



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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12th Assembly

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The Honourable Samuel Gargan, Speaker

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1995

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MEMBERS PRESENT

Hon. Jim Antoine, Hon. Goo Arlooktoo, Mr. Barnabas, Hon. Charles Dent, Mr. Enuaraq, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Evaloarjuk, Hon. Samuel Gargan, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Henry, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Miltenberger, Hon. Don Morin, Mr. Ningark, Hon. Kelvin Ng, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Picco, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Roland, Mr. Steen, Hon. Manitok Thompson, Hon. John Todd

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Mr. Enuaraq. Good afternoon. Orders of the day, item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Premier.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of important statements prepared and ready for delivery, including reports from Ministers on recent meetings with their federal and provincial counterparts. Since the session will likely conclude today, I would like to request the indulgence of the House and seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 34(6) which specifies a 20-minute time-limit for Ministers' statements so that all statements can be given before the session prorogues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Premier is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 34(6). Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Premier. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 4-13(1): GNWT Fiscal Situation

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier spoke about the challenges faced by the 13th Legislative Assembly and about how this Legislature intends to meet these challenges. My purpose in speaking today is to elaborate on some of the fiscal challenges outlined by the Premier. I have just returned from the Finance

Ministers' conference in Ottawa. It was obvious during our discussions that the federal deficit reduction agenda is once again coming to the forefront. The federal Minister was quite clear that the federal government intends to meet its deficit reduction targets. Unfortunately, we have little clarity concerning federal plans and their potential impact on the NWT until the federal budget comes down in February. What these national developments emphasize is the need to address our current financial problems and achieve a balanced budget as early in our term as possible. Although there are no quick fixes to our fiscal situation, the problem is manageable and our goal of a balanced budget can and will be reached. However, to do this we must take the time to develop a comprehensive recovery plan based on fair and quality decisions.

Mr. Speaker, later today I will be tabling the Interim Financial Report for the year ended March 31, 1995. The report will show that we closed the last fiscal year with a \$26 million deficit. This represents two per cent of our total revenues of just over \$1.2 billion. This took us to an accumulated deficit of \$12 million. For the current fiscal year, our revised forecast is for a deficit of \$30 million, due in large part to higher social program costs than budgeted for. This will increase our accumulated deficit to \$42 million. Under normal circumstances, this level of deficit could be eliminated with only moderate spending reductions.

However, in the last federal budget a five per cent reduction to our 1996-97 formula funding revenue was announced. This translates into a \$60 million decline in our revenues for next year. When coupled with the increased spending required to meet the relentless growth in our social programs, the financial shortfall for next year could climb to over \$100 million, Mr. Speaker. Unchecked, the deficit would soon compromise our ability to respond to the needs of our residents. But, Mr. Speaker, we will manage the looming deficit; we will not let it manage us.

Avoiding a major deficit next year will not be

easy. There are no quick and easy solutions. As our social spending indicates, many of our residents depend on government support. As our unemployment statistics show, the jobs are simply not there in the smaller communities to allow people to become more self-sufficient overnight. Although we must improve education and training levels and support job creation, these are long-term solutions. In the meantime, we cannot abandon support to those most in need.

Our new Legislative Assembly has taken major steps to prepare itself, to plan for and make the difficult choices that will be necessary. The new standing committee structure, the significant measures to improve communication and cooperation between ordinary Members and Cabinet, the adoption of a multi-year planning process and the commitment to a more open and consultative approach with the public will position us to develop and implement a quality plan that will have the support of the large majority of NWT residents. But we must take the time to allow these new approaches to work to find opportunities to do things in better ways and to develop this plan.

Let me, Mr. Speaker, give you an example. In the Premier's statement, he talked about empowering communities to have more control over decisions that affect them. With this goal in mind, we need to discuss, among many other ideas, whether title to all government infrastructure used to deliver

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community-based programs should be transferred to each community.

We need to discuss whether the community should take over full operating and maintenance authority for this infrastructure, whether all communities should have access to block funding for construction and maintenance, and whether communities need more authority and flexibility to raise revenues and finance new infrastructure. And we must consult with the communities on these options.

If we are going to make government more responsive and more efficient, we will need

to address these questions and many more. We need to balance the urgency of dealing with the financial situation with the time needed to make good, quality decisions. Today I will be tabling the results of the public consultation on eliminating the deficit. This report shows the value of seeking public input. We must continue to explore new and innovative ways of getting public views on options and approaches. An achievable timetable for developing a multi-year plan was identified by the Premier yesterday. And let there be no doubt, this will be a plan for managing the looming deficit. We will make the hard choices and the changes necessary to achieve a balanced budget as soon as we can. Mr. Speaker, in the short time before this plan is fully developed, we must still provide for the ongoing operation of the government. Even the relatively small deficits of the past few years have meant that a former accumulated surplus is now a small accumulated debt. This has reduced our cash position to a point where we must, during the lean months, borrow money for cash-flow purposes. This cash-flow requirement has been rising and has meant that we must seek increased borrowing authority this year.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note, increasing this borrowing authority does not allow the government to increase spending. Spending can only be increased with the authority of an appropriation act. But we must ensure that we always have the actual cash in the bank to honour the cheques we write. Later today, I will be speaking on this issue in more detail during consideration of the Borrowing Authorization Act.

Mr. Speaker, while there is an urgent need to deal with the current fiscal difficulties and plan for the future, we must also move quickly and decisively to ensure that the NWT is not set up for an even larger fiscal and political disaster with respect to division. The most immediate issue related to division is the incremental costs of funding two new territories. Recently, the federal government has been evasive about the nature and the timing for the provision of

incremental funding.

Without this funding, training cannot proceed, infrastructure cannot be built and the GNWT planning is being done in a vacuum. Now that the question of the capital has been decided by the people of Nunavut, there is no reason why a decision on funding should be delayed.

The federal Finance Minister is committed to discussing this issue with me early in the new year. It is our intention to aggressively pursue a federal commitment to fund incremental costs so that we can adequately fund two new territories on April 1999.

As we develop our long-range plans, we must also look down the road at our financial ability to meet the needs of our population. Once we manage our way out of our current financial situation, how will we ensure that we have the resources needed to address the structural, social and economic problems we face? How will we ensure that future generations will have access to a healthy future, to get a good education and to get a decent job?

Mr. Speaker, we will all be called upon to make hard choices over the next few months. Changes must be made on how we do business and to what people can expect from government. Our financial problem must be solved. But we cannot abandon support to those most in need. We must ensure that our actions are fair and equitable to all. This will require a comprehensive recovery plan for managing the deficit based on quality decisions. We have taken the first important steps to prepare this plan. Through the process we have started, through the leadership we will show and through ongoing consultations with our constituents, I am confident that we will solve our financial problems.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 5-13(1): Provincial-Territorial Council Of Ministers For Social Policy Reform And Renewal

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the annual Premier's conference in August 1995, an agreement was reached on the establishment of a Provincial-Territorial Council of Ministers for Social Policy Reform and Renewal. Premiers supported the establishment of the council because Ottawa was acting unilaterally on changes to Canada's social safety net.

The social safety package includes a variety of programs and services relating to health care, education, welfare, unemployment insurance, training and care for children, single parents and the elderly.

Premiers directed the Council of Ministers to prepare a set of principles which the provinces and territories would use to guide changes to Canada's social policy. Since August, the process of developing these principles has involved consulting with other provincial/territorial ministerial forums

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which meet regularly to deal with health, social services and labour market training issues.

On Tuesday, I attended a meeting of provincial and territorial Ministers responsible for Social Services in Calgary.

On Wednesday, I attended the meeting of the ministerial council; also in Calgary.

Mr. Speaker, the Tuesday meeting produced a consensus among Social Services Ministers on a number of issues. For example, Ministers reaffirmed that the federal government has the primary responsibility, in law and through policy, for funding social service programs for aboriginal Canadians. Social Services Ministers also confirmed their commitment to reducing overlap and duplication.

Ottawa, the provinces and territories, municipal and aboriginal governments must be more efficient in delivering programs and services.

Social Services Ministers completed their one-day meeting with a package to forward to the Social Policy Council. I should also note that Health, labour market and Status of Women Ministers have separately forwarded their views to the ministerial council.

On Wednesday, the council reviewed a draft report which will be forwarded to Premiers in the coming weeks. Provincial and territorial Premiers are expected to meet early in the new year to review the report. Their job will be to confirm a set of guiding principles for future negotiations with Ottawa on reforms to Canada's social programs.

Mr. Speaker, I realize my remarks have focused largely on the process. However, getting 10 provinces and two territories to agree on anything requires an initial commitment to process from all participants. Nevertheless I can report that:

- A number of the provinces, particularly in the West, are taking a strong stand on federal responsibility for aboriginal social programs;
- Ministers in the South have recognized the reality of self-government and how aboriginal institutions will be delivering social programs in the future;
- They have also recognized the special circumstances of smaller jurisdictions which need to work out cooperative and shared arrangements with Ottawa for delivering programs and services;
- Finally, all provinces and territories are committed to ensuring that Canadians in need will have access to the social safety net.

Mr. Speaker, it is my intention to brief committees of this House on what has and will be taking place leading up to Premiers' meetings early in the new year. I also intend to keep aboriginal organizations, health boards and other social services agencies informed of these initiatives in the coming months.

Finally, social policy reform has government-wide implications. Therefore, the government's position cannot be developed in isolation of the Ministers of Finance, Education, Culture and Employment, women's bureau and national constitutional affairs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Item 2, Ministers'

statements. Mr. Antoine.

Minister's Statement 6-13(1): Status Of Aboriginal Affairs In The Western NWT
HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to all the honourable Members of this House. As Minister responsible for aboriginal affairs, most of my agenda will be driven by the commitment by Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories to divide the Northwest Territories in 1999. While the task is challenging, processes are in place and planning for the establishment of a Nunavut territorial government is well under way. The circumstances in the West are much more complex.

The Constitutional Development Steering Committee held a successful conference last January which reached consensus on 22 principles to guide the western constitutional process. One critically important point of consensus was the recognition that aboriginal self-government processes and the public government process are equally important, that they are closely linked and that self-government processes must catch up to the CDSC process for either to succeed.

Timing is critical. Division will occur in 1999, but new legislation to replace the NWT Act for the West may need to be drafted two years in advance for introduction into Parliament. The next federal election must be held by October 1998, at the very latest, and could well take place in 1997. We have a two-year window of opportunity in which to move ahead on self-government and western constitutional development, or we may find ourselves faced with the status quo when the new Western Territory comes into being. We must accept the advice of the CDSC conference and ensure that the self-government and western constitutional processes are proceeding in tandem and as quickly as possible. To do so means we must find better ways to communicate and cooperate with aboriginal organizations in Nunavut and the West.

The aboriginal summit, a group comprised of leaders of western aboriginal

organizations, shares this objective and have expressed a desire to meet with Cabinet. Premier Morin has responded by arranging a first meeting between Cabinet and the aboriginal summit for this Friday to begin exploring common interests and to consider the establishment of a more formal mechanism for ongoing discussions. A similar meeting is being organized with Nunavut-based organizations early in the new year.

Members of this House should be aware that self-government discussions have been going on between Canada, the GNWT and most of the western aboriginal organizations for some time. A self-government conference

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scheduled for March 1996 is being coordinated by the Sahtu Secretariat on behalf of aboriginal summit members. The GNWT is cooperating with and supporting the efforts of aboriginal organizations to accelerate self-government talks with Canada.

The tasks before us are challenging, especially in light of the time constraints. However, we can forge ahead successfully if we are willing to work together for our common goals. I will do my best to help build the consensus we need to succeed.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Before I go on to the next Minister, I would like to recognize a former colleague of ours, Mr. Nerysoo.

Welcome to the Assembly.

---Applause

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mrs. Thompson.

Minister's Statement 7-13(1): Municipal Election Results

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, December 11th was election day for 35 hamlets and two settlement corporations across the NWT. This was the same day, as you know, that the Nunavut capital vote took place. I am sure the Members of this House can appreciate that election officials

were extremely busy.

Mr. Speaker, there were 177 council positions available on community councils, for which there were 399 candidates. Of the 37 communities requiring to hold elections, only two communities acclaimed their full council. The department has advised that it is waiting for the official results from four communities. The information available at this time shows that there were 11,360 eligible voters, of which 7,623 cast their ballots. That, Mr. Speaker, calculates to a 67 per cent territorial-wide voter turn-out. Complete information respecting the election will be made available to this House as soon as we receive it.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and the Members of this House, I would like to extend congratulations to all the newly-elected officials and extend our sincere appreciation to those who ran. There are many challenges facing locally-elected officials. I extend my best wishes to them as they take on their new responsibilities and offer the expertise and services of the Municipal and Community Affairs department to assist them as they undertake their duties.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased, as well, to inform this House of the department's efforts to ease the transition period of new councillors. We're offering...I'm used to speaking Inuktitut so it's getting confusing.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased, as well, to inform this House of the department's efforts to ease the transition period of new councillors. We are offering municipal and community governments the opportunity to train elected officials of their roles and responsibilities using training modules set up by the department. Our staff will be advising all hamlets and settlement corporations of these orientation sessions and scheduling workshops to occur in the near future.

Thank you and merry Christmas, Mr.

Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Thompson. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Antoine.

Minister's Statement 8-13(1): Proclamation Of Mine Health And Safety Act

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Safety and Public Services, I am pleased today to announce that the new mining safety legislation will come into force on Friday, December 15, 1995.

Mr. Speaker, the new Mine Health and Safety Act represents a major step toward ensuring safer working conditions in the northern minerals sector. It places an increased emphasis on safety training and provides improved standards for technology and operations in the mining industry. This act will replace the Mining Safety Act, which is outdated and ineffective. Mine safety legislation in the Northwest Territories has been in need of reform for the past decade. The process leading to this reform has included all facets of the industry: managers, unionized labour, non-unionized workers and government. Their involvement will not end with the proclamation of the new act. This legislation allows for the appointment of an expanded mine occupational health and safety legislation committee, with responsibility for advising the Minister and recommending any further amendments to the act and regulations.

While the act specifies that the Minister has up to 12 months to establish this committee, I want to indicate today that I intend to proceed with committee appointments as quickly as possible, and will be informing the House as progress is made in this area. As well, the Department of Safety and Public Services will provide a series of technical seminars to explain new regulatory requirements. The chief mine inspector will also be issuing a series of directives to clarify the way in which some of the more complicated regulations are supposed to be interpreted.

Before concluding, it is important to acknowledge the leadership provided on this legislative initiative by previous Ministers, especially the Honourable John Todd, Mr. Nerysoo, Mr. Whitford and Mr. Patterson. I also want to note the many

valuable comments and recommendations made by the last Assembly's Standing Committee on Legislation, which you chaired, Mr. Speaker.

Responsibility for reviewing over 750 new regulations was undertaken by the existing Mine Occupational Health and Safety Board. Representatives who served on the board during this period should be commended for their hard work and commitment.

I am sure that all honourable Members of this Assembly will join me in looking forward to the proclamation of the Mine Health and Safety Act, and to a new era of mining safety in the Northwest Territories.

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Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 9-13(1): Improving Services In Education, Culture And Employment

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, every Member of this Assembly is well aware of the challenges the government faces in providing high-quality programs and services in the face of declining revenues. Through good planning and the cooperation of our various stakeholders, we can continue to improve services to the people of the NWT. I want to bring this Assembly up to date on a number of initiatives made by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment that are helping to move programs in this direction.

The NWT needs to develop a home-grown workforce. To reach this goal, we need more grade 12 graduates. In the early 1980's, grades 10 to 12 were offered in only six communities. Mr. Speaker, with the implementation of grade 12 in Fort Good Hope this fall, all NWT students have an opportunity to complete their senior secondary education within their region. This improved access has had a positive effect on participation rates. There are now 761 students in grade 12 -- twice as many

as there were five years ago. When people are better educated, they have a better chance of finding a well-paying job.

The government's building and learning strategy has resulted in trades training being delivered on-site at community construction projects. These opportunities will ensure northerners have access to the jobs that accompany any large-scale development such as new mines.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a tremendous surge in the level of student financial assistance. Problems which were experienced in the fall of 1995 have been addressed and revisions made to ensure that similar difficulties do not occur in January. It is expected the payment schedule will return to an average of 10 working days from receipt of the student enrolment form as was usual prior to September of 1995.

Over the past 18 months, a further initiative has been income support reform.

Recognizing federal actions, we are developing a northern approach. Social assistance recipients are now given opportunities to participate in wellness activities or take part in education, training and employment. Mr. Speaker, given the current fiscal climate, the participation of all stakeholders is essential to improving services. There is no doubt that we must identify new approaches to support program and service delivery.

In one current example, the chiefs of the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council plan to set up a regional services board to look after the administration of all education, health and social services in the Dogrib communities. Education, Culture and Employment, and Health and Social Services staff are part of the working group established to set up this board by next April. This should result in less duplication and overlap and produce greater community control.

Community consultation and participation are also essential in redefining language programs. As a result of federal cutbacks, the department is carrying out widespread consultations to develop plans to reshape how programs and services are delivered.

It is also proposing to simplify existing programs and emphasize its support for the language communities and their activities.

The plan is to transfer resources to the regions and language communities and reduce direct services delivered by the programs.

Mr. Speaker, the current fiscal climate means that the government is going to have to take a strategic approach to spending in order to improve services to northerners.

Through continued consultation with communities and organizations, and by working together, I believe we can continue to make progress towards our goals and still improve services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

Minister's Statement 10-13(1): New Gun Control Legislation

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to the attention of the Members of the Legislative Assembly the proclamation dates that have been announced by the federal Minister of Justice.

The legislation received Royal Assent on December 5, 1995. Despite the many attempts made by the Government of the Northwest Territories and other concerned territorial and provincial governments, the legislation was passed without any of our concerns taken into consideration in the form of amendments.

The federal government has stated that the legislation will be proclaimed into law in various stages.

The regulations for the Firearms Act are presently being developed. The federal government is expecting to have regulations which relate to the proclamation dates tabled in Parliament February 1996.

Regulations which deal with aboriginal issues are also expected to be tabled in Parliament mid-February 1996. A Policy and Regulation Committee, made up of chief provincial firearms officers from British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Quebec along with representatives from the

RCMP and the federal Firearms Task Force, will work towards the development of the regulations of the Firearms Act.

The federal government has appointed a number of individuals to a firearms user advisory group. The group is made up of a cross-section of Canadians from the provinces of British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Yukon and the Northwest Territories along with a federal National Aboriginal Advisory Committee, made up of aboriginal representatives from British Columbia, Quebec and

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New Brunswick, to work with the Firearms Task Force in the development of the regulations. The purpose of their involvement is to try to ensure that aboriginal and treaty rights are respected and that traditional lifestyles of aboriginal people can continue.

The Safety Education Committee, made up of chief territorial and provincial firearms officers from the Northwest Territories, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick and a representative from the federal Firearms Task Force, will work towards the required modifications to the Canadian firearms safety course. This committee will also work towards the development of a firearms safety course which will meet the needs of aboriginal people. It is the intention of the federal government to have all firearms safety course material ready by a mid-1996 training course proclamation date. We have serious concerns about whether the deadlines can be met.

When the remaining portions of the act are proclaimed, citizens will have to examine their current practices involving the use of firearms and ammunition. My officials will continue to work with federal officials to reduce, to the extent possible, the adverse impact on traditional lifestyle.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government will be providing information to the public with regard to the requirements of the new gun control legislation. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Baffin Central, Mr. Enuaraq.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS
Member's Statement On Tribute To The Late Malaya Akulukjuk

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a respected Pangnirtung elder and distinguished artist, Malaya Akulukjuk, who passed away recently. Malaya was born in 1913 at Qikiqtaq, outside Pangnirtung. She was married to Nutaralaaq and had 13 children. In the 1960s, she and her family moved to Pangnirtung following an epidemic which killed most of their sled dogs. She started drawing for the local co-op shortly after her arrival. Her striking illustrations were always based on her own life and Inuit legends. Malaya was involved with the Pangnirtung weave shop right from the beginning. Recently, the Uqqurmiut Centre for Arts and Crafts celebrated their 25th anniversary with a beautiful collection of tapestries, all based on Malaya Akulukjuk's designs. The anniversary celebrations were held in her honour. Malaya was known for her kindness and generosity, and also known for her skills as a midwife, seamstress and hunter. Whether it was making kamiks, caring for the sick, sharing food and clothing, comforting and assisting women in labour, Malaya was there.

She was a wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother who will forever live in the hearts of her family and community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Kivallivik, Mr. O'Brien. Member's Statement On Kivallivik Historical Sites

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is regarding the two new sites that were designated by the federal Minister of Heritage. These historical sites are located in Arviat and Baker Lake. Just to give you

some background on these two sites, Century Island and the Fall Caribou Crossing on the Kassan River were designated nationally significant to Canadian history by the Minister of Canadian Heritage in August 1995. This designation follows four years' of consultations with the communities of Arviat and Baker Lake. The hamlet councils and various groups in Baker Lake and Arviat were also consulted in October 1995 and planning committees were recommended for both communities. The first meeting was held in Arviat on November 15, 1995. The training committee will meet once a month until the plan is completed.

Century Island is located approximately .5 kilometres from Arviat, and has evidence of many centuries of Inuit use and occupation. The island continues to be used by the people of Arviat and continues to be a very special place.

The Fall Caribou Crossing is located on the lower Kassan River and is a well-known example of the important fall caribou crossing hunt which sustained Inuit in the region in the past.

Two years of historical and archaeological research were directed by the Baker Lake Elders' Advisory Committee and the Arviat Historical Society, respectively. The research was presented to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in July 1995. The board recommended to the Minister of Canadian Heritage that the sites be designated nationally significant. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board also recommended that Parks Canada staff return to the communities to consult and help commemorate these sites in a meaningful way. Plans will be developed from a community-based perspective. The training process will consider other related heritage projects engaged in by the communities from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, special thanks to Mr. Darren Keith, the Inuit historic site specialist; Mr. David Webster, consultant; Luke Suluk and the Arviat Historical Society; and, the Baker Lake Elders' Advisory Committee for their hard work on this particular project.

Also, Mr. Speaker, since this is our last session of the year, I would like to wish all my colleagues and the staff here at the Assembly a very happy and safe Christmas, and also a special greeting to the residents of Arviat and Baker Lake, especially the children and elders of the communities. Thank you, matna, mahsi cho.

---Applause

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement On Christmas Greetings To Constituents And Staff

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Firstly, I would like to thank you for the fine repast you provided for us at lunchtime. It was the first, I'm sure, of many turkey dinners, but it was well worth eating.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to briefly wish the people of the Northwest Territories and each and every one of my constituents, as well as the very capable staff of the Legislative Assembly, a very merry Christmas and a safe and happy new year. And, a special wish of well-being and happy yuletide to the capable Members of this House. I am honoured and proud to be one of the Members here, and I wish you all Godspeed when you go home to your communities and look forward to meeting with you again early in the new year.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for North Slave, Mr. Rabesca. Member's Statement On Dangerous Condition Of Mackenzie Highway

MR. RABESCA:

(Microphone turned off)...and the rest of my colleagues and the people of the Northwest Territories. I would like to make my Member's statement in the Dogrib language. (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have an opportunity to speak Dogrib; I am very grateful for that. It was in November of last year when the then MLA for North Slave expressed his

concern about the icy and dangerous conditions of the highway between Rae-Edzo and Yellowknife. Mr. Speaker, this road is still used daily by the people of Rae-Edzo, government employees and various trucking businesses. It was only last month that an employee from the Department of Health and Social Services was killed on that road. Other deaths have occurred on that highway over the years, including a mother and two children.

I and other colleagues like yourself, Mr. Speaker, have travelled on that road to meet with our constituents or to travel with our families to Yellowknife. The road can be treacherous, and I, as a Member of this House representing my constituents, do not want any more deaths or fatal accidents due to icy or treacherous conditions on that highway.

Last year, the Honourable Mr. Todd stated during the November session that the highway is one of the most heavily used in the Northwest Territories. It is due to this that I have grave concerns about the safety of those who use the highway as their only means of transportation. Mr. Todd didn't mention that out of \$20 million used on highways, \$9 million is spent on that highway. He used the unique global climate conditions as a contributing factor that made it difficult to maintain the highway. Later today, I will be asking the Minister of Transportation what he is willing to do about this.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas. Member's Statement On Opening Of New Arctic Bay Arena

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was very happy to attend the official opening of the new Tununirusuq Arena in Arctic Bay on December 1st. It was a very happy event. I would like to thank our former MLA, Ludy Pudluk, for his hard work and dedication to getting this project completed. The new arena is also a credit to our former mayor, Juda Taqtu, and the council of the hamlet of Arctic Bay.

(Translation) I would also like to thank the Honourable Manitok Thompson, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, who sent a message which I was happy to deliver on her behalf and a plaque which I was pleased to present to the community. I very much appreciate the Minister's efforts to extend her congratulations to Arctic Bay, since I know that she had only just been appointed when the arena was opened. (Translation ends)

The new arena was full of Arctic Bay residents when it was officially opened. It was very exciting when everybody went out on the new ice to skate together and enjoy the new facility. There were even people who went out on the ice who had never skated before. I want to also make special mention to thank Mr. Shorty Brown of Yellowknife, whose generous program provided skates for many people who would not otherwise have been able to skate. I am pleased that the arena is already well used and has a busy schedule. I know that wonderful new facility will be enjoyed by Arctic Bay residents and will also be very beneficial to our youth who now have a much-needed place for healthy recreation and are grateful.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Barnabas, your two and a half minutes are up. Mr. Barnabas.

MR. BARNABAS:

Sorry. I am asking for unanimous consent.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for the High Arctic is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Conclude your statement, Mr. Barnabas.

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last comments are that I would like to say to my colleagues to have a merry Christmas and to my constituents in High Arctic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Member's statements. The Member for Inuvik, Mr. Roland.

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Member's Statement On Christmas

Greetings To Constituents

MR. ROLAND:

Mr. Speaker, honourable Members, I would like to take this time to speak to the people of Inuvik and the Northwest Territories, including Nunavut.

Although we have heard the state the government is in, let us not forget to look for the positive things that we do have.

Especially during this time of year, let us all take the time to stop and talk with the people, neighbours and visitors alike. Let us be participants in making this Christmas a memorable one. Let us not be so busy with ourselves. Instead, let's make the time available to make our communities peaceful places this Christmas season.

In the true spirit of Christmas, may God protect and bless you all. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the people of Inuvik that I look forward to spending Christmas at home. Thank you, and merry Christmas.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement On Minister's Literacy Award To Dorothee Komangapik

MR. PICCO:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, 1995...(Translation ends).

...Dorothy suggested that Mr. Gzowski hold one of his golf tournaments for literacy in the North. Mr. Gzowski thought it was an excellent idea and thus began the annual tournaments that we have had since. That first tournament was held here in Yellowknife and, as one of the first members of the NWT literacy council, I had the great pleasure of caddying around Frame Lake in February for celebrities like Valdy and Ken Dryden. We have Dorothy to thank for this.

Dorothy has been an innovator and a strong advocate for ESL and ABE programming in the Eastern Arctic. This busy educator and mother also recently completed her masters degree in adult education. Only five people in the Northwest Territories were honoured with the Minister's Award for Literacy, and I

am proud to say that my friend and constituent, Dorothee Komangapik, was one. Qujannamiik, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements.

The Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

Member's Statement On Christmas Greetings To Constituents And Staff

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, like my colleagues, despite the fiscal situation we are in, want to wish a very merry Christmas to the people of Gjoa Haven, Taloyoak, Pelly Bay and the people across the North; especially to you, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues in this House, Mr. Hamilton and his staff members. I wish you all a safe trip home and I hope to see you again within the new year. Thank you very much.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements.

The Member for Yellowknife North, Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement On Christmas Greetings To Constituents And Staff

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to wish a merry Christmas and a happy new year to the people in the Yellowknife North constituency, and also a safe journey to all the Members and staff of the Legislative Assembly as well as a merry Christmas to all of you and to all of the staff who make our work a lot easier. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements.

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

Picco.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize in the gallery today a well-known local Yellowknife businessman and author, David T. McCann, and sitting next to him, Mr. Gordon Rennie, a long-time northerner and a big supporter of mine during the

recent election in Iqaluit. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 8-13(1): Cost Impact Of Eastern Arctic Resupply Proposal

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Department of Public Works and it relates to the Eastern Arctic resupply proposal request. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House I indicated that the residents of Kivallivik had a great deal of concern and fear that the awarding of this tender and any other related tenders may have a negative impact on their cost of living. Mr. Speaker, at this point, I am seeking assurances from the Minister that the cost of living will not increase in any form or fashion by the awarding of this contract or any other contract that is directly or indirectly related to this particular proposal. At this point, Mr. Speaker, that is my request and my question to the honourable Minister. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Arlooktoo.

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Return To Question 8-13(1): Cost Impact Of Eastern Arctic Resupply Proposal

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO::

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the concern the Member has about the possible increase in the cost of living. I wish to assure him that I'm told by departmental officials that there will be no increase in the cost of dry goods, due to this change in the way fuel will be supplied. In fact, the overall landed cost of fuel will be less than it is now, as well as the fact that the cost of dry goods is remaining the same.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

Question 9-13(1): Request For Police Services At Arctic Bay

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Justice. My Speaker, the hamlet of Arctic Bay is concerned about not having any police in their community. Arctic Bay is at least half an hour away from the RCMP detachment in Nanisivik by a very narrow and steep road. The road is sometimes closed due to the weather and the mining community has very few policing problems compared to the problems that occur in Arctic Bay. I would like to ask the Minister if he is aware of the request from Arctic Bay that RCMP be located in the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 9-13(1): Request For Police Services At Arctic Bay

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I will be advising the chief superintendent of the RCMP of the request for Arctic Bay, although he is already aware. I understand the RCMP have already had one meeting with the community to date. They feel the meeting was a very positive meeting and they have scheduled a follow-up meeting with the community in January. So I will be awaiting results of that meeting to see what follow-up may be necessary. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 10-13(1): Assistance For Purchase Of Staff Housing

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was very happy that my honourable colleagues across the floor were getting into the Christmas spirit. But for me, business comes first so I will get into it.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a question of the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation. I have been approached by the long-time residents of Pangnirtung who are long-time employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories. They have been hit hard recently with steep increasing rents and the cost of utilities. Mr. Speaker, my question is would the Minister be open to assisting these employees to purchase

government staff houses in Pangnirtung.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Ng.
Return To Question 10-13(1): Assistance For Purchase Of Staff Housing

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I would like to advise the Member and commit to him that if those employees are interested in purchasing their staff housing units, we'll ensure the corporation staff work with them and try to help accommodate. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Evaloarjuk.
Question 11-13(1): Cost Of Enacting Gun Control Legislation

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Justice. The Minister of Justice worked very hard with the gun control act. I wonder if he ever asked the question of how much money will be used to enact this law. If he cannot respond to my question, I would like a letter from him showing the amount that might be used. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.
Return To Question 11-13(1): Cost Of Enacting Gun Control Legislation

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The federal government's modest estimate of the cost of implementing this new legislation, as of a month ago, was \$85 million. The projected costs concerned provinces and, in some cases, exceeded \$200 million. It remains to be seen how much money the federal government will be budgeting to implement this bill. As I have said earlier today, they will be implementing different parts of this legislation at different times. So we are waiting on some word from the federal Justice department on how they plan to implement it and how much money they believe they should budget to implement this piece of legislation. As we have said from the beginning, we do not believe it would be very easy, if at all possible, to

implement and enforce this legislation in a realistic manner. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.
Question 12-13(1): Number Of NWT Grade 12 Graduates

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. You made reference, very fleetingly, to the need for a greater number of graduates from grade 12. Then you switched over from reference to graduates to participants and numbers of people enrolled in grade 12, indicating that the numbers had gone up to 761, I believe, which is a doubling in the last five years. Could you indicate to the House the number of grade 12 graduates? Are they as similarly impressive? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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Return To Question 12-13(1): Number Of NWT Grade 12 Graduates

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The number of graduates across the Northwest Territories has not gone up by the same percentage as the numbers of participants. Obviously, a lot of the participation would be at the lower grades. The numbers of graduates have increased: from 221 in 1991-92 to 273 in 1994-95. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 12-13(1): Number Of NWT Grade 12 Graduates

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In our briefings earlier in the month and last month, it was indicated to us that the number of graduates for the amount of money spent is not very high. Does the Minister see any bright spots on the horizon with programs like the Western Arctic leadership program that would improve things so we could get more graduates? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 12-13(1):
Number Of NWT Grade 12 Graduates

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are some bright spots on the horizon. As I said, though the number of graduates didn't increase in the same percentage as what participation had, with grade extensions and people dropping back into school in the communities, they will start to graduate in the next few years. Most of them were coming in at the grade 10 and 11 stage. As they progress through the system, we are counting on seeing a significant increase in the number of graduates across the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 12-13(1):
Number Of NWT Grade 12 Graduates

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is my final supplementary. Does the Minister see a benefit to programs such as the Western Arctic leadership program in terms of contributing to the number of graduate students across the Western Arctic and from small communities where there have been no graduates before?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 12-13(1):
Number Of NWT Grade 12 Graduates

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I visited the Western Arctic leadership program previously when I was an ordinary Member. I was quite impressed with that program. I should point out to the Member that while that program has had some important successes and the department is committed to keep it going as much as is possible in these fiscal times, we are expecting to see the graduation numbers in those small communities, where we haven't seen them before, start to increase with the grade extensions. I think we are trying to see an

improvement in education across the Territories. I think there is still some room for us to support programs like the Western Arctic leadership program, but we are going to have to look for other partners to assist that to continue in the same way it has been done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 13-13(1): Extension Of Taloyoak Airstrip

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transportation. The Minister may be aware of a request in Taloyoak regarding the length of the runway. According to the operational requirements, a 748 is a critical aircraft in the Kitikmeot, which has recommended a runway of 3,610 feet; that is, 3,400 feet. We also have a Lear jet based in Cambridge Bay sometimes, Mr. Speaker, used for medevacs when a situation is life threatening. There are times, Mr. Speaker, that the situation can be life threatening. According to operational requirements, a Lear jet needs 4,000 of runway. My question to the Minister is will the Minister look into the situation seriously and get back to me about the status of the request. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 13-13(1): Extension Of Taloyoak Airstrip

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to my honourable colleague from the Taloyoak riding. This is my first question as Minister of Transportation. I am aware of the Taloyoak airstrip situation. I have been briefed on it. I understand the concern that the Member has on behalf of his constituents. This particular airstrip isn't long enough to accommodate a certain type of aircraft, but there is an airstrip there and they are utilizing it for other aircraft. The department is looking at the situation. It requires additional capital expenditure and it

might be quite substantial. I will get back to the Member on the findings of the department. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ootes.
Question 14-13(1): Results Of Affirmative Action Policy Review

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Finance. The Government of the Northwest Territories' policy on affirmative action is subject to review during this year. A multi-departmental task force, under the direction of a steering committee comprised of deputy ministers and regional directors, was given the responsibility of doing the policy review. The review's final purpose was to examine what the future direction and implementation of the affirmative action policy should be.

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Upon completion, the findings of the review were to be forwarded to Cabinet. Can the Minister of Finance advise when the findings will be forwarded to Cabinet?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.
Return To Question 14-13(1): Results Of Affirmative Action Policy Review

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, there was an internal review done by the FMB. I haven't had an opportunity to read their report. I understand that it will be on my desk later on this afternoon. Once I've read it, I'll present it to Cabinet and then we'll be able to table it in the House during the next session. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Rabesca.
Question 15-13(1): Review Of Mackenzie Highway Maintenance

MR. RABESCA:

Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I mentioned something to do with transportation on highways. Mr. Speaker, many of us have already heard my concerns about dangerous road conditions between Rae Edzo and Yellowknife. My

question to the Minister is, is he aware of the problem. Mr. Speaker, in light of the high number of accidents and fatalities on the highway between Rae Edzo and Yellowknife, my question to the Minister is will he agree to review the adequacy of the maintenance on this heavily travelled stretch of highway.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Antoine.
Return To Question 15-13(1): Review Of Mackenzie Highway Maintenance

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'm very aware of that stretch of road. In fact, I just drove back from Fort Simpson last Sunday when it was about 45 below so I know the conditions of the road very well. I agree with the honourable Member. The department is briefing me on the conditions of the road and once the department gets me the information about what levels of maintenance are there, I will get back to the Member with that information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions, supplementary. Mr. Rabesca.
Supplementary To Question 15-13(1): Review Of Mackenzie Highway Maintenance

MR. RABESCA:

Mr. Speaker, my constituency is not aware of anyone patrolling the Rae-Yellowknife highway to ensure the accidents are quickly attended or that drivers and passengers are not waiting on the highway during the cold winter months. My question to the Minister is is there a highway patrol officer in his department who regularly checks for breakdowns and maintenance on the road between Rae and Yellowknife.

MR. SPEAKER:

That's a new question. Mr. Antoine.
Further Return To Question 15-13(1): Review Of Mackenzie Highway Maintenance

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, again, Mr. Speaker. The highway patrol is supposed to be on that stretch of road, as everybody should know,

and the Speaker knows about the situation very well, from driving this road as well. In the past they've been there. If the Member is saying that they are not there, then I'll check into that situation and get back to the Member.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Rabesca. Supplementary To Question 15-13(1): Review Of Mackenzie Highway Maintenance

MR. RABESCA:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I understand there are plans to realign the road between Rae Edzo and Yellowknife. In order that my constituents are made aware of any plans that will effect them in that area, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister, does the Department of Transportation have concrete plans to rebuild this stretch of road to eliminate injuries.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine. Further Return To Question 15-13(1): Review Of Mackenzie Highway Maintenance

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe this is somewhat of a new question. I just want to inform the Member that being the new Minister of Transportation, the department has some documents that he should be aware of that describe the transportation strategy that was put together by the department in 1990. There were two tabled documents: the first in 1993, entitled The Transportation Agenda; the second in 1994, entitled The Transportation Strategy Update. These documents have a lot of information on the direction that the department is going in all areas of transportation as well as in the area of highway construction.

As the Member knows, the department has been paving the road from the border right to Yellowknife. I think that is still in the strategy. We are at the stage where there is a section between Providence and Rae that still has to be completed. There is also a section from Rae to Yellowknife that is in

the plans to be done. As to exactly when it will be done, it's a capital expenditure and we haven't got to that stage in the House. It's still up for discussion. The Member should know that it's in the plan and if he reviews these documents he'll become more aware of the strategy for highway construction. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 16-13(1): Review Of Inuvik/Tuktoyaktuk Road Conditions

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address my question to the Minister of Transportation. Mr. Speaker, with the poor all-weather road conditions between Inuvik and Tuk, I would like to ask the Minister if he plans to

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address this situation in his long-term transportation strategy in the future?

Return To Question 16-13(1): Review Of Inuvik/Tuktoyaktuk Road Conditions

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not too clear on that, whether it's an all-weather road that he's referring to or is it a winter road. However, as for the winter road, I know the department works in that area to try to keep transportation going there in the wintertime. As for the all-weather road, this is more of a long-term strategy and I'll have to check with the department to get the specifics on that and get back to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Hay River, Ms. Groenewegen. Question 17-13(1): Colomac Mine's Point Of Departure

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is going to be addressed to the Premier, who is also responsible for the portfolio of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. Hay River, as a community, had made quite a bit of effort and hard work in the last few years to try and attract people who were working in the North in the mining industry

to consider Hay River as a viable and economic community to live in. We were very pleased when we were successful in having the Colomac Mine choose Hay River as a point of departure for their employees. At first there was not a tremendous response by the employees to live in Hay River and many travelled from quite a far distance to catch the plane out of Hay River into the mine. However, over the last several months, the idea of living in Hay River has started to catch on and the research department tells me that presently half of the employees of Colomac Mine are now northern residents. I can't tell you the exact number of those 50 per cent that actually live in Hay River but I know that it is a significant number. We were very disheartened to learn that there has been a tentative plan now made by Colomac Mine to make Edmonton, Alberta, their point of departure for employees working in the mine.

It would also seem that another prospective mine is also looking at bringing people straight from the South in to work in the North. This is very discouraging. I would like to ask the Minister what can this government realistically do to stop this kind of thing and prevent this from happening more in the future. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 17-13(1): Colomac Mine's Point Of Departure

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, have some serious concerns, as the Member for Hay River has, about the direction mining is going in the Northwest Territories. I would agree that mining companies should invest and at least have their employees living in the Northwest Territories. I have contacted the Chamber of Mines already on this issue and I will be contacting Colomac Mines as soon as possible on this issue as well and encourage them to encourage their people to stay in the Northwest Territories and not resupply that mine out of southern Canada.

But we must also remember that without a hammer or legislation like the northern accord, there is little that we can do except for encourage and try to work with them to invest and keep their employees in the North. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 18-13(1): Legislation For Mandatory Use Of Headlights

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Out of the concern for safety of Mr. Rabesca on the road to Fort Rae, I have had plenty of occasion to travel on the highways south and back when I've been going to school and visiting some friends in Hay River and I've always been concerned with the vehicles that are travelling without lights. Often you can't tell if a vehicle is coming towards you or going the other way. I know there have been studies done in areas where it's mandatory to have lights on. The studies have shown it is safer and there are less accidents when it's mandatory to have lights on highways. Of course, this brings down the hospital costs, long-term care and stuff like that, so I was wondering if the Minister would consider initiating an amendment to the proper act to make it mandatory to use headlights on our highways.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 18-13(1): Legislation For Mandatory Use Of Headlights

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. That's a very good point that the Member raised. I think for all safety and protecting lives on the highway, I think if that is the direction that this Assembly wants to take, then we could certainly look at the necessary acts and make the amendments with the support of this House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 19-13(1): Review Of

Standardized Testing In The NWT

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education. Is the Department of Education reviewing a process for standardized testing at the grade 11 and grade 12 level in the NWT at this moment? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 19-13(1): Review Of Standardized Testing In The NWT

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department has taken on a project called

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"towards excellence." It is an educational quality indicators project. The goal of this project is to provide information for the system as a whole in two key areas; areas such as student learning and also in the effectiveness and efficiency of the system in supporting student learning.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the department has a program in which it is evaluating how successful the system is, and it's called the "educational quality indicators project."

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 20-13(1): Funding For Workshop Re Transfer Of EDO Positions

MR. RABESCA:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Economic Development. Mr. Speaker, the service contract the Department of Economic Development and Tourism has issued recently is for a period of four months for Rae Lakes, Lac La Martre and Snare Lakes. The communities have all indicated that there is a definite need for economic development officers in these three communities. Mr. Speaker, the department has indicated that depending on operating funds available in the last quarter of this fiscal year, they may be able to provide some funding towards a workshop with three communities going to plan the transfer of economic development officer to the

communities.

Mr. Speaker, at present, the service contract is only for a short period of four months, and no consensus was reached regarding the transfer of the economic development officer position to the communities during a recent meeting held in Rae-Edzo with the department.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister if the department will fund further meetings with these communities to resolve the concerns and to reach consensus on this issue before the end of the fiscal year.

MR. SPEAKER:

I don't know, but I've been getting two...the Dogrib and the English. Mr. Evaloarjuk, are you getting the Inuktitut translation on your receiver? Okay. The Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 20-13(1): Funding For Workshop Re Transfer Of EDO Positions

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Economic Development and Tourism has been working with the communities of Rae Lakes, Whati and Snare Lake to solve the problem of an economic development officer and how they will man that position in those communities. They have talked to the three communities; they have consulted with the three communities. The communities have agreed to share that position. The only thing the communities have not agreed to was how to divvy up the funding that was available for that position. The department put the process to them, or a recommendation on how they can share those dollars. Cash would be given to the communities to administer themselves, \$2,000 a month. The only problem we have now is Rae Lakes has indicated support for that approach; the Wha Ti band manager has indicated that the offer is not acceptable; Snare Lake has not responded, so we have to get together with the three communities again and try to negotiate how we can staff that position or else we will have to staff it ourselves to make sure the services are still available to the communities in the new year.

Let me assure the Member that we will sit

down with the communities again and try to work out a compromise or a deal with them how they can provide that service to their own people themselves.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Rabesca.
Supplementary To Question 20-13(1):
Funding For Workshop Re Transfer Of EDO
Positions

MR. RABESCA:

Mr. Speaker, the service contract that the Department of Economic Development and Tourism provided is only for a short period of four months in each of the three isolated communities. The contract will pay the designated economic development officer \$2,000 per month. The individual will work for 12 and a half hours per week which is one third of the standard 37 and a half hours per week for a government employee with the same responsibilities within the department. The communities have indicated that the salary does not clearly take into account the high cost of living in the isolated communities, most importantly the hours do not consider the range of duties and responsibilities of this position. Mr. Speaker, will the department reconsider the salary of this economic development officer position in three communities before the end of the fiscal year?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.
Further Return To Question 20-13(1):
Funding For Workshop Re Transfer Of EDO
Positions

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will meet with the Member at a later date before he leaves and try to solve this issue. We have a certain amount of money in our budget to fund an EDO position in his communities. That's one position to service three communities. I will be willing to sit down with the Member to try to come to an arrangement of how we can fund those positions and let the communities control those positions. I'm willing to do that. Mr. Speaker, it's also really hard to hear the Member's question because I can't pick it up on here as well because I'm getting the

Dogrib language instead of English. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

We've been having that technical problem, too. I'm getting this. Could you look into it? We'll take a five-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER:

I will call the House back to order. We are on item 6, oral questions. Mr. Rabesca.

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Question 21-13(1): Replacement Of Snare
Lake Community Freezer

MR. RABESCA:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Speaker, the local community freezer in Snare Lake broke down last year and this issue was raised in the House a year ago. When the local community freezer broke down, it was cleaned and it was claimed to be safe for use by the community health inspector. However, the local people refused to use the freezer because too much meat was spoiled and a large amount of blood was spread inside the local freezer. The local people depend on the caribou meat as part of their diet, and they feel that the spiritual connection that they have for the animals will be greatly affected if they use the local freezer where all the meat was spoiled. Therefore, in respect to the common spiritual beliefs of my constituents, I ask the Minister of Renewable Resources if he will reconsider the decision made by his department that the community should continue to use the local community freezer and that he find an alternative solution to this issue.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mrs. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will refer this question to Mr. Kakfwi.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 21-13(1): Replacement
Of Snare Lake Community Freezer

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

English not provided...(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister of Renewable Resources, I am the person that the question should be addressed to.

Not that long ago, in Snare Lake, for some reason the equipment in the reefer broke down, and the meat and fish and whatever was stored in that reefer was all spoiled. It was repaired. The reefer seems to be working okay now, but some people are not using the reefer; I don't know why. The reefer has been fixed.

Some communities do not have a community reefer, so we will be working more on this issue after Christmas when capital funding is requested for the communities that do not have reefers. We will be working toward them being able to build reefers and looking at how much money would be required for it. The O and M still has to be figured out. So the communities that do not presently have these reefers are the ones that we will be supporting to get reefers in their communities.

So the one in Snare Lake that is being discussed has been repaired, and if it's maintained properly, it will be working for a long time yet. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Rabesca.
Supplementary To Question 21-13(1):
Replacement Of Snare Lake Community Freezer

MR. RABESCA:

Mr. Speaker, I apologize for making my statement to the wrong Minister. Since Mr. Kakfwi spoke in his own native language, maybe I should speak my own proper language.

(Translation) Mr. Speaker, the community is prepared to build an outside shell of a community freezer with logs from outside the community and wish to purchase the inside shell of the freezer. They feel that this will not only create employment for a number of the residents during the winter months, but a good solid protection would be built for the inner shell of the community freezer which will be cost-effective in the

long term. Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister, will it be possible to provide the necessary funds to the community for them to participate in the construction of an outside shell and to purchase the inside shell for a new community freezer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Further Return To Question 21-13(1):
Replacement Of Snare Lake Community Freezer

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

(Translation) Mr. Speaker, in listening to what the honourable Member had to say, I now have a better understanding of what they are requesting. They would like to work on the project themselves. There is already a reefer there. If it is to be renovated on the inside as well as the outside, then we can sit down together and find out exactly what they would like to have done. Once we have an understanding of what they would like to have done then we would be able to help them financially and how the whole project could be worked on as well.

It is only once we have sat down together and discussed this whole thing that we could find out what we can and can't do with this project, so we will be doing that shortly after Christmas. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Rabesca.
Supplementary To Question 21-13(1):
Replacement Of Snare Lake Community Freezer

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation) I would like to ask the Minister of Renewable Resources; he has just been given responsibility for this. He has a responsibility to help the communities with these kinds of issues. If he can look into this issue; look at the issues in Snare Lake with regard to this. Maybe he can give me, in written form, how we can work on this issue together.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Rabesca.
Further Return To Question 21-13(1):
Replacement Of Snare Lake Community Freezer

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the honourable Member. I think if he wrote a formal letter then I would be able to know exactly what they are requesting and we will be able to

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discuss it further. He is speaking on behalf of the Snare Lake community. He's the best person to know exactly what the people are requesting and what they would like to have worked on. The best process to work on this would be for him to write me a formal letter. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Mr. Steen.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 1-13(1): Government Services To The Community Of Holman Island

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address my written question to the Honourable Don Morin, Minister of the Executive. With the division of the existing Northwest Territories on the horizon, the question of which regional government office should be responsible for government services to the community of Holman Island must be addressed as soon as possible. As you know, at the present time, most, if not all, government services, including education, health, police and court service for this particular community in the riding of Nunakput are administered out of the Cambridge Bay regional office.

There is no doubt that after 1999, the community of Holman Island will be in the Western Territory.

The residents of this community would like clear indications from the government as to where these services will be coming from in the future; Nunavut or the new Western Territory.

Furthermore, as MLA responsible for this community, I find it very hard to deal with two separate regional offices in order to have input on annual O and M and capital expenditure budgets for this community. Travel costs to Cambridge Bay regional

office puts a severe strain on my constituency travel budget.

Would the Minister consider:

1. Instructing his regional officials to seriously consider transferring all O and M and capital budgets applicable to Holman Island from the Cambridge Bay regional office to the Inuvik regional office effective April 1, 1996?

2. If this is not possible or feasible, would the Minister indicate what other options are open or under consideration by the government that would address this situation?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

Mr. Ootes's Reply

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate this opportunity to reply to the Opening Address. There are several topics on which I would like to comment. These are also issues raised during my election campaign. These issues are the constitutional process; division; the deficit; and, job creation.

With respect to the CDSC, today we are at a crossroad where we seek to establish two new territories. While Nunavut has been the subject of attention and funding support by the federal government for many years, relatively little federal intention nor support has been given to the constitutional process here in the Western Arctic. As an MLA, I'm now a participant in the constitutional process. I resolve to develop a new constitution for the Western Territory and to design a system of government that will suit all people will require foresight and careful decision-making. Those decisions will affect future generations and must be just and fair for all peoples of this Territory.

A number of people in Yellowknife have commented to me that they are not familiar with the reasons for designing a new constitution. These and many other such questions need to be answered for the

general public. It is therefore essential that work be done on public awareness so that all northerners are comfortable with the CDSC process so all northerners have an opportunity to have input.

To help this process along, it is important that the federal government acknowledge its responsibility and provide the necessary funding for this process. While the time frame must be met, in order for us to succeed, we must remember that it will be easy to be pushed by events and circumstances placed on us to make decisions that are rushed and not well thought out nor have the support of the public at large.

I, for one, will attempt to do my level best to integrate the desires of all peoples of the North; for example, the desires of the aboriginal people for self-government which I feel a number of us in my constituency have little understanding of and which must be explained if we are to succeed in our process. It must also be understood that it will be my effort to have in the end a constitution that is ratified by the general public on the basis of one person one vote and that there be a strong central public government for the whole of the Western Territory.

There are some pragmatic steps we can take immediately. For example, let's proceed with selecting a name for our territory. Our Premier has already suggested this be done in the next six months and I concur whole-heartedly. With respect to division, the creation of Nunavut and a separate government for that territory in 1999 will have significant impact on the shape and size of the present territorial government. This will likely have more impact on the city of Yellowknife than any other community in the Western Territory, and my constituents are extremely concerned about those impacts. It was originally envisioned

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that to fully establish the government of Nunavut, the new government would be phased in over a period of many years. The signals now are that there is a desire to

speed up the transfer of government operations to the new territory. It was also originally envisioned that the federal government pay for the infrastructure costs of such a new government and the incremental costs of operating two governments.

One of the issues the people of Yellowknife are particularly watching out for is how its MLAs deal with how the East/West split will affect the constituencies they represent. I would like to see a comprehensive plan prepared for division so that we can see what and where impacts will be. I would also like to have the details of that plan made available to the public as soon as possible.

With respect to the deficit, many of the issues we are facing involve money. One such issue is how do we deal with the deficit. The Premier stated yesterday that next year we will be short by over \$100 million. There are two main options to address this problem: raise taxes or reduce spending. My constituents made it clear that they do not want taxes raised in any way, shape or form. For me, the answer, therefore, comes back to reducing spending.

I would like to make reference to a Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce fax survey conducted last summer to which the Chamber received a large response. The most common comment was that the government should become more efficient in their spending practices, giving more value to the people's tax dollars. Among the expenses the survey showed its membership would like to have reduced were: travel expenses, office expenses, wages and benefits, spending on public buildings and grants to other agencies. I'm quite prepared to support the tough decisions that need to be made to eliminate the deficit, provided everyone shares the burden and that Yellowknife not be singled out. I agree that these cuts should not unreasonably threaten essential programs and services, particularly for those who need them the most. And that the very small communities in our North, where there

is absolutely no local economy, should be treated with consideration.

I am in favour of eliminating the projected deficit quickly. It is my opinion that the cuts should be done in one year simply because we don't know what federal financial cutbacks face us, or disasters face us, or what we may face down the road. My motto will be short-term pain for long-term gain. At every level of government there are people with very good ideas who feel constrained about using them. It would do our government well to obtain the papers produced by three economists from the University of Calgary who conducted research on the Alberta government cuts and how the civil servants reacted. Among the questions that absorbed the researchers was how civil servants behave when they are ordered to make cuts. Do they make more drastic cuts in areas sure to cause the most embarrassment to the government? That was one question. Do they make the cuts in such way that their own power base is affected the least?

The answers varied according to department. Some entrenched their power while others were only too eager to make changes. Nevertheless, the researchers found the civil service rife with entrepreneurial spirit and a wealth of great ideas about how to conduct government business more efficiently. That is the bottom line, after all. We need to make our civil servants understand that this government must operate more efficiently. Finally, on the issue of job creation. We must diversify the northern economy. Dan Marion, the mayor of Rae-Edzo who is now also the Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, spoke this past spring in his community and illustrated the need for economic diversification. He said, and I quote, "The reason is starkly illustrated by a single number -- 42 -- 42 is the official rate of unemployment in Rae-Edzo." That figure is representative of most of the aboriginal communities in the North. Approximately one of every two members of the workforce cannot find a job. With that kind of unemployment it is impossible to have a

vibrant economy. What we have instead are incredible social problems. We must create jobs to get people out of that social malaise.

The mainstay of our northern economy for the past 25 years has been government. The GNWT is the main economic force in the North, now to the tune of \$1.2 billion per year, funded in large part by the federal government. Shrinking federal budgets mean we can no longer rely on the Government of Canada to foot the bill for the NWT forever. We need jobs and we need revenues created from some source other than government. That means we need to diversify the northern economy and we need to do that quickly.

In the North there is only one sector that can provide large-scale jobs and dollars in a short space of time; that industry is the mineral resource industry. Mining can kick-start that diversification. Mining, operated in a responsible way, can help solve many of the North's problems. I am not advocating the development of mines at all costs. I am acutely aware of the need to ensure that mines create a minimum of environmental damage and that the industry demonstrate its willingness to give its majority of jobs and business opportunities to northerners. Also, the aspirations and desires of the aboriginal people affected must be met as much as possible. When I visited Rae-Edzo last spring, I heard many elders speak about the importance of the land and their spiritual and subsistence relationship with that land and the animals on it. The message I got was that for those people who wish to use that land, to respect that spiritual and subsistence relationship. The other message I got was best said by Dan Marion, the mayor of Rae-Edzo, and I quote again, "Young men and women who have grown up in a vastly different world from the one their parents knew have neither the desire nor, indeed, in many cases, the ability to engage in hunting, fishing and trapping full-time." In fact, many, if not most, would, frankly, prefer employment in the modern economy. I know this because I know 448 Rae-Edzo residents, 42 per cent

of our working-age population, told the labour force surveyors they wanted a job last year but couldn't find one.

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In my opinion, the benefits of proceeding with resource mineral development, done in a responsible way, far outweigh the detractions. This government has a role to play in establishing a supportive atmosphere for responsible mining development. It also has a role to play in maximizing northern jobs and benefits. The health of the North is extremely sensitive at this time. Jobs, or the lack of jobs, reflect the vibrancy or the recessionary state of the whole of the North.

There are a number of private citizens in Yellowknife who have formed a group called, "Committee for Support of BHP," with a common view to seek support for responsible mining development. They are circulating a petition in which they state, "Interest groups which do not support the project have made lengthy submissions to the panel, and in some cases have urged the panel not to approve the BHP development permit. We are writing to ask for your support in our efforts to influence the BHP environmental assessment panel to reach a favourable decision on the approval of the NWT diamonds project." I understand that, to date, they have in excess of 1,000 signatures and are seeking 10,000. They will submit their petition to the EARP panel, which is scheduled to hold final hearings at the end of January.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, there were many other issues of concern to my constituents which were raised during my election campaign and many more issues that I have been made aware of since my election. I will be working on all of these in the coming weeks and months.

At this time I would like to express my wishes for a good Christmas and new year to all my constituents and to the Members of this House, and to thank the staff of this House for this capable and excellent work they've done for us. Thank you very much.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 9, replies to opening address. Mr. Miltenberger.

Mr. Miltenberger's Reply

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I rise to speak, I'm ever mindful of the tremendous record for duration and length of replies to the opening address. I want people to rest assured that I won't be anywhere close to that today.

I would like to publicly go on record today, before we break for Christmas to indicate that I've had input as an MLA through Caucus and through the new committee structure into the contents of the Premier's statement yesterday, and that I fully support the direction being taken by this Assembly and the government and the need to address the deficit in the decisive and clear manner that is fair and equitable and keeps in mind the need to protect the communities and those who can least afford to take major cuts. I think it's important, at least to me, that I go on record to say this now because when I go home, I want to be able to say and have it known that I support this, that I was involved in this process and I will continue to state my case in this regard.

I think, as the Minister of Finance has indicated, that this is a manageable situation. If we make careful, wise decisions we can deal with this. We have to do it quickly so that it doesn't take over our agenda. But I will be out there and I will go where this Assembly asks me to go to make this case to people to justify our decisions and support this initiative.

In closing, I would just like to clarify. There were a few questions raised at break, but I did wish to extend the best season's greetings to each and every one of my constituents in Thebacha. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have several documents I would like to table this afternoon. I wish to table Tabled Document 5-13(1), Interim Financial Report of the Government of the Northwest Territories for the year ending March 31, 1995.

If I may, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to table Tabled Document 6-13(1), Public Consultation on Eliminating the Deficit, Report to the Minister of Finance, October 1995.

If I may, Mr. Speaker, as required by section 32(1)(2) of the Financial Administration Act I'm tabling the following document: Tabled Document 7-13(1), list of inter-activity transfers exceeding \$250,000 within departments for the period March 9, 1995 to December 8, 1995. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Tabled Document 8-13(1), Northwest Territories Law Foundation Thirteenth Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1995.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with Motion 14-13(1) on MLA compensation today.

MR. SPEAKER:

Could you just give me...We're on item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions: Motion 13-13(1), Serving of Alcohol at Government Sponsored Functions. Motion 13-13(1) is dropped from the orders paper. Item 16, motions. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for getting a little ahead of myself. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with Motion 14-13(1) today.

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MR. SPEAKER:

The Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Henry.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 14-13(1): Appointment Of Independent Commission On MLA Compensation, Carried

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the last comprehensive independent review of Members' and Ministers' salaries, allowances, benefits, expenses, indemnities and per diems was conducted in 1987;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is of the opinion that it is timely to undertake another comprehensive independent review;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife North, that the Legislative Assembly hereby appoints Mr. Joel Fournier, Ms. Anne Crawford and the Hon. Jim Bourque as the Commissioner on MLA Compensation to review and inquire into the salaries, indemnities, allowances and benefits of Members, Ministers and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly;

AND FURTHER, that the commission shall:

1. Establish principles relating to remuneration for Members, Ministers and the Speaker, which take into consideration the diverse geographic and economic factors which may impact on MLAs' ability to carry out their duties;
2. Conduct a review of the existing salaries, indemnities, benefits and allowances to determine the appropriateness of the amounts provided;
3. Conduct a review of the legislated pension benefits provided to MLAs and make appropriate recommendations concerning the level of benefit;
4. Evaluate the relative pros and cons of a straight salary versus a combination of salary and extra indemnities for MLAs and make appropriate recommendations;
5. Review and recommend the procedures Members shall follow to account for allowances, disbursements and other

payments;

6. Develop a statement of purpose for the constituency work expense allowances including recommending permissible spending criteria, and to express an opinion on the adequacy of the current levels of these allowances;

7. Recommend the manner for adjusting from time to time Members', Ministers and Speaker's salaries, indemnities, allowances and benefits and other payments;

8. Review and recommend a compensation system that is simple, straightforward, easily understandable, fair and accountable; and,

9. Review any other matter that the commission considers relevant respecting allowances, disbursements and other payments.

AND FURTHERMORE, in conducting its review, the commission shall take into consideration the diversity of the constituents across the Northwest Territories;

AND FURTHERMORE, the commission shall seek public input as an integral and essential part of the review process;

AND FURTHERMORE, the commission shall report with its observations and recommendations to the Speaker by March 1, 1996, and the Speaker shall cause the report to be tabled in the Assembly without delay if the Assembly is in session, and, if the Assembly is not in session, within five days after the beginning of the session.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Henry. 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 unanimously.

---Carried

---Applause

Item 16, motions. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous

consent to deal with Motion 16-13(1), Appointment of Deputy Chairpersons of Committee of the Whole.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Member for Thebacha is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Miltenberger.

Motion 16-13(1): Appointment Of Deputy Chairpersons Of Committee Of The Whole

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS there is a requirement for the naming of two Members to hold the positions of deputy chairpersons of Committee of the Whole;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to appoint two Members;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Natilikmiot, that the honourable Member for Hay River, Mrs. Jane Groenewegen, and the honourable Member

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for Nunakput, Mr. Vince Steen, be appointed as deputy chairpersons of the Committee of the Whole.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. 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. All those abstaining. The motion is carried unanimously.

---Carried

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 16, motions. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with Motion 15-13(1) on support for the western NWT constitutional development process today.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Mackenzie Delta is seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Do we have any

nays? There are no nays. Proceed then, Mr. Krutko.

Motion 15-13(1): Support For Western NWT Constitutional Development Process

MR. KRUTKO:

WHEREAS the Constitutional Development Steering Committee (CDSC) was formed to design, implement and guide the process of developing a constitution and structure of government for the new western territory, which will be created upon division of the NWT on April 1, 1999;

AND WHEREAS it is imperative that the western constitutional process continue in order to ensure the development, ratification and implementation of appropriate structures of government for the western territory by April 1, 1999;

AND WHEREAS on April 27, 1995, the 12th Legislative Assembly endorsed the 12 draft principles to be used as the basis to guide the western constitutional process;

AND WHEREAS this continues to be an urgent matter of major political significance in the western NWT;

AND WHEREAS the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Hon. Ron Irwin, has indicated that he has postponed his decision to provide support until the 13th Legislative Assembly has considered its approach to gaining public support for changes to the structure of government for the new western territory;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Iqaluit, that the Legislative Assembly strongly endorses and supports the continuation of the CDSC process to ensure ongoing public consultation and discussion and progress on the development, ratification and implementation of a proposal for a constitution and structure of government for the new western territory;

AND FURTHERMORE that this Assembly recommends that the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories continue to provide an appropriate level of funding to the CDSC to conclude the western constitutional process. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. 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? Let the record show that the vote was unanimous.

---Carried

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, with Mr. Ningark in the Chair.

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

Bill 1: An Act To Amend The Borrowing Authorization Act

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The Committee of the Whole will come back to order. By the way, Bill 1 is in your green binder down there somewhere if you can find it. It is in the legislation binder. We are dealing with Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act. I would like at this point to ask if the Minister of Finance has any opening remarks.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no additional remarks to make other than what I said to the committee and to the honourable Members over the period of last week. At this time, I would suggest seeing if there are any remarks or questions that Members may want to ask. If not, I would be prepared to proceed line by line.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Do we agree then that we will proceed line by line? Do any of the Members have any general comments to Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act? Is there any comment from the Members of the full Caucus? Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to get a copy of the manual.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

There is a green binder. You don't have one? A copy will be provided to you. We will stall until the Member gets his copy. Do we have any general comments? Do we then agree that we will go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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---Agreed

Clause By Clause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Open the page to **Page 1**. Clause 1.

Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 2. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Does the committee agree that Bill 1 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Bill 1 is now ready for third reading. Okay.

If there is nothing else on item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, I will now rise and report to the Speaker. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. We're on item 20, report of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, and would like to report progress and that Bill 1 is ready for third reading. And,

Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Do we have a seconder? Mr. Picco. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

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

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek consent to give third reading to Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Keewatin Central is seeking unanimous consent to give third reading to Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Todd.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 1: An Act To Amend The Borrowing Authorization Act

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, be read for the third time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 1 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. Prior to asking Her Honour, the Commissioner, to enter the Chamber, I would like to say a few words.

Speaker's Closing Remarks

We have all come through a very busy time with the general election, orientation,

territorial leadership, selection of a new capital for Nunavut and the development of our common agenda. It will be nice to go home to our families and friends. I would also like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation and I'm sure all of yours for the never-ending and tireless assistance that has been provided by the Clerk and his staff during our orientation and the first sitting of this Legislature.

---Applause

I think it was one of the staff who drafted this.

As we leave today, I wish each and everyone of you a safe journey home, and may the joy and spirit of the Christmas season be with you and your family. I hope that 1996 will bring peace and understanding to all our people. God bless. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain if Her Honour, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to bills and prorogue this session.

Assent To Bills

COMMISSIONER MAKSAGAK:

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, it gives me pleasure to assent to the following bill: Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act.

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Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, prior to proroguing this session as Commissioner, I wish to announce that the Second Session of the 13th Assembly will convene on Wednesday, February 14, 1996 at 1:30 p.m.

I would also like at this time to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I hereby prorogue the First Session of the 13th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

---PROROGATION

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 1995

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MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

--- Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Mr. Arngna'naaq. Good afternoon. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Morin.

Minister's Statement 91-12(7): Norman Wells Fire

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with a great deal of pleasure and relief that I am able to report to you today that the Norman Wells fire is controlled on the front toward the community of Norman Wells. The fire centre will be recommending to the emergency measures organization that they can begin plans to return people back to their homes.

Six crews with support from three helicopters, three caterpillars and various other equipment are in the process of completing what they refer to as a "cat line" which is built along the edge of the fire to ensure the fire will not cross into unburned forest if it flares up again. Because of the dry conditions and the low water table, it is likely the fire will continue to smoulder for a long time. My staff will continue to monitor the fire area for the rest of the summer, but after the edges are fully secured there will be no further action on the fire.

Again, I want to express my appreciation to all of the people involved in various ways in responding to the fire situation including community leaders, residents who were evacuated, fire crews, managers and supervisors, and all the people who stayed behind in

the community to carry out essential services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mrs. Thompson.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Requirement In Repulse Bay For Vehicle To Transport Patients

MRS. THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The health centre in Repulse Bay is in need of a vehicle to transport patients. Currently, residents of the community have to rely on the hamlet community service trucks to transport them when they are seriously ill. Often, people are reluctant to call the service men in the middle of the night knowing that they have to work in the morning. A lot of times, seriously ill people are forced to travel by skidoo or four-wheeler and, in some cases, even by sled.

I am told that in the wintertime, patients who cannot walk to the health centre or airport are wrapped in sleeping bags and transported on stretchers in the back of pick-up trucks or on komatiks, with IVs attached to them. This is obviously not a safe way to move sick or injured individuals.

Mr. Speaker, the health centre was built with an attached garage so there is already a facility in place to house a vehicle. The local nurse would be responsible for the automobile to ensure that it is only used for medical purposes. I would urge the Department of Health and Social Services to act quickly so that the health and well-being of the residents of Repulse Bay is no longer placed at risk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Thompson. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

Member's Statement On Appreciation For Assistance In Fighting Sahtu Forest Fires

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to put on record my appreciation to the people of Yellowknife for the way in which they, on such short notice, took action to receive and make as comfortable as possible the people who were evacuated from Norman Wells last week, and the tremendous support that has come forward from the Mayor Dave Lovell and his counsellors. The way in which the entire operation was carried out is something to be very proud of. On behalf of the people of Norman Wells, I want to thank, again, the people of Yellowknife, the mayor and his council.

The people of Fort Norman have also expressed over and over again, their deep appreciation and gratefulness that they feel towards the people of Norman Wells for the support and the way in which they were also received by that community once the community of Fort Norman was evacuated. The community of Norman Wells; I want to put on the record, the impression that I had in spending three days with them last week, how well organized they were, how committed they were to the work they were doing, and my own observations were that although people were put under such pressure and stress for such a long period of time, they carried out their work so well, in spite of the difficulties that they encountered.

Max Melnyk, the mayor of Norman Wells, the council and the emergency measures organization there took care of Fort Norman and then themselves, in turn. I should also mention.

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the chief of Deline, John Tetso, who was called literally on one-hour notice to receive over 370 people from Fort Norman. And who, in six hours, was able to receive that many people and house them.

Mr. Speaker, I request consent to complete my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Sahtu is requesting consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Conclude your statement, Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and honourable Members. The people of Deline have also opened up their homes in their community to receive their friends and relatives. There have been literally no complaints or concerns that have come out of that community since they arrived in Deline, and it's all to the credit of the chief and council of Deline and the residents of that community.

I think something has to be said about the cooperation, effort and extra work put in by the RCMP in the Sahtu communities, and the excellent working relationship they had with each of the communities that I have mentioned: the nurses, the social workers, the extra people who were brought in by Health and Social Services. All have provided a great deal of support and help to those communities. They pitched in and did more than their share of work in Norman Wells, in Deline and Fort Norman, and, of course, here in Yellowknife.

It is not exactly over, but I have counselled all the people I've talked with that, surely as in any operation, there were a few hiccoughs. The emergency measures operations in Norman Wells, Fort Norman and here in Yellowknife may have suffered a few mishaps. Now is not the time to air those. There will be a full accounting, I am sure, of the operations that were carried out, and people will have ample opportunity to question the manner in which these operations were carried out. At this time, we must continue to support those people who were put in charge of these operations: Renewable Resources, throughout this operation; for myself, keeping in close touch with the operators and the superintendent in Norman Wells; the deputy minister of Renewable Resources; the Honourable Don Morin, who has provided excellent information and support has been a great comfort to myself; and, to many of the people who have asked for information. I'm sure we've assured the people in the Sahtu that the many questions they have about the conduct of the department, the policies that this government follows in firefighting, that there will be a day and a time to explain and to have questions aired in a proper manner. For that, there is confidence that people will see that things were done in the best interests of the people. Thank you, very much.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Deh Cho Women's First Nations Gathering

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, Members of this House. On Friday, June 9th, I was honoured to have been invited to address the Deh Cho women's First Nations gathering in Fort

Simpson which was held from June 9th to June 11th. The Deh Cho women addressed the serious undermining of the aboriginal people today with their eyes open and a determination to deal with our needs, having particular emphasis on youth and elders. Many symptoms were identified and addressed.

Certainly, these have been pointed out here, as in other forums. However, the Deh Cho women's First Nations gathering addressed many solutions within the power of the aboriginal community today. Much of the power to regain pride, to reinvigorate our elders and to calm our children comes from within ourselves and a reinstatement of our own beliefs in our culture and teachings. Men and women play an equal role in these issues, not to compete with each other, but to complement our collective strength and shore up one another's weaknesses. The members of the aboriginal community are the only ones who can participate in redefining itself. The role of government is to support this process, by helping communities incorporate their needs into viable planning and ensuring the protection of aboriginal rights in the future.

I would like to congratulate the efforts of the Deh Cho women's First Nations gathering and hereby will be tabling the resolutions passed during their deliberations at the appropriate time. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Water Safety

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I, too would like to add my support to what Mr. Alloo had to say yesterday about water safety. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Department of Transportation and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs for their upcoming public service announcement campaign on water safety.

I had the opportunity to participate in that in a small way, by reading a few lines that say: "Everybody enjoys the lakes and rivers in the north. Some people fish, others swim and many travel the waters by boat and by canoe. Lots of people don't wear their lifejackets and they risk their lives every day they go out on the water. Your family needs you, we need you, so please, make sure you always wear your life jacket." Now, that's the message that a number of us and, certainly, the departments are trying to get out. However, each year we still lose two or three people to water accidents, not to mention those who manage to escape by sheer luck. These need not happen, Mr. Speaker, if we observe a few simple rules:

- 1) Make sure you're familiar with water safety procedure;
- 2) Water and alcohol don't mix; and,
- 3) You always wear your lifejacket and insist that all of your family and guests on your boat wear lifejackets.

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A message that some of my colleagues in a different profession said I should mention is that you may look very macho to your friends and family but, to the RCMP and the coroners who are recovering you, you all look the same: you look dead. If you don't want that to happen, wear your lifejacket.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Third Reading Of Federal Firearms Legislation

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer some comments and opinions about Bill C-68, the gun control legislation. There have been a lot of eloquent statements made by my colleagues in this House about the events and negotiations leading up to the gun control legislation, which was passed yesterday. I was very dismayed and appalled that Bill C-68 did get passed by the House of Commons yesterday. I believe the amendments to the bill do not go far enough in terms of dealing with the issues raised by people in the north.

Of special concern are issues raised by aboriginal people with respect to their rights to hunt, trap and fish and to use firearms for their livelihood. The other areas are outlined in some of the claim agreements and have to do with the levying of fees for registering and getting certificates and licenses. The two agreements I'm familiar with -- the Inuvialuit final agreement and the Gwich'in settlement agreement -- have statements in them that protect the rights of these people. They should not have to pay for permits, licenses or other authorizations. The gun control bill comes under that.

Also, in terms of the consultation process, the latest committee that went around went to Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson. The response the committee received there was very similar to what they heard across the territories: our people were very upset at the short notice and the type of consultation they came to do. I believe the bill has now gone up to the Senate, and we should continue our lobbying efforts as hard as possible. Mahsi.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Further Gun Control

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am not surprised but distressed by the passage of Bill C-68 which was given third reading in the House of Commons yesterday.

I would like to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker -- I commented on the feeble amendments that were introduced yesterday -- to announce the formation of the new Nunatsiak Coalition against further gun controls. This organization, Mr. Speaker, has sprung

into existence out of the strong and deeply-felt concern against this new federal gun control law. The objects of this new organization are to oppose further gun controls which say are intrusive, unfair and unreasonable to the legitimate aspirations of law-abiding, responsible firearms owners and users. The coalition is working very hard to demand accountability of their elected representatives.

Although newly organized, they have sought support and received extensive support for a petition which has been circulated through the good offices of hunters' and trappers' organizations from Kitikmeot to Keewatin and Baffin. The petition, which I'll table later today, has 1,000 names on it and is growing by the day. The coalition represents aboriginal and non-aboriginal hunters and firearms owners in Nunatsiak. It is strong and determined.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the MP for the Western Arctic today in a radio interview stated that there may be a silent majority in her riding who support the new gun control bill. I feel very confident in saying, and I know the Nunatsiak coalition against further gun controls proves, that is certainly not the case in Nunatsiak riding. This remains a very serious issue, and the last won't be heard of it from the passage of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Lewis.

Member's Statement On Study Of Sports In The Northwest Territories

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I see that the government is conducting a study on this subject or that subject, then I first of all ask myself what the purpose of the study is.

I know that there is an individual who is trying to gauge how important sport is to the people of the Northwest Territories. He has talked to several Members today. A study on sport, whenever you see it come out of the blue like this, makes you think that here is one more thing, maybe, that's being examined as a frill. Maybe we could save some money if we don't do this or we can cut it back.

I would like to say something about that, Mr. Speaker, publicly, because all my life, and as I get older, I have

become even more convinced that one of the ways in which young people grow is to really become involved in some kind of physical activity, whether an individual sport or a team sport, because in the long run, your society is going to depend on the health, the fitness and the vigour of your young people. Member's Statement On Nunatsiaq Coalition Against I see the huge changes that have taken place in the Northwest Territories, from camp life where people were very active and engaged and busy all the time, to urban life where there are different challenges. When you see young people getting involved in vigorous activity, you realize that this is one way in which young people develop, learn all the values of cooperation, competition and associating with people, achieving goals and objectives that you set for yourselves; sport has always done that. At every school I have ever worked over a long career, Mr. Speaker, I found that it went together. You could get kids up at six o'clock in the morning to go to train or practice for some important events. You

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couldn't get them out for an early math class but you could certainly get them out for something like that.

I would be very disappointed if this government sees the opportunity to save a few dollars by taking away something which is very valuable for young people in the development of their personalities and their lifestyles. I would hate to see us drawing support from it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Improvements Required To Lake Harbour Airstrip

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this House, we have heard a lot in the past few years about the subject I am going to be talking about. I want to bring this up again while I am still a Member of this Assembly.

There is a very short airstrip in my constituency. It's in between hills and mountains. As we all know, Mr. Speaker, we are aware that there was going to be an improvement there in 1987 when we still had the BRC

in the region at the time. There was going to be an improvement made to that airstrip.

I think this is very important to the safety of the community and to the aircraft that travel to and from the community. We are all aware that there has been no major mishap, but when the winds blowing from the south, you have to go straight towards a hilly area to take off and to land.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind this government that they owe these small communities and my community of Lake Harbour for improvement of airstrips and to remind the Minister of Transportation that they have to service all of the communities, even if they are small and poor, to prevent mishaps or accidents in the future.

There have been funding cuts. We all know that, but I think that we owe our people good facilities so that they'll be safer and so we don't have to spend further money in the future. I just wanted to remind the Members that this is still a concern in my constituency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Ballantyne.

Member's Statement On Need For Yellowknife To Embrace Impending Changes

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Northwest Territories as we know it is changing quickly. Yellowknife, as the capital city, must embrace those changes. I have been in politics for 17 years and there have been tremendous changes here in Yellowknife. The infrastructure that is in place now, the opportunities that are in place now in Yellowknife are so much greater than they were 17 years ago.

A lot of people who have worked very hard in building Yellowknife deserve a lot of credit for the effort that has gone into it. Today we have a city that we can be very proud of and a city that has no equal for its size anywhere in the country.

I hear criticisms from some people in Yellowknife. Some don't think they are well looked after. They don't think that they have everything that they want. But the reality is, Mr. Speaker, most of those criticisms come from people who have just come to Yellowknife in recent years. Those who have been here a long time recognize the support that

Yellowknife has had from the Legislative Assembly and from successive governments in order to build that infrastructure. Yellowknife has done very well by this Legislative Assembly over the years. I just wanted to put that on the public record.

The face of Yellowknife is changing rapidly. I would say that close to 25 per cent of the population today is aboriginal, and probably by the year 2000 closer to 50 per cent of the Yellowknife population will be aboriginal. Young people tend to gravitate towards larger centres, so I see the political dynamics in the western Arctic changing significantly over the next five to 10 years, where aboriginal people will start to embrace Yellowknife as their city.

As I said, over the years, Yellowknife MLAs, with the support of this Assembly, have been able to bring a lot of infrastructure into Yellowknife, have been able to protect jobs in Yellowknife; but times are changing, Mr. Speaker. Division, the impending federal government cutbacks and the stronger regions in the western Arctic will bring sweeping changes to the structure and size of government across the territories, especially here in Yellowknife.

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

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. BALLANTYNE:

I think it's incumbent upon me as an MLA to say to the people of Yellowknife that things will change. The Yellowknife that we know is going to be changing rapidly, and we have to start preparing for that change. To try to put our head in the sand and say somehow the status quo will be maintained I think is misleading and dishonest to our constituents.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I think the western Arctic and Yellowknife have a tremendous future. We have everything going for us. There are only 40,000 people with vast resources. I think we have a very skilled population. Though we argue amongst ourselves, at the end of the day I'm convinced we'll come together and we're going to make it work.

In the future, I think Yellowknife has to draw upon its strengths. As I said before, it has unmatched

infrastructure here in the territories. It has a trained workforce. It has a critical mass of population whereby you can have investment opportunity, whereby you can bring in the larger opportunities from southern Canada, where you can bring in the banking and financial institutions. So I think it's very important for the western Arctic to have a Yellowknife. It's also very important for Yellowknife to recognize that without the support and the interaction with the rest of the western Arctic, Yellowknife can't thrive.

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I think that Yellowknife has to get back to its roots. It started off as a very important mining centre, and I see the potential in mining as tremendous. I'm happy to see this mayor and city council are trying to take advantage of that, and are out there pursuing opportunities in mining.

I also see Yellowknife having to really improve their relationship with regions. All too often, Yellowknife has sat in splendid isolation. We, in this House, have heard many times some of the frustration by people across the territories. I think it's time for Yellowknife -- and the mayor and council are starting on this-- to embrace the regions. I think that Yellowknife in partnership with the regions strengthens everybody.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that at the end of the day if there is proper planning, if there is leadership, creativity and goodwill, I think the people of Yellowknife can move towards 2000 with a lot of confidence and a lot of energy. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

--- Interruption in Proceedings

Would the Sergeant-at-Arms request that the gentleman leave.

--- Interruption in Proceedings

--- SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. We're still on item 3, Members' statements. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Member's Statement On Concerns With
Implementation Of Bill 32

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate my honourable colleague for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent, on what I expect to be the imminent passage of Bill 32.

--- Applause

As you know from your own experience as a Member, Mr. Speaker, it's not always easy to bring forward a private Member's bill and I applaud Mr. Dent's effort and conviction in doing so.

At the same time, though, Mr. Speaker, I remain troubled as I see this bill go on to third reading.

Mr. Speaker, I will always support any endeavour which serves to preserve and enhance the integrity of this House. In retrospect, I believe that Bill 32 will do that. But I remain very concerned about a loophole that exists with regard to Members who may receive a conditional discharge, and I am certain that the legal profession will make every effort to capitalize on it.

I am also concerned, as I stated during standing committee hearings and again during debate in this House, that Mr. Dent's initiative does not go far enough. I believe that there is a far broader range of offences, including bootlegging, impaired driving, illegal possession of drugs, fraud and others that should have been included. I believe that any Member found guilty of these should not be allowed to sit in this House.

I have already stated my concerns over the potential interpretation of threatened violence or attempted assault, and I wonder what our constituents must think when we become so buried in legal definitions and case law that we're not even sure whether our laws reflect what we mean.

But, Mr. Speaker, what troubles me most about seeing Bill 32 passed through this Legislature is that just one more signal of a disturbing trend in Canada; a trend that is pushing all difficult decisions into the courts to decide.

Mr. Speaker, while I applaud Mr. Dent's efforts, this bill runs contrary to the basic belief that I have in our democratic system. It is my belief that it should be up to the people who decide when an elected representative is to be removed, not an outcome of a

sentencing hearing in a court. Decisions to expel a Member should occur through an election or when other elected Members choose to exercise the rules of the House.

I am troubled by the increasing Canadian trend of pushing almost every decision into the courts through Charter challenges, constitutional interpretations and so forth. We will take a 10-minute break, please. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to continue.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

I am troubled when I see basic common-sense decisions -- like the decision to expel an elected representative who sexually exploits children or assaults another person -- are now being codified in the written laws of our land. Mr. Speaker, the power to exercise those common-sense decisions should be left in the hands of the people who elected us, not the courts. That's especially true here in the north where, for centuries, our elders and leaders did not have to rely on written law. They don't need to have some university-trained judge to tell them what is morally or right to do. Mr. Speaker, those decisions should be with the people who elected us.

Mr. Speaker, I find it absolutely regrettable that Cabinet should vote as a block to defeat the principle of recall, which would have reinforced the people's power to remove a Member. If we had embraced that concept, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that Bill 32 would have been necessary. Choices about the potential expulsion of MLAs would have remained where they should be, with the voters of the Northwest Territories. I want to put on the record that I will be voting in favour of Bill 32 at third reading, Mr. Speaker. Because, as I said, I believe that when all things are said and done, it is a good bill. But, I will be voting with a feeling of concern in my heart and I hope all Members will take at least a moment to ponder the direction

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in which we are moving, as we enact this legislation. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Marie-Jewell. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

(Microphones turned off)

---Laughter

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Dent.

Question 599-12(7): Call For Proposals For Photocopy Services

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Public Works and Services. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, I asked the Minister a question about a call for proposals for copying services that had been undertaken by the Housing Corporation, and I would like to thank the Minister for having responded by letter to me with some details on that call for proposals so quickly. One question is still outstanding and that is, does this call for proposals represent a change in government policy where large-volume copying will now be contracted out?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 599-12(7): Call For Proposals For Photocopy Services

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is no change in the policy regarding the use of office photocopiers and none is planned in the near future. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mrs. Thompson.

Question 600-12(7): Departmental Policy On Transportation Of Patients

MRS. THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today in my Member's statement, I referred to the serious problem experienced by sick people in Repulse Bay who need safe transportation to the health centre or to the airport. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Is it an approved practice of your department to transport seriously-ill patients on sleds or in the back of pick-up trucks?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question 600-12(7): Departmental Policy On Transportation Of Patients

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the matter of the community health centre vehicles in Repulse Bay, the health centre has two skidoos and one all-terrain vehicle and the health centre has two community health nurses. The health board indicates that the number of vehicles is sufficient. The other back-up that the health centre has is that the nurse on call is allowed to take the vehicle home for government business and return to the health centre to see a patient.

Mr. Speaker, the position of the Keewatin Regional Health Board is that it supports local enterprises, such as taxi services. Under the medical travel policy and the non-injured health benefits agreement, ground transport does not pay for travel within the community to go to the airport. The board has indicated to me that it has made its policy positively clear and they are abiding by their general policy where, when a closed in vehicle is required, they support the use of local taxi services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mrs. Thompson.

Supplementary To Question 600-12(7): Departmental Policy On Transportation Of Patients

MRS. THOMPSON:

I don't think the Minister of Health and Social Services knows that there are no taxis in Repulse Bay. I guess my question is, will the Minister undertake to make sure that a solution can be found so that the nursing

station can have access to a van or have a van to transport patients who are seriously ill, so they don't have to depend on a four wheeler or a skidoo to transport them back and forth or on pick-up trucks that are available in the community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 600-12(7): Departmental Policy On Transportation Of Patients

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the Member, I have received information from the Keewatin Regional Health Board that has apprised me of the measures they've taken. They also indicated the concern they have is although there are vehicles available that they can contract out, it may work for awhile, but then the businesses are no longer there. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, I believe as circumstances change, we have to address the issue. Yes, I will continue to work with the Keewatin health board to see that patients, particularly if they are seriously ill, are comfortable in their transportation from the health centre and in their transportation out of the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 601-12(7): Status Of Northern Accord Negotiations

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. Currently, I believe negotiations are continuing on the development of a northern accord for the Northwest Territories. I would like to ask the Minister, what is the current status of these negotiations?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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Return To Question 601-12(7): Status Of Northern Accord Negotiations

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These are fluid negotiations. It is my understanding, in talking to Mr. Bailey who is leading the discussions on behalf of this government, that everybody is currently still at the table and is working aggressively to go through the draft accord in an effort to see if an arrangement can be made with all the groups so we can meet the June 30th deadline. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 601-12(7): Status Of Northern Accord Negotiations

MR. KOE:

There have been many comments, made not only in this House but by various people who are presently negotiating, about some of the issues that are impeding progress. Can the Minister outline to us some of the issues that are impeding progress at this time?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 601-12(7): Status Of Northern Accord Negotiations

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The major issue that appeared -- or maybe currently is; why knows? As I said, these negotiations are under way, so I don't want to make any comments that would jeopardize a satisfactory arrangement -- to be a bit of a stumbling block in the discussions was the definition of the inherent right to self-government, et cetera. Indicated to the group who were negotiating that this responsibility lay with Mr. Kakfwi and Mr. Kakfwi, I believe, has dealt with that -- at least to the satisfaction of this government -- in an orderly and expeditious way.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 601-12(7): Status Of Northern Accord Negotiations

MR. KOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On June 2nd and 5th of this year, Minister Kakfwi did write letters to the aboriginal leaders about this government's position on inherent right to self-government. These letters were subsequently circulated to Members of this Assembly. What is this government's position in the current negotiations on the inherent right to self-government with respect to the collection of revenues from oil, gas and minerals within the respective claimant areas?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

It seems to me that that question should perhaps be addressed to Mr. Kakfwi. Otherwise, I would have to take it as notice, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. The question was taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Koe.

Question 602-12(7): Position Of Aboriginal Leaders On GNWT Position On Self-Government

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs. On June 2nd and June 5th, he wrote letters to the aboriginal leaders stating this government's position on inherent self-government. Subsequently, copies of these letters were sent or distributed to Members of this Assembly. Have the aboriginal leaders indicated their positions in response to these letters which you sent?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 602-12(7): Position Of Aboriginal Leaders On GNWT Position On Self-Government

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The matter which is being questioned is supposedly under negotiation. I have great reluctance to try to word anything off the cuff because the precision of the wording, the choice of words we use to communicate our position, has been

a matter of great debate between lawyers. You could almost make a career out of arguing about what phrases and terminology you should use in this communication. The fact is I was asked to provide some comfort to aboriginal groups with regard to our position on the inherent right, respond to whether or not this government should be a third party in self-government negotiations and provide some other comments. I have done that. They asked for a letter, so I worked with my officials to draft a letter I thought would provide comfort. The response was varied. I provided a second draft yesterday to the groups to ask if this provided any additional comfort and only one group thought there may be interest in receiving such a letter. However, for the most part, they were either indifferent or dismissive of such a letter. So I have not closed the door on it, but I am not inclined at this time to provide a letter to them since it seems to bring no general comfort to them at all. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 602-12(7): Position Of Aboriginal Leaders On GNWT Position On Self-Government

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The issue of inherent right to self-government is not new and has been underriding various negotiations, not only in claims, but treaty negotiations and other negotiations across Canada. What consultation has been happening to promote this government's position on the inherent right of self-government?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 602-12(7): Position Of Aboriginal Leaders On GNWT Position On Self-Government

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, this government has, since the early 1980s, taken the position that aboriginal people have the right to self-government. In the last eight years, we have taken the position that this government recognizes the inherent right of aboriginal people to govern themselves. We

took that position in the negotiations leading up to the Charlottetown accord.

In the last two years since the election of the Liberal government and their promise in the red book that they will recognize the inherent right, we have all been waiting, rather impatiently, for the delivery of a policy; the federal position on what "inherent right" means and what they are prepared to negotiate. Having said that, it is our government's initiative to start circulating a draft protocol and mandate that spells out what our initial thoughts are with regard to self-government, and Cabinet has approved a draft paper for discussion purposes. We have sought to consult with aboriginal groups to get their initial thinking on it. Some provided a very detailed response to the paper and others were perhaps not dismissive, but deferred comment until the federal government came forward with their own paper. So we have tried to complete consultations and are presently formulating a response to the paper based on what we got back. We will be making suggestions or recommendations to Cabinet in the next few weeks. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 602-12(7): Position Of Aboriginal Leaders On GNWT Position On Self-Government

MR. KOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the contentious areas is the position of the Northwest Territories when it comes down to the actual negotiations, and the various groups are active in various stages of negotiating self-government arrangements with the federal government. During the landclaims discussions, this government was a member of the federal government team. I would like some clarification on what this government's position is as it pertains to the self-government negotiations. Is this government a member of the federal team or are they a full participant in the negotiations?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 602-12(7): Position Of Aboriginal Leaders On GNWT Position On Self-Government

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I have had this discussion with the aboriginal groups. It is the position of this government that we must be a separate party from the federal government on self-government negotiations. At this time, that is our position. We feel that we are presently funded and mandated to deliver programs and services and the public would expect and demand that the quality of service that we deliver must be protected in the course of negotiations. So we must have a direct hand in those areas in the course of negotiations that affect our present responsibilities; jurisdiction, you might say. I have advised the aboriginal groups and, as far as I know, no one has denied them their supposed bilateral relations with the federal government. For those subject matters that are exclusive to them, there is no argument from us and we feel they should have bilateral discussions. But for those areas that affect programs and services and responsibilities currently under the territorial government, we must be there. We believe the aboriginal people in the communities will understand, support and respect that position

If it is the unanimous view of all the aboriginal groups that, in fact, they want us to be part of the federal government or not in the room at all, I would be prepared to accept that and bring it to Cabinet, as well, for their consideration. But, in my view, it would not lead to expedient negotiations and it would impede any type of progress since the mechanism of negotiations would change dramatically. There will be, in any case, consultation between the federal government and ourselves and it would slow down what, otherwise, could be very dynamic and progressive negotiations. Thank you.

Supplementary To Question 602-12(7): Position Of Aboriginal Leaders On GNWT Position On Self-Government

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The negotiations are currently under way on the northern accord, so I would like to ask the Minister, what is this government's position in the current northern accord discussions on the inherent right to self-government, with respect to the collection of revenues from oil, gas and minerals within the respective claimant areas?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I think the question is the same one that was taken as notice by Mr. Todd just a little earlier, so I will take the question as notice as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

I would like to advise the Minister that the question is quite legitimate. There are two Ministers who are responsible for the question that has been asked. Mr. Todd doesn't know the answer, so he has taken the question as notice but still, as the Minister for Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, you also have that responsibility. Mr. Kakfwi do you wish to respond, or take the question as notice?

--- Applause

Further Return To Question 602-12(7): Position Of Aboriginal Leaders On GNWT Position On Self-Government

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, what the aboriginal groups want to do is to start defining the inherent right, using the mechanism of the northern accord. That is where we raise our objections. We feel that the inherent right is more properly addressed through negotiations with the federal government and ourselves in self-government negotiations. We can, at this time, make some broad statements about the inherent right, but the specific elements of what may be within the scope of the inherent right are better left to negotiations.

That is because there is some difficulty with being specific and predetermining negotiations through forums like this Legislature. Having said that, this government has been prepared, for instance, to recognize that legislative and administrative capacity over aspects of oil, gas and other natural resources must, from our perspective, be determined to fall within the scope of the inherent right. What that means and the details of that, again, should be subject to negotiations. It is not for us to unilaterally dictate our positions because, for as well. one, in the event that a court case should be taken, the position of this Cabinet may be used and at that time, it may

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not be of comfort to the aboriginal groups, who are seeking some clarification and specifics from this government. Further Return To Question 603-12(7): Status Of BIP The Deh Cho, for instance, have said

that any statement we've come up with so far -- the first one, plus the draft that I've given them -- takes away from the inherent right; therefore, they don't want any statement from us at this time. The Sahtu is, as far as I understand it, the only one still interested in such a statement. There, again, we have a draft which I was prepared to give them but, because of the rejection by most of the groups, we're considering what to do with the draft we have placed before them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 603-12(7): Status Of BIP Review

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Public Works and Services. I was wondering if the Minister could advise the House about the current status of the business incentive policy review.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Morin. Further Return To Question 603-12(7): Status Of BIP Return To Question 603-12(7): Status Of BIP Review

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The BIP review is on the Cabinet agenda. It is one of 45 items that we have yet to deal with. As soon as it gets through Cabinet, I can go to public consultation with it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 603-12(7): Status Of BIP Review

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, supplementary. I'm glad to hear that it's on the agenda. The Minister, on April 10th, had indicated that he would do his very best to have the new BIP tabled in this House before we prorogued. Does the Minister expect that he will, in fact, be able to do that?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 603-12(7): Status Of BIP Review

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As soon as I get it through Cabinet, I will table it in the House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 603-12(7): Status Of BIP Review

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister didn't answer whether, in fact, he would be able to table it in this House before we prorogued. That's the specific question: will he be able to table it in this House before we prorogue?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

--- Laughter

Review

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm optimistic that I'll be able to get it by Cabinet and get it into the House. Thank you.

--- Laughter

MR. SPEAKER:

Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 603-12(7): Status Of BIP Review

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to hear that the Minister is optimistic. I wonder if he could advise the House, will the BIP, as it is tabled, be a final document, or will this be a document that the public will again be invited to comment on before it is actually implemented?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Review

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This document will get Cabinet approval, will be tabled in the House, and then will go out for more public consultation before the final document is complete. We will go once more to the business community and community leaders to get their input into this document. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 604-12(7): Review Of Request For Proposals For Air Tanker Contract

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance a question. Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Minister of Finance whether or not he received a request for a review of the request for proposals for the land-based tender that went out this past winter, and the Minister of Finance indicated that he will be making a decision on that this week. So I would like to ask him whether his department has decided to do a review on the tender process with respect to the request for proposals for the air tanker base contract. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 604-12(7): Review Of Request For Proposals For Air Tanker Contract

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, yes, we will be doing a review, it will be done by government accounting. Mr. Voytilla is writing a letter and a copy will go to Mrs. Marie-Jewell. We are confirming to the parties in Fort Smith that requested the review that there will, in fact, be a review done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 605-12(7): Funding For Deh Cho Economic Conference

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, I spoke in the House with regard to a real need for an economic conference in my constituency and in the region. I say this because there are a lot of different opportunities that exist out there, and each community has their own plan. There's potential in the area for very positive growth in the economic field. I've asked the Minister, in the past, for funding. The Deh Cho First Nations had requested the Minister for funding for such a conference. I would like to ask the Minister if his department has done any work in trying to secure some funding for holding such an economic conference in the Deh Cho region. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 605-12(7): Funding For Deh Cho Economic Conference

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I recently returned from a tour of Mr. Antoine's riding last weekend. I may say publicly, I think there's clearly a recognition by all the players -- certainly in the communities, the private sector and, of course, the First Nations group -- that there has to be a bit of a blueprint and some political direction given as to where that area wants to go economically; whether it's in tourism, in logging, or mineral exploration et cetera.

The department is working with the First Nations group in an effort to identify some of the funding that we would be able to provide, along with trying to identify other funding from other agencies. I'm confident that the funding will be found on our side, and I'm sure that when the other groups come into play, we'll be able to move reasonably quickly in putting an important economic conference in place. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 606-12(7): Appointment Of Supreme Court Justice

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Justice. Mr. Speaker, the fourth Supreme Court position has been vacated by Justice David Marshall for quite a while now. I know the Minister has been working on getting a replacement in that position. I wonder if the Minister could give us an update as to the timing and the possibility of getting a fourth Supreme Court judge here in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 606-12(7): Appointment Of Supreme Court Justice

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, this was a subject that was raised with, at that time, the newly-appointed Minister of Justice in Ottawa, Allan Rock. I did have some issues that I wanted to initiate discussions with him on; this was one of them. As you know, the issue of the gun control legislation, Bill C-68, has consumed the Minister and has sidetracked many of the issues we have brought to that Minister in recent months. It is my hope that whether he wins or loses, whether he survives or is slightly tattered in pursuing his gun legislation, he is still morally and principally intact enough to continue without any vindictiveness to conclude discussions on these elements, one of which is the appointment of a fourth judge and the appointment of a chief justice of the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 606-12(7): Appointment Of Supreme Court Justice

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the Minister is aware of the fact that there was a commitment from the federal government when the Honourable David Marshall received an appointment on the judicial education group in Ottawa, that once he left that position, his position would be filled. So we

have a prior commitment from the federal government. When does the Minister think he'll be able to get this on the agenda, because there is a real problem with the workload now for our Supreme Court judges? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 606-12(7): Appointment Of Supreme Court Justice

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, it was our suggestion that the fourth Supreme Court judge be appointed. There was strong recommendation to have that judge specifically located in the Nunavut territory.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear! Hear!

--- Applause

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

We also seek to have changes in federal legislation to allow for the appointment of a chief justice of the Supreme Court. At this time, we have a senior judge who presides over the functions of the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories, but we do not have a chief justice. It's our view that even with the three judges at this time, that we could seek to have a chief justice appointed. We need Mr. Rock to initiate work to make amendments to federal legislation to allow for the appointment of a chief justice of the Supreme Court, and to provide appropriate funding to allow for the creation and function of that office. It's my hope that the good Member of Parliament for Nunavut will see, in this case, that this is something we need and will support us when the time comes and work as hard on it as he would other essential services of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 607-12(7): Regional Consultation On Housing Issues

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. I think the Minister knows that I was very impressed with the manner in which people in my region were consulted on housing issues, and then the burning issue of the day was the new rent scale last year. I would like to ask the Minister if he has plans -- since there were many other issues related to housing raised in those consultations to deal with design, method of delivery and construction -- to have further consultations with the regions in the current year on other housing issues. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 607-12(7): Regional Consultation On Housing Issues

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The consultation process is there to be carried on from year to year, so there will be consultations held in every community and every region every year from now until someone else changes it, I believe. We also have the Special Advisory Committee on Social Housing that has yet to meet to do some final work on the other recommendations from the communities and the regions, so we can respond to them prior to the next consultation. But most of the work is done. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 607-12(7):Regional

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can I take it from the Minister's response that, subject to approval and agreement of the Special Joint Committee on Housing, consultations similar in kind and scope to the ones that took place last year could take place in the coming year on on-going housing issues? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Supplementary To Question 608-12(7): Summer
Further Return To Question 607-12(7):Regional
Consultation On Housing Issues

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those consultations will happen for sure in every community in every region. The Special Advisory Committee on Housing have to meet to look at these other recommendations. Hopefully that could happen before those consultations start. But if it doesn't, then the consultations will proceed, regardless. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 608-12(7): Summer Employment Initiatives
For Kitikmeot Students

MR. NINGARK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transportation. I think he is our friend. Every summer, school children don't have many activities in the communities, Mr. Speaker. Right after the school year ends, there are activities whereby they can still go out on the land using skidoos and ATVs, but in mid-summer activities are sadly lacking. As the Minister is aware, the smaller communities want to make roads that are accessible by ATVs, especially in the Nunavut area where there are no highways.

Also, there is a problem with wharves in the Nunavut communities. I think we can create jobs for younger people in building these docks. Can the Minister of Transportation tell me exactly what kind of job creation programs are being planned for young people in the Nunavut area, especially in the area of Gjoa Haven, Taloyoak and Pelly Bay?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 608-12(7): Summer Employment
Initiatives For Kitikmeot Students

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As my honourable colleague knows, the access road policy, which we put into effect the last two years, is really a condition of a request that was put forward by Mr. Ningark three

years ago. That particular program has had overwhelming success in the communities. It is a program that provides access to fishing, hunting and traditional areas. It is done in cooperation with the hamlet councils, as they provide some support through equipment, et cetera. I am optimistic that that is one area this year where the budget has been fully taken up by proposals that have come in. I believe there is some activity. I can't Consultation On Housing Issues quite recall, but I think there is some activity in Gjoa Haven and Pelly Bay this year. We are looking at the possibility of working with the municipality of Taloyoak who have requested some support for exactly what Mr. Ningark was talking about, and that is ATV small roads into areas which both youth and elders can use for recreational, spiritual and traditional use. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ningark.

Employment Initiatives For Kitikmeot Students

MR. NINGARK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a supplementary to my question. The community of Pelly Bay wants jobs created for young people in the area of creating docks. There needs to be a clearing of the shoreline. I wonder if the Minister can give me a response as to whether these will be carried out as a project for creating jobs for young people in Taloyoak to clear the beach area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

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Further Return To Question 608-12(7): Summer
Employment Initiatives For Kitikmeot Students

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A precedent has been established in Iqaluit, where we worked closely with the community there with marine development. We had cleared the beaches of large rocks and debris to provide better access to the boat owners whether they were private in terms of recreational or commercial. As I said, we are currently in discussions with the municipality of Taloyoak in an effort to make a similar arrangement with that community to improve their wharf and marine facilities in that community.

The emphasis that we are currently looking at in terms of Nunavut is an expansion of the wharf and marine facility program. I am optimistic that in the coming years, we will see more activity and more money spent in that area. Thank you.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 609-12(7): Relocation Of Polar Bear Management To Baffin Region

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the previous session, I asked a question. I will ask a supplementary to a question I asked at that time. This is to the Minister of Renewable Resources. Polar bear management isn't going to stay in Yellowknife; they will be moved to the Baffin region. Since their office is going to be transferred over to that region, when does the Minister think that is going to happen?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Return To Question 609-12(7): Relocation Of Polar Bear Management To Baffin Region

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy to say that this will be done because this was dealt with at our meeting this morning. It was approved that polar bear management is going to be moved to the Nunavut area. This move will commence in the fall. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 610-12(7): Officers For Truck Inspections On Highway System

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Transportation. It is a compliment on an initiative that his department will be undertaking shortly regarding transportation on the highways; big truck inspections. In the announcement referring to the inspections, they said they would be

employing some 12 officers manning our two inspection sites at Enterprise and Inuvik for this 72-hour effort. Do we have 12 officers or are they hiring new people to do these inspections?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 610-12(7): Officers For Truck Inspections On Highway System

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the operation with respect to the inspection of trucks is being done by the current staff that we have. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 610-12(7): Officers For Truck Inspections On Highway System

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 610-12(7): Officers For Truck Inspections On Highway System

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, Mr. Speaker. There is a growing concern, particularly in the last six or seven months right across the country with respect to big trucks and safety as it relates to that equipment. I believe recently on the news there was a particular concern raised when there were two nasty accidents in Ontario. So this is an overall approach by the provinces and territorial jurisdictions to bring about the more vigilant approach to inspections to ensure that these trucks barreling down our highways are doing so in a safe and orderly way to protect the interests of territorial citizens. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 610-12(7): Officers For Truck Inspections On Highway System

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The announcement states that there will be two check stops; the one at Enterprise and the one at Inuvik. It will catch most of the vehicles coming into the territories. However, there is another route and that is through the Liard. I am not sure about the amount of traffic that comes through there. Is this an oversight or is it deliberately not going to be inspected because of low traffic? Why is it not being included in the expectations?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 610-12(7): Officers For Truck Inspections On Highway System

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My honourable colleague is correct; the majority of the heavy truck traffic goes through the two points and we feel that that is where we should put our energies; particularly with respect to the limited fiscal resources we have. Our analysis shows that is where the majority of vehicles pass through. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 611-12(7): Status Of Bird Dog Officers

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask a question of the Minister responsible for forest fire management. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, June 12th, I asked the Minister whether or not he would give us the status of Bird Dog officers with respect to flying with the DC-4s. I would like to ask him for an update with respect to the status of Bird Dog officers. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for forest management, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 611-12(7): Status Of Bird Dog Officers

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my understanding that the DC-4 pilots have been approved by the consultant we brought in to do the safety inspections. To day at around 12 o'clock, I believe it was, the supervisor was instructed to instruct the Bird Dog officers to report to work for orientation. He refused so he was terminated. Then we went to a Bird Dog officer to instruct him to report for orientation, and he refused so he was terminated. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 611-12(7): Status Of Bird Dog Officers

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I find that quite appalling, and I don't think it's any type of joke with respect to Members' comments. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask if it is the intention of this Minister to terminate all employment for all Bird Dog officers who are employed by the Government of the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 611-12(7): Status Of Bird Dog Officers

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me assure the Member that I take this matter very seriously. I take the whole issue of forest fire fighting very seriously. It is not my intention to terminate all the Bird Dog officers. These men are requested to go to work. The aircraft are ready to go to work. The pilots are ready to go to work. It is their choice. It is their career choice not to go to work. If they choose not to go to work, then they will be terminated on the spot, their keys for the buildings and their credit cards will be taken away and they'll be asked to leave the building. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 611-12(7): Status Of Bird Dog Officers

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The problem for these Bird Dog officers, as I have stated in the

House many times, is that they are very concerned about their safety. Last night, I saw the documentary that CBC did, and it was clearly stated that the Bird Dog officers refused to fly with the DC-4s because of the request for proposals the government sent out asking for certain requirements, and this request for proposals was not fulfilled. Therefore, it is a safety issue. I would like to ask the Minister regarding the termination of Bird Dog officers, why is it that on termination of Bird Dog officers, they are only given verbal notice and not any notification in writing on their status of employment? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin. Minister responsible for forest fire management.

Further Return To Question 611-12(7): Status Of Bird Dog Officers

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We addressed as a government the grievance that these Bird Dog officers laid before this government as a safety issue. We brought in two independent consultants to assess the pilots.

For example, one of our consultants has 21,000 hours total flying time. He has 45 years' experience in aviation operations and management. He was the DC-6 chief training pilot and operation captain for Con Air for over four years. He has flown fire suppression missions for other operations in northern Canada. He is currently a company training pilot and check pilot for Air North, training pilots and conducting safety proficiency checks on both DC-4 and DC-3 aircraft functions. He has performed since 1988 as an instrument check pilot and air carrier inspector with Transport Canada. He monitored the operations of 23 different air carriers and was co-founder and chief of operations for the Biafra human airlift. He was also director of flight operations for Air Vietnam which operated 56 aircraft. His qualifications are excellent, and this man sat in the cockpit and said the DC-4 captains were qualified to fight fires in the Northwest Territories. It is this government's position that they

are quite qualified. We have addressed the safety issues.

The next step is to inform the Bird Dog officers to report to work. We need them to work to do their orientation. They refused to go to work so they were terminated. It is as simple as that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 611-12(7): Status Of Bird Dog Officers

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, this Minister doesn't listen, whatsoever. He doesn't even attempt to answer the question I posed. I asked the Minister nothing to do with the review. I mean, they pay the price for the review; they call the tune. They get the results of what type of review they asked for.

But I asked this Minister, why is it that the Bird Dog officers got their notices of termination verbally and not in writing? That is my question. It has nothing to do with his consultants.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

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Further Return To Question 611-12(7): Status Of Bird Dog Officers

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A meeting was held with each individual to report to work. They were told verbally. This happened around 11:45 am and 1:15 pm to day. I am sure the paperwork is going to follow before 5:00 pm today, hopefully; or if not, tomorrow. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 612-12(7): Departmental Responsibility For Termination Of Employees

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier if she could advise this House when departments started to take over the responsibility of terminating employees. I was always under the impression, Mr. Speaker, that this responsibility lay with either FMBS under labour relations or with regard to personnel, but it appears that now departments are starting to take over this responsibility. Can the Premier indicate to this House why it is now becoming a departmental responsibility to dismiss employees? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 612-12(7): Departmental Responsibility For Termination Of Employees

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, the Member is quite right. There is a process that is followed with the Minister handling the responsibility. I believe that all the processes were followed. The steps that had to be taken to do the termination have involved all the departmental responsibilities that had to be involved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 612-12(7): Departmental Responsibility For Termination Of Employees

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Can the Premier advise me as to why it was the ADM for Renewable Resources who advised these individuals of their termination of employment and not someone from FMBS, which is normally the practice of this government? Thank you.

Further Return To Question 612-12(7): Departmental Responsibility For Termination Of Employees

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that the department has full responsibility to take such action. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Lewis):

We are on item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

Supplementary To Question 612-12(7): Departmental Responsibility For Termination Of Employees

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Speaker, under the public service agreement, under the act that we passed in this House, there is nothing that gives the responsibility to department officials to terminate employees. I know that, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to ask the Premier as to why it was the departmental officials who granted the dismissal verbally to these employees, without even the courtesy of a written notice from FMBS's labour relations area, which is normally the practice. They are the ones who generally give the termination notice, and it is generally given in writing, but, now departmental responsibilities are being taken away. I would like to ask the Premier, since it's in the act and clearly defined who should do the termination, why was this not adhered to? Thank you.

Further Return To Question 612-12(7): Departmental Responsibility For Termination Of Employees

NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, when this issue HON. arose, the Minister responsible knew very well that R was a controversial issue and made the proper steps to institute these changes. I believe the Minister responsible answered the question, that these steps were just recently taken within the last couple of hours and, surely, the paperwork will follow as soon as possible. Thank you.

Supplementary To Question 612-12(7): Departmental Responsibility For Termination Of Employees

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Once again, the Premier didn't listen to the question that I posed, Mr. Speaker, and it's unfortunate because I'm not going to use my supplementary on it. I leave it on the record, but I want to ask the Premier, will she review and relate to this House whether or not there was political interference in the dismissal of the Bird Dog officers who have been given verbal notice of dismissal? Will she determine

whether there was political interference by her Minister? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 612-12(7): Departmental Responsibility For Termination Of Employees

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I will look to determine that. I have full confidence in the Minister, in the carrying out of his duties in these very difficult times...

--- Applause

And I have full confidence that he has followed the proper procedures, but I will check again to ensure that those procedures were followed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Time for question period is over.

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ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Return To Written Question 26-12(7): Requirements For NWT Health Care Cards

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, Return to Written Question 26-12(7), asked by Mr. Patterson on June 5, 1995 of the Minister of Health and Social Services concerning residency requirements for NWT health care cards.

Any individual or family, resident in Canada, having left their home province to take up permanent residence in the Northwest Territories is eligible to receive coverage under the Northwest Territories health care plan after three months residency.

People in the following groups are eligible for coverage on the first day of arrival in the territories: newborns, whose mothers or fathers are eligible for coverage; landed immigrants; Canadians returning from foreign residence; members of the Canadian Armed Forces or RCMP upon discharge; federal

penitentiary inmates upon release; individuals holding a valid working visa; and, individuals holding a Minister's permit.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 9, replies to opening address. Mr. Pudluk.

--- Applause

ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

Mr. Pudluk's Reply

MR. PUDLUK:

Thank you. (Translation) Thank you. I will make a short reply. It will be 20 years since I was elected. First of all, I would like to make an apology to my constituents because I haven't been able to visit them for a whole year. We had a lot of things to deal with, with regard to legislation. That's my first apology to my constituents. Hopefully, before August 30th, I will be able to visit my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected in 1975, I had more communities because Pond Inlet was included in my constituency. For the last election, they took Pond Inlet out of my constituency. It made it easier for me to visit the communities I represented, although it was cheaper then to visit my communities. Even though the number of communities has decreased, it is more expensive.

I would like to thank the people who supported me in my campaign when I ran, particularly, I would like to thank my wife who is up in the gallery. She has been very patient with me. Even though I was away a lot, she looked after everything. I would like to thank her, first of all. I would like to say to the Member for Kitikmeot, who used to sit right beside me, that since he has moved to the opposite side nobody has touched

because of the cutbacks in funding. They will have to start --- Laughter

... which is quite all right with me. Even though the person who sits beside me now is a female, she hasn't touched my legs. Residency Mr. Speaker, between 1975 and 1995 a lot of things have been accomplished in the north. Some of them are successful and some are not. The operation of the government has changed somewhat, which hasn't been very easy to deal with. Back in 1967 or 1968, a government was set up in the north and it was

operated like a southern government. The Members were appointed. Back in 1975, there were 15 elected Members, and the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner led the government. I am happy to say today that this has changed. The Cabinet consists of eight, instead of two. The government in the north is more directed to the north now, and it works for the people of the north. We all know it is impossible to keep all the residents happy, but when you're representing people, you try your best to do what you have to do for your constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I was also involved when they were first dealing with the division of the Northwest Territories and it was a very difficult task. I won't go into details as to why; there were a lot of things involved. The Northwest Territories is a vast area to be handled by one government. I would like to thank the people who worked with me during the plebiscite and the people who were working on the boundary of where Nunavut should be. I am sure that western Arctic people will pick out an appropriate name for their region, Mr. Speaker. During my time, I am proud to say that when I first started back in the Baffin region, there were no hamlets. When they first started, they could become a hamlet if the population was 500 or over. Now, all the communities have hamlet councils. Also, in order to get a satellite for the communities, they had to have 500 people or over. Nowadays, all the hamlets have television services. I am very happy to see that.

Mr. Speaker, I am also proud, especially in my constituency, there has been lots of development within the past 20 years. I won't go into detail, but there have been two mines started; Nanisivik and Polaris. They also built a road from Nanisivik to Arctic Bay and it is the longest road in the Baffin region. A lot of new schools have been built in those communities, gymnasiums, et cetera. In my constituency, there will be the first arena built in Arctic Bay. Those are the major developments that have happened and I wanted to mention them because I am proud to see that.

Within that last 20 years, it hasn't always been easy. We have gone through sad times. I have had sad times and happy times. I have lost a lot of relatives when the House was sitting; I also lost a younger brother who passed away when I was here in Yellowknife. These times can be strenuous, but I am happy that I overcame them.

Like I said before, I am going to make my reply brief because I know this will be my last time during this 12th Assembly. I would like to say that I won't be

running at the next election. I will miss all of you. I am not saying I won't be running again because I am too old, I am just not too new any more.

Mr. Speaker, I know for a fact that the 13th Assembly will have my leg ... a lot of work ahead of them. One of the main reasons will be working on self-government in Nunavut. The residents of

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Nunavut believe in this and are expecting this. There will be a lot of other work for the 13th Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I have noticed when they are first elected, Members can be good friends and help support each other; however, I have seen, more than once, after a while they become enemies. (Translation ends)

Some people understand differently. Someone says a word I understand, but you understand differently. I see something and you see something ... For example, this glass is half-full and you can say it is half empty. That is where arguments start sometimes. I have seen, a number of times, people become enemies. People are not electing us to become enemies, they are electing us to work together.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear! Hear!

--- Applause

MR. PUDLUK:

We are expected, by our people, to work together, help each other and develop the north; not to make enemies. Because we see things differently, that is where arguments start sometimes.

(Translation) Mr. Speaker, I don't have much else to say, but I would like to thank everyone for their assistance to me, especially our Clerk. I would especially like to thank our Clerk. Since he became the Clerk, he has assisted me a great deal. Every time I ask him questions, he gives me answers. He advises me about how it would be best to do my work. I'm sure he has helped all of us. He works hard and never seems to hesitate to help or do his job. Even though he has helped us a lot, we have never given him anything. Since I won't be coming back, I would like to thank him, especially. To show my gratitude, I would like to present him with something, even though it's small, to show my gratitude.

I will be back, but I will give him what I want to give him, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

--- Presentation

--- Applause

Mr. Speaker, I supplied the materials for what is in that box and my wife did the hard labour for making the things in that box.

I also would like to thank people who have helped me in the past, specifically Don Stewart. He taught me how to be a politician.

--- Applause

He passed away not too long ago. Also, Pete Fraser and others who aren't here right now, but they are still alive and I would like to thank them. I hope future generations will be settled in their communities better, because everything is happening too fast in the north, especially since the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner ran the government. Things are happening, but they don't just happen overnight, they take time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to finish off by saying to those people who are going to run again, good luck. I hope you get back and I know for sure there will be a lot more new faces in the 13th Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Pudluk for your last Member's reply, your swan song. On behalf of the Members, I would also like to wish you the best.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear! Hear!

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Mr. Patterson.

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, more signatures are being collected as I speak, but today I would like to table Petition No. 11-12(7) that was organized by the Nunatsiaq coalition against further gun controls. It is signed by 966 residents of various communities in the three regions of Nunatsiaq riding in Nunavut. It reads:

"We, the residents of Nunatsiaq are strongly opposed to the proposed gun control legislation, Bill C-68, and as such, do not support further controls which are intrusive, unfair and unreasonable to the legitimate aspirations of law-abiding, responsible firearm owners and users."

Thank you.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 10, petitions. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to table a petition which I believe also came from the Nunatsiaq coalition. However, the wording is somewhat different and it comes from the residents of Baker Lake, with 21 names. Petition No. 12-12(7) reads as follows:

"Be it known that we agree, in principle, with firearm legislation designed to protect the citizens of Canada from harm from the criminal element and that there is need for legislation affecting the use and kinds of weapons which can be obtained and used legally. The time has come, however, to make our views known to the government body of Canada, that it is time for legislation which punishes the criminal element with harsher and more severe penalties for committing an offence with a firearm. For who among us thinks that by making a firearm illegal or restricted will stop a criminal from obtaining it, if he truly wants it? Further restricting hunters and honest gun owners with useless legislation does nothing but hurt our abilities to make a living from hunting and using firearms. Therefore, the people of Baker Lake in the Northwest Territories hereby agree and affix their signatures to this petition. This petition

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represents the views of those who sign their names below."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Arngna'naaq. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table Tabled Document 130-12(7), Annual Report of the Legal Services Board of the Northwest Territories, fiscal year ending March 31, 1994.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, according to Rule 42(10), I wish to table Tabled Document 131-12(7), a response to Petition No. 10-12(7) presented by Mrs. Thompson and responded to by the Minister of Health and Social Services.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Pursuant to section 85(2) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table Tabled Document 132-12(7), Annual Report of the Conflict of Interest Commission for the period January 15, 1994 to April 15, 1995.

Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table Tabled Document 133-12(7), resolutions from the Deh Cho First Nations women's gathering that was held from June 9th to June 12, 1995. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. KOE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Tabled Document 134-12(7), an article from the Globe and Mail, dated Monday, June 12, 1995 titled "Clipped Wings, Beyond Bandaging." It's an article on our education systems today. I think it's very relevant, as we're dealing with the Education Act.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Motion 22-12(7): Appearance Of Western NWT Aboriginal Leaders In Committee Of The Whole

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, June 16th, I will move the following motion.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that one elected representative of each of the nine western NWT aboriginal organizations be invited to appear as witnesses in committee of the whole on Monday, June 19, 1995. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. 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. Pollard.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 34: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1995-96

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 34, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1995-96, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Pollard. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

--- Carried

Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 34: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1995-96

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 34, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1995-96, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for the Government of the Northwest Territories in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1996. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 34 has had second reading and, accordingly, the bill stands referred to committee of the whole. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Committee Report 11 - 12(7), Report on the Review of Bill 25 - The Education Act; Bill 25, Education Act; Bill 34, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1995-96, with Mr. Ningark in the chair.
ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION
ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The committee will come back to order. Yesterday when we concluded in committee of the whole, we were dealing with Committee Report 11-12(7) and Bill 25. We also have Bill 34 on the order paper. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I recommend the committee continue consideration of Committee Report 11 12(7) and Bill 25.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do we have agreement of the Members that we deal with Committee Report 11-12(7) and Bill 25? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

Committee Report 11-12(7): Report On The Review Of Bill 25 - The Education Act

Bill 25: Education Act

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Minister of Education, would you like to bring in the witnesses before we continue with the consideration of Committee Report 11-12(7) and Bill 25?

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

I would like to request the permission of my colleagues, Mr. Chairman, to invite the witnesses in.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

--- SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I will call the House back to order. Sergeant-of-Arms, would you please bring in the witnesses.

Thank you. For the record, Mr. Minister, would you please introduce the witnesses.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. This is the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and all its staff. No.

--- Laughter

If I might, on my right is Gail Joyce, Mr. Chairman. At left, the deputy minister, Mr. Hal Gerein. On my back left, Mr. Eric Colbourne. Immediately behind me, Carol Whitehouse, legislative counsel; and, Janet Grinsted, the senior policy advisor, on my right behind Ms. Joyce. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Before I recognize a speaker to the item, I would like to remind each and every Member that the rules allow a Member at any one time to speak for only 10 minutes. If any Member wanted to go beyond that, the Member would have to ask for consent from the committee to continue. Mr. Antoine, I believe you wanted to speak. Mr. Antoine.

General Comments

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment Minister and the staff.

Yesterday, I made a few comments on the treaty issue, and I was just getting into my concern with regard to language when the time ran out. So I will pick it up where I left off.

In the previous act or the existing act we have today, there were a number of provisions in there regarding the language of instruction. One of the concerns that I have, and I raised it during the Standing Committee on Legislation hearings in Fort Simpson, is that this act is a totally new act, so it's difficult to compare what is in the existing act and what is planted in the revised act to see what the differences and changes are.

On the language of instruction, section 89.(1) in the existing act states that, "the local education authority or the divisional board of education, as the case may be, shall determine the language of instruction to be used for kindergarten in schools in the education district or education division where a kindergarten program is offered, and for the first two years of school programs following kindergarten."

Section 89.(2) on that is, "where a language other than English is the language of instruction under subsection (1)(a) English must be taught as a second language; and (b) instruction must be provided in English for students whose first language is English."

Section 89.(3) is, "where English is the language of instruction under subsection (1) but is not the first language of the majority of the students, the first language of the majority of students must be taught as a second language."

On this one here, I was hoping that this section remained intact; or was, in fact, even expanded upon. The reason I am saying that is that there have been requests from different quarters and people that I

represent to increase aboriginal language in the communities.

For example, in the Deh Cho First Nations women's gathering that was just held, a number of recommendations were made, and one of them deals with education. It says that, "The Deh Cho First Nations resolve to integrate Dene language, culture, knowledge and spirituality into the institutions of education from preschool through to high school in the Deh Cho region, that the institutions of education recognize the value of the history of the Dene in the Deh Cho, and in doing so, are supportive of developing programs in the schools that call for the teaching and instruction of Dene elders, and that the institutions of education set aside four to five minutes a day for instruction and discussion on treaty rights, Dene history, Dene culture, politics, traditional justice, traditional medicine, traditional knowledge of land and people and all such teachings that will provide the Dene youth with a sense of pride and belonging as well as the knowledge and skills to take their place as leaders in due time." This is the direction of women from the Deh Cho region.

What has happened here in the tabled version of it on March 30, 1995, in the revised bill, is hard to determine if you are going through the bill. I think it deals with it in section 73.(1) of the revised bill. It says: "Subject to subsection (2), a District Education Authority shall, in accordance with any directions of the Minister, determine a language to be taught as part of the education program in the education district or in any school in the education district." Section 73.(2), "If an Official Language

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other than English is the language of instruction, English must be taught as a language as part of the education program." Third, section 73.(3) says: "If English is the language of instruction, an official language other than English must be taught as part of the education program."

In section 70.(1), it says: "The language of instruction of an education program must be an Official Language." And 70.(2): "There may be more than one language of instruction in an education district and more than one language of instruction in a school."

Section 71.(1) is: "A District Education Authority shall, in accordance with the requirements of this section, determine the language of instruction to be used in the education district!" Section 71.(2), "Before

determining a language of instruction in an education district that is in an education division in which there is more than one education district, a District Education Authority shall request from the Divisional Education Council relating to development and use of school program materials and the supply of teachers who are fluent in a language and their availability to teach in that language."

Further on, section 71.(3) says: "The Minister may give directions establishing standards and guidelines for the selection and use of language of instruction to assure the maintenance of the highest possible standards of education..." and it goes on.

I am trying to determine what all this means. In the tabled document of March 30th, the Minister had discretion over all these things, but that was taken out, which is good. But the criteria that was established in the revised bill was, in order to teach in an aboriginal language, you have to determine the significant demand. I would like to know what the definition of "significant demand" is in this area.

The other thing is that you have to determine if there are enough teachers who are fluent in a language and you also have to determine if there are enough materials or resources to teach this.

You have to fulfil these requirements before you can even teach in an aboriginal language now, so what this new revised bill does is make it even more difficult now to teach in an aboriginal language. There was a comment made that I heard that there is enough culture in the bill already, but to determine culture is very difficult. Culture is derived from language, and language is key for the culture of the Dene people.

I feel there is an imposition of unrealistic conditions placed in the new bill when it comes to teaching in the aboriginal languages. The emphasis of English is very predominant in this bill and it really emphasizes that English is the way to teach. In some cases, I have to say that isn't the case. We have to allow aboriginal languages in the schools.

Another thing is the Dene languages are taught in the schools based on how many students speak the language. However, that shouldn't determine it. I understand that in the French language, if the first language of the parents is French, they allow the students to be taught in French; so, if the first language of the parents is Dene, students should be

taught Dene first. The idea is to save a language and to develop it.

These are the comments I have on the Dene language part of it. I have more concerns. I just wanted to know if I have 10 minutes to speak on each clause

--- Laughter

...or is it 10 minutes for the whole bill and that is it, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. You were just right on time. Your 10 minutes was up about two seconds ago. I believe each Member has 10 minutes to speak on every clause. That is my understanding. As I indicated earlier, one Member can speak 10 minutes at a time. If I recognize someone else and it is your turn, then you are on for another 10 minutes. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

I took a little break, does that qualify me for another 10 minutes?

--- Laughter

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I believe there was a question by Mr. Antoine asking what significant demand is. He indicated that he wanted to get a definition on the term "significant demand." Perhaps the Minister can respond to that.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just thought I would allow all Members to deal with the general comments. The point that was made by the honourable Member was specific to clause 17 and portions of it. Just for clarification, there has been no specific definition for "significant demand." That requires us to work those issues out with the appropriate district education authority or divisional education council. That will be determined by the number of students involved in the program; the amount of staff required; the resources for us to deliver the program, at cetera. These are all part of that consideration. That is the extent of significant demand at this time. We would develop the guidelines that would be necessary for these discussions as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Qujannamiik. Are there any general comments? Mr. Antoine, did you want to continue from here? Your 10 minutes has lapsed.

MR. ANTOINE:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to have a supplementary to the question the Minister has answered. A district education authority may choose a language as the language of instruction if there is a significant demand for the language in the education district. Who determines that? Is it the district education authority? I am aware that in the Official Languages Act, the phrase "significant demand" is in there as well. Since the life of that act, "significant demand" has yet to be defined. Like the Minister said, it is unclear what it means. For clarification, we should try to determine the definition of "significant demand." That is what we have to do. It could be interpreted any way that you would like because it isn't clear. It is going to be up to each district education authority. Each one could have a different definition of what that means. That is my concern. If one is very lenient in the definition and another district is very strict with that definition, then you will have different degrees of the language being taught in one particular district. So I have a concern with that. If the Minister would further clarify that, I would appreciate it.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I know the honourable Minister said this term deals with specific clauses, but I left the question on the floor earlier, so I will ask the Minister to give some clarification. Thank you.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly appreciate the concern of the honourable Member. What would happen is we would be developing the general guidelines and criteria for all. In other words, we have to set the general standards to assist the decision making with each of the authorities. It would be dependent, even in the sense of the range of options that might be available, on situations as well. In some instances, the matter of delivery will be dependent on the kind of programs that will be necessary to each in each particular situation.

Mr. Chairman, one of the better organized aboriginal Dene regions, in terms of programming and material, happens to be in the honourable Member's

constituency. They have some people who have really been involved in the development of languages. They have developed some excellent material. His particular constituency, along with several others, have developed a good basis for delivering instruction in the aboriginal languages.

So we are allowing decision making to be made by the district education authorities and the divisions. In fact, we are trying to remove as much of the Minister's interference in this area, so the communities can make these choices. They will be made based on standards, criteria and guidelines, so there are no inconsistencies. They will then be able to make decisions on investment, programs and services that could be supported by our government in the context of financial support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. General comments? If not, I continue to recognize Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding section 71(4)(a),(b) and (c), this is where a district education authority may choose a language as the language of instruction if the three areas are determined. These are the conditions imposed in this bill and I find it very restrictive. Like I said before, it is taking a step backwards from where we were under the existing act in section 89.(1), (2) and (3). In the existing act, from K-2, the aboriginal language has to be taught and it fulfills certain conditions. In this new revised act, under section 71.(1) to 71.(4), there are restrictions placed on that. It is really up to the Minister's discretion and the district authority if there is significant demand for the languages to be put in place -- I don't know for sure what it really means, from what the Minister has been telling us -- and if there are enough teachers. So, who decides if there are enough teachers who are fluent in the language?

The point here is, we have a lot of elders in our communities who speak our languages very fluently and that's the only language they use. Why can't we change this provision to allow elders to come into the schools to teach their languages? Why does it only have to be teachers? Couldn't we use elders as resources to come into the schools to do this? That's my question to the Minister.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I would like to remind the honourable Member and all Members of the committee that we are dealing with general comments. At the appropriate time, we'll be going through it clause by clause. At that time, questions pertaining to specific clauses should be asked. But, I will ask the honourable Minister to respond.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just so it is absolutely clear, first of all, the definition "given languages of instruction" means that all subjects are to be taught in that language. In other words, whether you're teaching math, science or languages, they must be taught completely in that language. That's the basis of the definition. There has to be some quality of instruction if you're going to deliver a program in that language.

In other words, if the Deh Cho divisional board decides they're going to teach all subjects in Slavey, then the individuals must be able to teach all subjects in that language. If there are other language programs, then they are in addition to the structural components that have been agreed to. That is what this is saying; we're basically allowing the district education authorities to make that decision and that decision should not rest with the Minister, to determine this matter.

What we're trying to say here is there are standards, there is a quality requirement, and then we can assist in the decision making by the district education authority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have some comments I would like to make, for the record. I made some comments the other day about the committee report and I would like, in some cases, to expand on those.

The general comments I have concern subjects throughout the act and I also have comments and questions dealing with specific clauses, which I will raise at the appropriate times. In Monday's issue of the Globe and Mail, there was an article called "Clipped Wings Beyond Bandaging," an article about the education system today, and I tabled this article today because there are some quite relevant comments made in it. A question is asked in this

article: "How in 20 or 30 years have we gone from having a very good educational system to having a very poor one, a system in which the teachers long for retirement and students long for escape?" The article also states:

"We need to begin again, to re-eroticize learning. Everything needs to be put on the table: the question of core curriculum; school uniforms; sports; alternatives to schools, not just alternative schools; inflated grading; "dumbsizing;" a carnival atmosphere; and, the need for historical perspective and critical thinking. Patching the dike won't work. The leaks now threaten not only the system, spawned-mall bunnies and space cadets, but the vivacious and vigorous who, every day, become a little more enervated and defeated. Without intellectual stimulation and demanding standards for achievement, we will lose more and more of our young to sloth and sluggishness."

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I find a lot of these statements very valid and I raise them because we are dealing with an act which is one component -- mind you, probably the most important component -- dealing with our education system. The act will provide the laws and rules which will govern our education system in the north. Another key component of this, which ties into the act, are the regulations. The regulations will provide the detail on how the various provisions of the act will work. However, these are only a few of the components which need to be reviewed. If we put everything on the table, then we have to do that and we have to do it properly.

Many of the aboriginal groups have cautioned us not to proceed too quickly, to make sure that what we're doing is appropriate and fight, to not pass the bill because it is expedient to do so or politically correct to do so, so Members can leave and begin their campaigns. I agree with these people. We have to take our time and we have to ensure that the new bill that we pass will meet the test of time and the needs of our education system.

Everything must be reviewed and evaluated for our system to be revitalized. I hope this bill is only the start and, once the new act comes into force, with the proper regulations developed by northerners, that we continue to examine and change our education system to meet the needs of all our residents. There are many strategies under way, not only with our basic education system from K-12, but our post-

secondary institutions are also working on strategies and plans. The sooner that these are finished, the more comprehensive the whole system will be. Just completing a strategy or plan doesn't mean it's over and everything is fixed. It doesn't work that way, but at least it gives us proper guidelines and mechanisms to deal with ongoing changes to our system.

I would like to comment a bit on excellence in education. I was always under the assumption that this Assembly had adopted a principle to strive for excellence in education and to make this work, we should be establishing standards for excellence across the Northwest Territories. All students across the north should receive the same number of instructional hours in school, so that no one, depending where they are, gets short-changed.

We also have to ensure that the quality of our educators and curriculum material are of the highest standards. I have always had a concern about students who come from the smaller communities and go to our regional high schools, and we hear that many of these students aren't ready for the higher grades. Therefore, instead of pursuing academic studies, many students are shuffled into general studies, which are supposed to be easier.

I also believe that many of our community schools do not or cannot provide a full range of course options for students which will give them the basis for achieving academic success in high school. Students have a right to pursue academic studies and they should be encouraged to do so.

Today, our education system seems to focus on statistics and numbers. We always quote that we have so many students in our system. We say that we have so many graduates. But we also have to ask these questions. What are these graduates doing? Where are they going? What is their success ratio in post-secondary institutions? What jobs are they going into? There are many ways of measuring success, but we also have to focus on the quality of the students which we put through our system.

Another concern of mine, which I believe has an impact on striving for excellence in education, is the concept of age appropriate placement of students. I believe this means that students are being automatically advanced to the next grade level because of their age, not because of their academic achievements. I believe that this is the norm across the Northwest Territories. I don't know why. I don't believe this is in the current act and it is definitely not

in the new act. So I don't know where that concept has come from and why all the schools seem to follow this so rigidly.

It is almost impossible to achieve excellence in education if we continue this practice where hardly anyone fails. We hear that students are advancing grade by grade and have trouble reading, writing and doing arithmetic. Mr. Chairman, this has to change. Students have to be pushed and encouraged to succeed and there should be mechanisms to measure success. We cannot do this only when students write exams at grade 9 or grade 12 levels. It has to start at grade 1.

Mr. Chairman, my time is up, but I seek consent to continue.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Member for Inuvik is asking consent to continue. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Continue, Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make some comments on treaty and aboriginal rights. There have been many comments made about the issues of treaty and aboriginal rights, as they pertain to education. I don't think enough can be said about these issues because someday, somewhere, they are going to have to be resolved. Until then, I, for one, and I am sure my colleague beside me is going to continue to raise these concerns.

The basic concept for education is that all aboriginal people have a right to free education. That includes post-secondary education. The Standing Committee on Legislation, in their report, mentioned, and I quote: "Until treaty and other aboriginal rights are clearly defined, there is no way to include it in this act. To try to include it would imply a resolution and definition of these education rights, which is not the case." Mr. Chairman, I believe that all people who are impacted agree that it is a federal fiduciary responsibility to

provide education to aboriginal people, especially treaty and Inuit people.

However, the contentious issue in the Northwest Territories is that the federal government transfers money for education to the Government of the Northwest Territories. I believe -- and I could be corrected here -- by accepting this money, the Government of the Northwest Territories then takes over responsibilities for educating aboriginal people in the north. Therefore, I can't buy the argument that people continue to use that it is only a federal jurisdictional issue. I believe by

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accepting the money and the responsibility, that we also have to accept some of the jurisdictional issues that go with it. Reference is made in the preamble to the act, which refers to the rights and freedoms of aboriginal people, as set out in section 35 of the Constitution of 1982. However, I still don't believe that just by making that reference it goes far enough. The Government of the Northwest Territories cannot abrogate its responsibilities for providing programs and services to aboriginal people.

This government should be actively supporting aboriginal people in their negotiations and in their fight with our federal government to define and to agree on what aboriginal and treaty rights are. This government must be front and centre in supporting organizations who are in negotiating treaties, self-government or regional governments. Their position must be made public and must be followed by all government Ministers and employees.

There are still several concerns about the wording in the preamble. I have several questions which I would like clarified when we do get to the preamble. Do the words in the preamble include modern treaties or land claim agreements? Are our future agreements -- the ones that are presently being negotiated -- going to be included? Does section 35 of the Canadian Charter cover all of these?

There are many references in the act, especially where it pertains to the levying of fees and charges. This is one area that causes aboriginal people concern because we always believe that we have an inherent right to free education. Eventually, if this act is passed, then clarification is required as to whether any of the respective sections of the act contravene the agreements or intentions as laid out in treaties 8 and 11 or any of the land claim agreements. This

issue has to be brought forward, as a majority of our population are aboriginal people.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to raise these concerns and I'll now take a break to allow my colleagues to take their turn. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you for the promotion. I am not a speaker. I am a chairman. Thank you. General comments. Do we have general comments? Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

I guess the article that the honourable Member read sounded like a teacher who had run out of work or something -- I am not sure if that was the case -- because the fact is that the article that the honourable Member read was actually an article that was written by a teacher in Hamilton, Ontario.

I just want to say to him that some of the issues are important to consider, but they have to be considered in the context of the people you are serving, because you have a situation where the community and the circumstances in which we work have changed so dramatically that some of the issues have to be dealt with, not only in terms of critical thinking but in the ability of young people to operate in the technology that is now available to us. It puts a lot more pressure, I think, on students today than was probably the case for us.

I appreciate the comments that the honourable Member has made. I just want to say a couple of things. I agree on the matter of the standards. Just so that the honourable Member and Members are aware, that is, I think, one of the reasons we had an opportunity, with the Ministers of Education, to review the whole matter of a consistent curriculum across the country. There is a real need for us to be able to allow our students to go from one jurisdiction to the other without necessarily hindering them. In other words, it should not be difficult for a student from the Northwest Territories to go to British Columbia, or for a student from British Columbia to go to Newfoundland. There have been so many inconsistencies across the country that it's caused more problems for our students in terms of trying to move back and forth.

The other important component with that particular review of curriculum is to ensure that we have high standards in this country. I think that one of the problems that we have had, and I think the

honourable Member has again pointed out, is the whole issue of trying to ensure that the standards are high and will allow our students to be able to enter into universities and enter into training programs without necessarily losing time as a result of their quality of education. So I agree with the honourable Member on the concern with regard to standards. I think it's a concern across the country.

Just on a couple of issues, though. I do want to say that I think, despite the fact that we may want a consistent and standard curriculum across this country, communities also have differing requirements. All we have to do is look at the whole matter of the Dene Kede curriculum where, in a historical sense or a traditional sense, we, as aboriginal people, want our children to understand our educational system and those things we have learned as adults growing up in our communities; the kinds of interpretations we give to science, our relationships with each other and our spiritual nature.

Those have to be provided in the context of ensuring that those children have the capacity to operate in this modern world. In other words, there is no need for us to teach traditional education if they are unable to use a computer or unable to communicate with a community outside their own community.

So, in that context, there is a lot of work on our pad to bring together those two situations. My only view in that situation is that we, as a jurisdiction, probably lead most other provinces and territories in this area, and I think, from a quality perspective, we should be very proud of our own aboriginal people who are leading this area. I think the support that the honourable Member and Members in this House have given to the matter of more aboriginal teachers and more northern teachers who understand the north and the people, will only offer us a better and more optimistic future.

The honourable Member raised the issue of quality. I don't have a problem with it. I think that quality of education is necessary. The whole matter of excellence is always a matter of subjectivity. It is always a matter of measuring.

It also requires parents. If parents aren't interested in their children being part of the educational system and encourage them to go to school, then it makes it more difficult. I know the

Member, who has taken a serious interest in the education of his own children and takes seriously the issue of education generally, understands how important it is for parents to play an important role. That hasn't always been the case, but I think that raising the profile of education will help that.

One other last point, Mr. Chairman. I know it becomes very difficult to deal with the whole issue of treaty and aboriginal rights. There are two elements to the debate.

One, the argument that has been put forward by aboriginal and treaty people generally is that it is really none of the business of the territorial government to explicitly define their rights as they might exist, whether or not it's through claims agreements or the redefinition of treaties.

As an aboriginal person, my personal position, and it should be quite clear, is that I don't have a problem supporting the views of the aboriginal people in that context, but it can't be that, we define it and then are told that we are not a party to the agreement. The fact is, in my view, it really is an issue between the federal government and the aboriginal people. In the context of saying that they have rights, without question, this government has said that we support that. Our problem right now, if I could, Mr. Chairman, is that we have a very difficult time trying to be more explicit in what those rights are, but we do agree that they exist, and the issues should not only be contained in the legislation itself but also in the context of the policies that we develop.

The concern of the Member on post-secondary education, we have agreed and are obligated to live up to the general policies of Indian Affairs and have, in fact, exceeded that, but it's our belief that we must, at the very least, maintain our commitment to the students.

The other component that we still must have clarification on is on the role of the federal government providing additional resources, because we have been placed in a position where, as a result of federal policies, we now have to assume the responsibility of all status Indians and Inuit across the country who were originally from here. Previously, they assumed the responsibility in the provinces. So we are now being forced into assuming that responsibility without the necessary additional resources to implement that. But that was a matter of public policy and it makes it very difficult.

Just so that the honourable Member is aware of these factors, I think, in committing to the honourable Member and aboriginal people our support, these are factors that really have to be considered in the discussion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. General Comments. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Qujannamiik, Mr. Chairman. I have just a few more general comments. In the preamble it is advocated that and delivery of education. This concept has been an underlying principle of this Assembly; to transfer programs and services to communities, to encourage communities to take responsibility, take charge of delivering and have ownership of these programs and services. However, some real concerns which override this act are the powers and authorities of the

Minister; the whole issue of centralizing more and more powers to the Minister is in contrast to trying to devolve more powers to communities and regions. The Standing Committee on Legislation stated in their report, and I quote: "The many references to ministerial authority did not seem consistent with the partnership approach and increased local authority cited in the preamble."

Mr. Chairman, saying that, there have been a lot of amendments and changes already made to this act to reduce the powers of the Minister and, for these, I am pleased that they were made. The real issue that I am making is that, as much as possible, the powers, responsibilities and authorities should be given to local or regional education bodies. When the time comes for bands and Metis locals to get involved or regional governments, this theme should be practised and then encouraged. We have to encourage local community organizations to take responsibility for programs.

I would like to make a few comments on regulations. It has been mentioned many times by Members of this House and many of the presenters that we heard, that the development of the regulations is very important. They will provide the details of how the provisions in the act will work. There are many issues raised about these and I am pleased that there are provisions in the act that place a requirement on the Minister to consult with the appropriate organizations on these. So my comment here is one I have made

before and I will make again. The Minister is now obligated to consult with the organizations and I encourage the Minister to do that. I will also encourage all the appropriate organizations to ensure that they get involved in the development of these regulations. We can't continue to sit back and watch as things happen. The windows of opportunity are there and they have to prepare themselves to do this. I think the development of these regulations will take place over the next year. It is going to be a long tedious job, but I wish everyone good luck and all the best in working these out. I know it isn't easy.

Those are my general comments. As I mentioned, I will have specific comments as we get to the respective clauses. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister, his staff and everyone for all the hard work they have done in getting to this stage. It is a real achievement. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I am sure the Minister appreciates those kind words. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

I just want to correct a few remarks made by the honourable Member. First, we had a long discussion about the issue of the powers of the Minister. The irony is that there is less responsibility and power in the hands of the Minister as a result of this legislation than was in the previous legislation. We support that. A lot of it deals with the words that are included in the legislation. I hope, as we have our consultations with the communities, that we can clarify those understandings or misunderstandings that the communities might have. It is not my intention and, as a result, of the good dialogue with the Standing Committee on Legislation and its Members, we are not interested in taking away responsibilities and powers from our district education authorities or divisions. The more or less responsibility I have as a Minister in the daily affairs of managing the operations of schools and educational programs for our children and allow

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the communities to be part of that, the better it is for the students and for the parents. It gives us an opportunity to concentrate on those areas the Member has pointed out that need additional work; that is, ensuring that the standards, criteria and

guidelines allow us to be competitive in the quality of educational programs. I just wanted to make certain that that was clear and I appreciate the comments by the honourable Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make a few comments on the proposed Education Act. First of all, I have similar concerns to my colleagues with regard to aboriginal rights and also a choice of education, specifically for status Indians.

Mr. Chairman, although the act has been amended in the preamble to reflect section 35 of the Canadian Constitution of 1982, I am glad it is reflected, but I don't think it goes far enough. Mr. Chairman, the issue of the treaties, aboriginal rights and choice of education is a concern to me, especially as a parent and a status person. In relation to that, Mr. Chairman, I also have another concern which relates back to the Education Act. There is another component that we haven't touched on or the department has addressed to date. Let me backtrack, Mr. Chairman, because it does reflect on the Education Act.

First of all, in 1955, we had an agreement between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the federal government with regard to education for Dene people in the north and the Inuit. We had an agreement in terms of finances and the type of schooling that the Dene children should have. It is all spelled out in that document, which was signed on April 1, 1955.

As time went on, Mr. Chairman, in 1969, the employees of the federal government were transferred to our government. A new agreement should have been drafted then, but unfortunately it wasn't. There was just a letter signed by the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs to transfer employees to our government and all the assets. Mr. Chairman, in that transfer, I think, at that time, the government should have renegotiated a new deal with the government, or even now, because it reflects on the Education Act. Even the Standing Committee on Legislation has made numerous recommendations pertaining to financial resources; specifically for inclusive schooling, accommodation and so forth. There are a lot of issues that relate to the proposed Education Act.

Mr. Chairman, the other component I'm making reference to hasn't been addressed and I'm just wondering when the government is going to revise or renegotiate the agreement between ourselves and the federal government. As you are well aware, Mr. Chairman, resources are scarce nowadays, especially at the federal level and at our level. One of the other problems, in relation to this, Mr. Chairman, is funding that comes from the federal government is all rolled into the formula financing agreement.

Back in 1987, my colleague from the Deh Cho questioned the Minister of the day with regard to education of status Indians in the Northwest Territories. He asked a number of questions

to see if we had a number of agreements in place. They still exist on our books today, Mr. Chairman. Part of the question was in relation to funding; if the department was aware if we were being adequately funded by the federal government. In 1987 when the Minister of the day answered my colleague, Mr. Gargan's question, they couldn't differentiate between numbers in the funding flowing through the formula financing. They couldn't tell us if we were being adequately funded or not. I think that's still an issue today.

But, with the technology we have today, Mr. Chairman, I think it would be quite easy to determine how many status Indians we have, how many Inuit we have, how many Metis we have, and how many "others" we have. I don't think that would be such a big task for the department to put together. I think that's another area the government has to clear up, Mr. Chairman, because it relates back to what is being proposed in the Education Act.

Mr. Chairman, that whole area hasn't been looked at and I have a lot of concerns. I wonder when the government will be looking at this issue and when they anticipate they'll get started on it, because it's going to have an impact. Maybe it's time now that we get into a new agreement with the federal government before they shut the door on us with regard to resources. I feel, Mr. Chairman, that we're not being adequately funded, especially the status people of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Chairman, although the department has indicated that they've looked at the Indian Act, Treaty 8 and 11 provisions that pertain to education rights and so forth, and the agreement between ourselves and the federal government -- I know they've looked at all of that -- I don't think the Minister can guarantee me, as

a status person and a parent, that the interpretation they're using is right, because the other issues aren't resolved yet.

Although it may not be that they go against what is anticipated to be the definition of aboriginal rights and treaty rights, which haven't been defined yet -- so that's questionable now -- I interpret certain sections differently than the department. I don't think anyone has tested the scope of treaty sections or those pertaining to the educational rights of status people. In that respect, there is no test case, there is no guarantee that what they put in the act is accurate.

Mr. Chairman...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Zoe, I let you go two minutes over your limit. If you want to continue, you have to seek consent. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

I would ask my colleagues if I can continue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Is it agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

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MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think the issue that I raised definitely has to be seriously looked at. Another issue I wanted to touch on is the issue which the standing committee also raised in their report, pertaining to the principal and if he or she should be in the NWTTA. I agree with the comments the committee has made. I think the issue has to be reviewed to determine if the principals should remain in the bargaining unit. I think that whole area has to be reviewed.

Mr. Chairman, I have a concern with regard to hours of instruction and the issue of the number of instructional days. Although I agree with the committee with regard to putting hours into the act, what the department is indicating to the committee, from what I read, is that they're going to be basing that on 195 days. I think they upped it from 190 from the old policy. That's my understanding. I think it should be a little higher than that. I think we're not going far enough with regard to the number of instructional days.

If you look at other jurisdictions, not only in Canada, but in the United States, Australia and Japan, the number of instructional days is higher. I understand Japan has 200 and some odd days where they teach their children, and they have been quite successful in that area of the world with regard to the education of their kids. In that respect, Mr. Chairman, I would have hoped that the instructional days would have been a little bit higher than what has been proposed by the department. I understand it is going to be done through regulations, but if they follow the Standing Committee on Legislation's recommendation, the number of hours should be calculated based on the number of instructional days and then put into the act. I was hoping that the number of instructional days could have been higher.

With regard to inclusive schooling, I agree with the committee where they indicate that adequate resources definitely have to be tied into the inclusive schooling issue. If we don't do that, then we're going to run into problems. Now we're currently having problems here in the territories with our overall funding, but once our funding is depleted, then our programs will hurt. I can assure you that this area is one of the areas that will be hit. I go back to the issue that I raised earlier with regard to the agreement between the Government of Canada and ourselves, pertaining to funding; that area has to be looked at because it touches things like inclusive schooling, as well as the other issue of accommodation, which would also require funding and so forth.

There is another section in part III under cultural diversity with regard to language resources. There again, if we would have revised the existing Education Act, maybe that whole issue could have been addressed through that agreement before we dealt with this issue. Mr. Chairman, it goes back to money issues again. Although we say all these good things in the act, if we don't have adequate resources, there is no use in saying these things.

Mr. Chairman, again with regard to the treaty issue and choice of education, the way the proposed act reads is only if you don't have high schooling and sort forth in your community, the students will be able to go to another jurisdiction to continue their schooling. Through aboriginal rights, as a parent and being a status person, I should have the right to say where my child should be able to go, not specifically to be detained to one specific district. Until all these issues are resolved... Currently, even though we have the act in place, as an individual, one can go directly to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs to ask for approval. If he gives approval now, from my understanding of reading the agreement between the Government of Canada and ourselves, the authority lies with the Minister of Indian Affairs. If the Minister disagrees with someone, we could always go directly to the federal government. That option is there, but I am hoping the government would try to resolve all these issues when they are renegotiating this agreement. That one component, as I indicated earlier, hasn't been dealt with yet. It all ties in together. You can't do one without the other. I am glad that this bill is in front of us now and I will be supporting the bill, although I am not totally satisfied. Nevertheless, I think the bill is a step in the right direction. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister, did you want to respond to the remarks by Mr. Zoe?

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

No, Mr. Chairman. The comments that have been made by the honourable Member... The issue of educational funding has been a matter of discussion of myself and my colleagues. We see it as one of the outstanding issues the federal government has to resolve. There are some situations that make it difficult; for example, the fiscal situation not only here, but the fiscal situation across the country.

It is also interesting to note, Mr. Chairman, that the Department of Indian Affairs had their budgets remain constant, yet when it came to transferring money, our budget was reduced. So you have to look at it in that context as well; whether they are passing on the resources to allow us to do our work. That is a political matter and my view is that some of the concerns are legal and constitutional.

I want to make one point. The Member made a comment about the issue of trying to define treaty

rights. His arguments and comments prove exactly why it is very difficult to be very definitive and explicit in our legislation. There is so much in terms of the definition and interpretation that we, as aboriginal people, give the whole issue of education rights in treaties and in our land claims agreements, that that has never really been resolved between the aboriginal people and the federal government. That's why it's very difficult to define that in our legislation.

The other point is that the legislation itself is the framework by which we administer and manage the educational system. So the whole issue of collective rights and treaty rights is really something that is in another agreement and should be resolved between the appropriate parties and the federal government. So it makes it difficult for me to be definitive. I think your arguments prove the reason why it's so difficult to do it.

The other point that I wanted to make to the honourable Members, and generally the comments I want to make so that people are clear; the fact is that based on even the manner in which education funds are being managed for aboriginal people across the country, there are more and more restrictions being placed on bands because the authority has been transferred to them. Therefore, the kind of ability that

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Indian Affairs had at one time is no longer there. But there area lot more restrictions, for instance, even for band members who do not live on reserves to access funds for post-secondary education.

But these are the rules that are changing across the country. Ours have generally not changed that substantially. In fact, I pointed out to Mr. Koe earlier that one of the problems we're encountering as a result of federal policy change is that we are not being held responsible for delivering educational programs for treaty and status Indian and Inuit in the other provinces and in the Yukon. So we are being pressed to accept responsibility for that. But in our formula calculations and in our population census, they are never considered in those numbers. So it's kind of an awkward way of doing business, but the fact is that they're forcing us to assume responsibility for that without ever compensating us for that responsibility.

So I think the honourable Member has made some good points and, thus, raised the issue. But I think one still has to recognize this as the administrative management document for our educational system,

and those additional issues really have to be resolved outside the document. I appreciate the concerns the honourable Member has raised. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have just a few general comments. I know that in speaking to people about the new Education Act, most of the comments that I've received along the way are that it's about time and that an update was needed. So I think most people welcome the fact that we've gotten this process under way.

One problem I have, Mr. Chairman, is that I'm meeting tomorrow with the two school boards in Yellowknife to discuss the revised act, so my comments may not reflect all of the concerns that I may wish to bring forward. I may, in future, have to seek consent to make more comments.

In any case, Mr. Chairman, while in Yellowknife, most people see this as an important step -- updating the act -- it isn't seen as providing a lot of change. In Yellowknife, this new act doesn't significantly increase the authority or the autonomy of the boards. In fact, the act appears to bring regional boards, in many ways, up to the level of authority and autonomy that Yellowknife currently enjoys. I guess that is one concern that I have heard, that since, especially in Yellowknife, we pay a significant portion of the cost of operating our school system, we should have even more autonomy than other boards.

Mr. Chairman, the one way to address this would perhaps be to talk about the issue of fairness and equity. This is something not in the current act, but perhaps we should start talking about eliminating the difference between what Yellowknifers pay in education tax and that paid by others in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Chairman, the residents of Yellowknife pay more than 70 per cent of all education taxes collected in the Northwest Territories, and I would submit that it is not fair that there is such a significant difference between what is collected in Yellowknife and in other regions.

To put this on a personal scale, in Yellowknife I have a modestly-sized house of about 1,400 square feet. On that, I pay school taxes of \$1,500 a year. Now,

Mr. Chairman, other Members of this House, say a Cabinet Minister who lives in Rankin Inlet or Cambridge Bay probably pays on their house no more than \$150 a year in school taxes, even though -- since our salaries are tabled in this House -- we know they make more money than I do. I would question the fairness.

I can make the same arguments about communities such as Hay River, Fort Smith, Iqaluit or Inuvik. The point is, Mr. Chairman, there isn't fairness and equity when it comes to the financing of school programs in the Northwest Territories. I think that is something that has to be addressed. I know there is a review under way right now of the financing of not just the school system, but municipalities, and whether or not property taxes are the correct way to do that. I would hope that as part of the evaluation, that we've directed the consultants to examine the situation in Newfoundland. In Newfoundland, the school systems are financed through personal taxes, currently. They quit charging a school tax and have made a conscious decision to increase personal taxes to pay for the school system.

To Yellowknifers, Mr. Chairman, this is one of the major issues that concerns them, the fact that we have to pay so much for the school system when it's not the case in other places, even tax-based municipalities.

The other issue I would like to comment on, Mr. Chairman, is some concerns have been expressed to me as to whether or not the act, even in its revised and reprinted form, meets the requirements of section 23 of our Constitution. The concerns have been expressed by L'Association des Parents Francophones de Yellowknife. I would like to thank the Minister for meeting with their representatives, as late as this afternoon, to hear their concerns and see if there is some way to address them. I still am not sure of the outcome of this meeting but I'm sure, in the spirit of cooperation, we have a much better chance of resolving all of our concerns in an amicable way. I hope that is what we can do.

Mr. Chairman, another area that I would like to make some general comments on is that of inclusive schooling. As expressed in the Standing Committee on Legislation's report, I have some concerns with this funding, and I would like to endorse recommendation 2 of the standing committee's report. As I have pointed out, Mr. Chairman, during consideration of the budget, I think all of us in this House welcomed the extra money that was found for this year for inclusive

schooling, but while we added \$1.5 million to the special needs funding, we cut \$3.5 million over the course of the school year from regular grants. The question is are we robbing Peter to pay Paul? The point being, if we cut regular grants too deeply, the boards won't be able to follow through in providing the services to the special needs students who need to be included. If the class size goes through the roof -- by the way, Mr. Chairman, I am not indicating that that has happened yet; I am just pointing out that that is a concern we have to watch for -- even the additional resources provided for students in inclusive schooling won't be adequate because the initial resources they are to supplement will have been stretched too thin. It is an area we are going to have to watch very closely and be very concerned about.

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Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned earlier, I will be meeting tomorrow with representatives of the school board, so at this point in time, I don't know if Yellowknife Catholic schools are satisfied with the amendments regarding religious programs made at the committee stage. Just for the record, I want to say that I strongly support their right to offer Catholic-based education and will be interested in hearing their comments tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman, I have some other comments to make, but they relate more specifically to individual sections; for instance, AIDS Yellowknife has expressed concern about some of the sections and I would like to bring forward some of those concerns as we go through the document, but I will wait until we get to the clause-by-clause in order to deal with that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do we have further general comments from the committee? Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the comments made by the honourable Member, Mr. Chairman, the matter of fiscal commitment will rest with whether or not education continues, as the Member has supported that education be the number one priority when we made the investment decisions in this House. I appreciate the support he has given during his tenure as a Member in this House over the last four years, as well as other Members.

Despite that support, obviously the fiscal situation we may be encountering as a result of some decisions that have been made, not necessarily by people in this House but by the federal government, we have to review our investment decisions. We have to be innovative in how we allocate resources, recognizing, Mr. Chairman, the seriousness of special needs requirements in our northern communities. So I appreciate the support of the honourable Member.

He had noted earlier that I had met with the Francophone representatives this afternoon. We had a very constructive meeting and I hope that by the end of today or, at the very least early tomorrow morning, we can hear some response to a letter that I will be submitting to them on some of the agreements we had reached to address some of the concerns they have. I intend to submit that letter to them later on today. Thank you very much for those comments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments on Bill 25. Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just have a few comments to make. I think we have been over this bill considerably and I've had a lot of participation. I think one of the things I did want to mention was the appreciation for having the opportunity to participate in the review of the new Education Act. The last go-around was in the 1970s, and I wasn't involved at all with it then. My children were still in the early stages of school and I had just participated in the school system. It worked well for me, at the time.

But, subsequent to the last review of the Education Act, a lot has changed. I had an opportunity to work in the education area, in staff development and training, and some of the things that are being talked about now were concerns then as well.

That dealt with how we were going to deal with the future, the future education of our children; how we were going to meet the standards being set elsewhere and how the territorial system was going to mesh with that. It has been a long standing concern since that term, but I didn't have the opportunity, until now, to participate in it, and I'm glad I did.

The department has said a number of times how important education is; it's a top priority of the

government, and we do spend an awful lot of money on it. The things I've heard my constituents say is that they are also concerned with the future of education and they are glad that there is a review taking place. They've had some input, had opportunity to participate in person at public meetings or through the presentation of reports, either directly or indirectly, by their school boards and other interest groups. We've certainly had ample time to participate. The department places a high priority on education and it's good to see, too, because it is going to play such an important part in our future.

More concerned with what is going into the bill, people were concerned that a high priority be placed on -- teachers, parents and students -- financial considerations. It dominated all the question-and-answer forums I attended. I realize the financial aspect is not in this bill, but I wanted to note where some of the concerns and priorities lay. That was one of the concerns: how future finances are going to handicap us greatly and will not allow us to achieve the objectives and goals we set for our children.

Another big concern was standards. As I said earlier, it was felt that oft-times, there is such a variety of standards being, either inadvertently or deliberately, set that didn't allow students from elsewhere to receive the education they need. People expressed the concern here in Yellowknife that the students from here would not mesh with students from the south in post-secondary institutions in the provinces. They were afraid that they would not be able to keep up, unless we set high standards. They didn't want to see students go from one grade to the next unless they did, in fact, pass the courses they were being tested for. They didn't want to see us have a northern variety of education here and not be able to compete successfully with the southern variety. I hope that isn't happening, but those were the concerns that were expressed. I think the new bill will address some of these things and put those types of things back on track.

The other concern that was expressed -- and I know we are going to make some amendments that will attend to that concern -- is the length of the school year. The school year appeared to the public to be getting shorter and shorter. There were more and more breaks, holidays, and other activities taking precedence over studying. We will be dealing with that in some of the amendments. This concerned students as well. Many students felt that other provinces or countries had longer school years and they were going to be short-changed if they didn't at

least match or exceed them. We see now that we may be a little closer than we think we are to the norm.

People, in the churches and the religious groups that met with us have expressed a very strong concern over the suggestion of removing religion from the school. It was felt that this would not be a good move, that is was something the country was Founded on and that schools and the church have played quite

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an important role in the education of northern students and that to remove that, would be a step backwards. We are going to be looking at that in amendments that may not exactly meet everything that had been suggested to us, but it certainly will go a long way to alleviating the fear that religion and spirituality will not be involved in our schools.

Parental involvement was an area that we heard a lot of concern about and that people had expressed a lot about wanting to get involved. However, in my opinion and others, it isn't just important, it is a must that parents take that responsibility and it rests squarely on the shoulders of parents to ensure that their children are not only given a good education, but are allowed to receive a good education. Allowing them to receive a good education means that there are certain responsibilities that the schools in the Department of Education cannot shoulder.

A student, in order to work, has to have a good night's sleep. They should be home in bed, they should be up in the morning and fed and it should be ensured that the student is directed towards the school, and then placed in the care of the teachers. What happens to the student there should also be the parents' responsibility to ensure that this is going to take place. The women's group that appeared before us stated that. They said they must have some involvement. The schools and the department have recognized this, but the parents themselves must shoulder the responsibility to make sure their children are looked after in order to get that kind of education they want.

I guess the act, in all of the things we have included in here, will address most of the concerns that we've heard along the way. Mr. Chairman, I didn't want to say more than what I've said already. I've participated in this a great deal on behalf of people who, I think, are happy with what we're seeing here.

And we're going to make some more adjustments to this as we go along. My time is up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Whitford. General comments from the Members. Are there any further general comments? Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have a few general comments. First of all, I want to again congratulate the department for the work they've done on this bill. Over the last four or five years, with heavy intensity in the last few months, they've dealt with a lot of issues, they've dealt with a lot of concerns, and they've been really open with trying to deal with the concerns. It's a mammoth task and a very difficult task, because everybody in the Northwest Territories is an expert on education and everybody has very strong opinions as to the education of children. So the patience the Department has shown is very commendable.

I thank the Minister and the deputy minister, Mr. Gerein, and especially Gail Joyce and Janet Grinsted who have sweated blood over this act for years. It's a very good job.

I have a few comments. Most of my concerns have been met. I think Mr. Dent has already said that we're meeting with the School boards tomorrow, and there might be some fine tuning. I think the department has gone a long way to alleviate any concerns that I've had or heard expressed to me by my constituents.

I guess there are a few points that should be put on the record. The first one is to do with the Catholic school system here in Yellowknife. I've heard some concerns in some circles that, there's some kind of an agenda for the government to, somehow or other, weaken the Catholic system. But I'm absolutely satisfied that is not the case. I think the Catholic system in Yellowknife has worked very, very well. They've provided a very good product in their education system, and they continue to have the full support of the government and the Legislative Assembly. I, for one, am very pleased with the things that are happening in the Catholic system. I think they're showing a lot of leadership, a lot of imagination, and doing an excellent job.

The issue of the Francophone parents has been a tough one. It's been a complex issue. There are many, many lawyers. The Minister met today with representatives of the Francophone community, and again, I think we're very close to accommodating the concerns of the Francophone community here in Yellowknife.

Some of the concerns the public school district had were similar to some of the ones the Catholic board had. I think that the clarification in new drafts outlining the power of the Minister, for instance, in choosing a superintendent will go some way to eliminating those concerns. We'll hear tomorrow if there are any other outstanding concerns.

One area which hasn't really been talked about a lot, and I brought it up at the public meeting here because I wanted to be fair to teachers, is that the whole concept of reaccreditation is on the table. I think Mr. Lewis expressed some very legitimate concerns. All of us want to ensure that the teachers stay up to speed with the latest techniques, the latest information, et cetera. We want to make sure that whatever process is set up, it we go that route after five years to reaccredit, we make sure the process is very open and very fair, so that teachers know what is expected of them. It shouldn't be left to the whims of individuals, whether they be principals, civil servants or school board staff.

I think all of us will support movement in that area, but let's make sure the process is transparent, fair and gives us a product that we want. In fact, rather than being looked at as a punishment for teachers, I think, used properly, teachers can use it to demand from their school boards or districts, the right to receive that type of education and upgrading that is very necessary in the teaching profession.

I was very happy to see in the act that we have outlined some of the responsibilities of students. I think it is very important that any time I look in any legislation, when I look at rights, I always want to see some responsibilities in there. We have become a country that is absolutely preoccupied with their rights. At the end of the day, I don't know who is going to pay for all of these rights because no one seems to want to be responsible for how this country works. It is good to outline that the teachers, students, parents and the principal have responsibilities. I was very happy to see that in there.

I am glad to see that the department responded very quickly to the concerns of the Status of Women delegation, as far as providing an atmosphere in a school free of violence and emphasizing equality of rights in the preamble. That was important. I was happy to see that there was absolutely no problem whatsoever from the department and they responded very well with that demand.

One of the recommendations of the committee was the recommendation to do with parent advisory committees. Again, if we were to say that education is a partnership and that parents are a key part of that partnership, we have to demonstrate that with a mechanism in the act where parents can exercise that partnership. My experience in dealing with schools in Yellowknife is that parent advisory committees have been a very important component of the schools. In some schools in the very beginning, they weren't that well accepted. It wasn't until they were pushed, that teachers and principals really saw them as allies. They aren't threats. We have to have that in the act; each school at least has to have the opportunity to have a parent advisory committee.

One of the major concerns we heard was so much of the act was going to be dealt with in the regulations. We have heard that in this House many times. Quite rightly, educators, parents and people across the territories were concerned and the department did respond in the act that in the regulation-making parties, the interested parties will be involved. That is a big step. It doesn't go as far as many people want, but we have to recognize that it is a fair compromise. It allows flexibility on one hand, which is what people have been demanding and, on the other hand, it does provide some level of commitment by the department that they will actually consult with people. It was a very good compromise.

I want to end by saying the basic principle of education to me always has to be -- on top of all the fancy ideas -- excellence in our schools. That is what this is all about. The bottom line is this act isn't just for the parents, boards, politicians or for groupings of political bodies, this is to actually make sure our kids get educated. This is what this is all about. And that's the only real test, at the end of the day, of whether this act works; are our kids being well educated? I don't really care who has the power. I don't care whether the Minister has the power, the local board has the power, or the principal has the power. At the end of the day, it doesn't matter who has the power if the kids don't get a good education.

I think we should get back to the focus and ensure that our kids get a good education. That's the bottom line. With that, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

--- Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Member for Thebacha.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have just a few general comments with regard to the Education Act. First of all, I want to thank the Minister, even though there are seconded many amendments in comparison to many other acts, for bringing forth this Education Act. I think the Education Act needed a total overhaul to address education in the north. There was recognition that the old act was archaic and it was probably very difficult to follow. The lines of responsibility were very unclear, once divisional boards were set up, because the act did not keep up to these amendments and changes.

Mr. Chairman, I know there have been many concerns about the initial act that was sent out, and I know the public meetings addressed many of those concerns; although, I did want to state that there were some concerns that still aren't addressed, according to my constituents. One was with respect to the inclusive schooling policy and the costs of inclusive schooling. This government could dream up and develop all the policies they want but if they can't ensure that departments have enough resources to give proper and adequate programs to students, then their policies aren't worth the paper they are written on.

There is a grave concern across the Northwest Territories about the amount of funding cut from education. I know there are grave concerns in my riding about the number of teachers that have to be laid off because of the lack of funding. These are the concerns that, even though policy development is being taken care of, if they don't have the funding and the resources

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

I'm very happy you're recognizing the clock. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I don't mean to interrupt the honourable Member, but the time being 6:00 pm, I will rise and report progress. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

I call the House back to order. 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. Your committee has been considering Committee Report 11-12(7) and Bill 25 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 21: THIRD 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, by the honourable Member for Sahtu, the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, that Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2, be read for the third time.

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--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

R. SPEAKER:

There is a request for a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

Recorded Vote

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Dent, Mr. Ballantyne, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, Mr. Koe, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Allooloo, Mr. Arngna'naaq, Mr. Pollard, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Whitford, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Patterson, Mrs. Thompson, Mr. Pudlat.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those against, please stand. Thank you. The vote is 16 for the motion, zero against and zero abstaining. The motion is carried unanimously.

--- Carried

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Bill 32 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 is a meeting of the Caucus Subcommittee on Bill C-68 immediately after adjournment this evening. There are meetings for tomorrow at 9:00 am of the Nunavut Caucus; also at 9:00 am of the Chairs' Liaison Committee, and at 10:30 am of the Ordinary Members' Caucus.

Orders of the day for June 15, 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 motion. Mr. Dent. 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Committee Report 11-12(7), Report on the Review of Bill 25 - The Education Act
 - Bill 25, Education Act
 - Bill 34, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1995-96
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 28, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, June 15th, at 1:30 pm.

--- ADJOURNMENT