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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker



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## YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Tuesday, November 7, 2000

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Honourable Jane Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Jake Ootes, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

### ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford):** Good afternoon. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

### ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

#### Minister's Statement 24-14(3): Fire Services Exemplary Services Medal

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I would like to call attention to the award of a Fire Services Exemplary Service Medal to an employee of the Department of Transportation, Mr. David Hessdorfer. David Hessdorfer is a veteran firefighter at the Yellowknife Airport. On behalf of the Office of the Governor General of Canada, I had the honour recently of presenting Mr. Hessdorfer with his award.

Following a lengthy nomination process, the Office of the Governor General approved the award this summer. To receive the award, the nominee must have completed 20 years as a member of a fire service of such high standard to merit the award. In addition to his 20 years with the airport fire service, David has also served more than two years with the City of Yellowknife's fire department as a volunteer firefighter.

Whether performing the general fire and paramedic duties of a professional firefighter, fire hall administration or training new recruits, David has proved a reliable worker who can be counted on at all times. His professional attitude and keen abilities make him a pleasure to work with and a well-respected member of the department.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this award from the Governor General's office is well deserved and that Mr. Hessdorfer stands as an example of the dedication and excellence typical of employees of the Department of Transportation and the territorial public service in general. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Antoine.

#### Minister's Statement 25-14(3): Ceremony at North Slave Correctional Facilities Site

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow morning a very important ceremony will be held in Yellowknife at the site of the new adult and youth correctional

facilities. This ceremony marks the beginning of the construction of these two new facilities.

Respected elders will lead prayers to ask for guidance for everyone who works on this project and for the safety of the workers who build the new facilities. As the project develops, there will be further ceremonies to help make sure the new facilities become a place of healing and reconciliation.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this is the first time we have built a correctional institution in this way and I believe it shows a commitment to the future of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, we often say we need to build stronger communities; part of doing that is dealing with the things that go wrong and make sure they do not happen again.

We have laws to say what is acceptable in our communities and what is not. It is easy to say that a person has hurt the community because they have broken a law. It is not so easy to say what should be done as a result.

In the past, prisons have focused on punishment, but we have learned that in the long term, this does not solve our problems.

In more recent years, the focus has shifted to rehabilitation. We now try to find a way to help offenders grow into strong, healthy people. To accomplish this, we need facilities that build on the best aspects of our cultures here in the North and that help people to find their own path.

Unfortunately, we have been limited by a lack of suitable facilities. Members of this House have raised the issue of the shortage of youth facilities in the North Slave region and have recognized that YCC needs to be replaced. I think we can all agree it is difficult to offer appropriate programs when you do not have room for them.

Mr. Speaker, the new adult and youth facilities in Yellowknife will play an important role in dealing with and reducing crime. In the long run, that is good for all of us. I hope that my colleagues here in the House and everyone in the Northwest Territories will join with me in recognizing this important occasion. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS****Member's Statement on Birthday Wishes for Mr. Kakwi and Mrs. Groenewegen**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure today in that this is a significant day in the history of our government. It is the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday of our Premier.

-- Applause

I am sure we all benefit from that 50 years of experience and learning that is packed in his head. Mr. Kakwi, we all wish you a very happy birthday.

As well, Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting that tomorrow is the birthday of the Deputy Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, no!

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, she is 40 -- and I cannot deceive this House...

-- Laughter

...and we also wish her a very happy birthday. I am sure there is some significance on the Chinese calendar or some other document to the fact that our Premier has his birthday today and the Deputy Premier's is tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, happy birthday, Mr. Premier, and happy birthday to come, Madam Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**Member's Statement on Range Lake North School Fundraising Efforts for the Council for Disabled Persons**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today at noon, I was fortunate to be able to visit my riding at the Range Lake North School where a group of students there have come up with an idea to help raise money for the Northwest Territories Council for Disabled Persons. What they have decided to do is challenge all the kids in our city to donate a cheesecake or a pie to the council auction, which will be held later this month on November 25<sup>th</sup>, I believe. Those pies that will be brought will be auctioned off.

Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, this is one of the most important events that the group has to raise money. I would like to acknowledge the work of the president of the student council, Kathleen Stroeder, and the vice-president, Kim Theil, who thought of this idea and launched it today. I would also like to challenge the Members and staff of the Legislative Assembly to make a contribution towards a pie or a cheesecake so that we can donate them at the event. Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize the fact that this is a group that serves people from all over the Territories, not just our city, and provide services for those in need due to various disabilities. It is an important cause.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the Ministers of the Department of Health and

Social Services and Education, as well as the sponsoring groups of Northwest Territories Council for Disabled Persons, Association for Community Living and YWCA for releasing a very important report yesterday, "Living with Disabilities and Living with Dignity." I am aware of this report from having been briefed on it in Hay River in the summertime and I was looking forward to having this report released. I look forward to reading the report and to working with the government to see what we can do to meet some of the needs of the people in our Territory who are in most need. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Member's Statement on Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government is in the business of providing programs and services to the people we represent. There are many programs that are designed to help the old, the young and the infirm. These programs and services must be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they remain relevant and meet the needs of the people they are supposed to serve.

One such program, Mr. Speaker, is the Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program administered by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Since its inception, this program has been a valuable aid to the seniors in the Northwest Territories in helping them maintain their independence in their own homes. However, Mr. Speaker, there is a need to review this program to ensure that the needs of the seniors and their families continue to be met. The program has not been improved since 1997. The maximum income that each senior's household is allowed needs to be adjusted higher to take into account inflation and a huge increase in fuel and oil prices in this year alone.

Mr. Speaker, in the communities I represent, any household who earns more than \$30,744 per year is not entitled to any assistance under this program. I challenge the Members present to consider whether they would be able to pay taxes, buy food, pay bills and keep a roof over their heads on this amount.

Mr. Speaker, government programs should be designed to ensure that they serve everyone in a fair and equitable manner. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, what guidelines does this government have in place to ensure that all our seniors will be able to meet their heat and fuel demands this year?

It has been four years since this subsidy was introduced. I believe it is time to review this issue in light of the rise in fuel costs. We have to measure whether or not the subsidy is still enough. We shall also be revisiting the ceiling set to see if they are still adequate. Is this \$30,744 still a realistic family income to use as a cut-off or should we look at raising it to an amount more in tune with what is required by the seniors to maintain their independence?

Mr. Speaker, I will be following up with the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment during question period to determine whether he believes that the Seniors' Fuel

Subsidy Program is being delivered in a fair and equitable manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Member's Statement on Aboriginal Programming in NWT School Curriculum**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a people's culture and language form the basis of their life and identity. Mr. Speaker, in a territory where half the population is aboriginal, it is important to have aboriginal culture-focused courses in our schools. However, teaching the ways and culture of aboriginal people in our school systems happens to be sporadic and infrequent.

One then has to look at the curriculum and see where this can be improved. Yes, our students do receive some instruction through Northern Studies in grade 10. Also, aboriginal culture and history are directly addressed in grades 4, 5 and 7. Grades 6, 9 and 10 address it in other teaching units. Dene Kede is taught from kindergarten to grade 6 with expansion to grade 9 this year, but there is no continuity throughout the grade levels, Mr. Speaker. In some cases, aboriginal languages are only taught up to a certain grade level, but they do not carry through to grade 12.

In northern Ontario, grade 6 students are expected to learn of the contributions aboriginal people have made to the political and social life of Canada. The course is called Heritage and Citizenship. Other opportunities are found throughout the curriculum to learn about aboriginal peoples.

In Australia, there is an Aboriginal Studies Association that promotes aboriginal studies for all levels of education. In Canada, SchoolNet may allow teachers and students to explore Canadian aboriginal and social issues, but again, there needs to be a more concerted effort to teach aboriginal culture with consistency at every grade level in the community, Mr. Speaker.

In the Department of Education's report "Towards Excellence", it acknowledges a need to improve support to communities to achieve their culture, heritage and language goals. The approach is to give the communities the flexibility to achieve this. So it appears there is much work to be done in this area still, Mr. Speaker, especially in the area of curriculum development at all grade levels.

I will have some questions for the appropriate Minister when the time comes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mr. Delorey.

**Member's Statement on Need for a Resident Doctor in Hay River**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about a matter that is critical to the citizens of Hay River. Mr. Speaker, we have a population of approximately 3,800 people, with a regional hospital but not one permanent doctor. We have had over the last eight months or so a number

of doctors providing service to Hay River on a locum basis. Mr. Speaker, I feel I am on the campaign trail again saying we need to do something about our health care system.

Here we are a year later, and we are actually in worse shape than we were back then. Mr. Speaker, the fact that doctors are coming from the South to provide locum service is a band-aid solution, a quick fix to a desperate situation. This may be all right for someone coming to see a doctor for a minor complaint, but I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that locum services are not all right for our seniors, our disabled, or persons with chronic diseases that need to be monitored closely. It is critical that a treating physician be acutely aware of their medical history. This cannot be done with doctors who come to town on a three-week stint.

Mr. Speaker, I know how frustrating it can be as I have experienced first-hand how hard it is to even get a medical appointment. It is pretty bad to live in a place like Hay River and be told that you have to go to Yellowknife or High Level to get a medical. Mr. Speaker, I find this situation deplorable. Women in Hay River who are pregnant have to go to Yellowknife in order to give birth to their children, as Hay River is not able to provide this very necessary service to its residents.

Mr. Speaker, for the months of August, September and October 2000, there were 17 Hay River mothers who had to give birth to their children in Yellowknife. Mr. Speaker, it is very important for the residents of Hay River, many of whom were born and raised there, that the birth certificate of their children read Hay River and not Yellowknife. This, Mr. Speaker, has very negative ramifications. Not only is it very expensive for families involved, it creates many hardships. Mr. Speaker, women have to leave home, many times leaving other children and their husbands behind for periods of up to three weeks or more. This, Mr. Speaker, is unacceptable and I will have questions for the Minister later. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**Member's Statement on Coordination in the Delivery of Social Services Programs**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The other day I spoke on the topic of housing and how the growing economy in a number of communities in the Northwest Territories was opening up new windows of opportunity, but it is also making things tough for the disadvantaged, the poor and the sick. Housing is just one of the areas of concern, Mr. Speaker. I work with a number of constituents on various social services issues and there are a couple of common threads that link all of them. We have seen some advances in the last few years in program and service delivery, such as the blending of territorial and federal income support and employment services at the Canada and Northwest Territories Service Centre.

We have seen NGOs and government working as the Minister for Health and Social Services announced a holistic healing program for women. We have seen the YWCA, the Salvation Army and the Women's Centre taking steps to join forces to work on housing solutions. They need our government's backing to be successful. We should be fostering the spirit of partnership, Mr. Speaker, to give better support to the disadvantaged.

These people often have complex problems. The need for housing support, for instance, is often linked with needs for education, for health problems or justice issues related to family violence and abuse.

In working with constituents, I learned that people in these situations go from office to office. They have to explain their situation over and over again to get help. We would do a lot better if we looked at service delivery from the client's point of view, from the point of view of the single mother with two youngsters traipsing around office to office, from voice mail to voice mail to get answers. A single window approach with one explanation, one face-to-face relationship with a skilled worker who has the time and the resources to do a good job would be a big step.

Yesterday, my colleague for Range Lake referenced the burden of social workers. They are not alone. Income support workers have caseloads that I understand are as much as triple their counterparts in other parts of Canada. Right now they are giving us a signal that their network is at the breaking point. Are we listening?

This Assembly's vision statement promises to foster self-reliant, independent citizens, Mr. Speaker. I believe if we put more emphasis on life skill support, we can help people maintain stability and help them get off that cycle of dependence. I look forward to the Ministers and the social services programs working together to benefit the help that we have for the disadvantaged. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

#### **Member's Statement on Zero Tolerance for Violence Policy**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, a motion was passed by Members of this Assembly in support of zero tolerance. In that motion, we challenged other governments, municipal governments and aboriginal governments to adopt this motion.

Mr. Speaker, this motion has caused me to reflect back to previous governments and their attempts to deal with zero tolerance, whether it be at this level or with the staff. It brings to mind a particular issue that I recall being rather heated in my community quite a number of years ago. A policy or directive was established that drug and alcohol workers, those who worked in crisis centres, had to live by the zero tolerance standard as well. If you were going to be dealing with addicts, you had to as well be an abstainer.

That raised an issue where we used to have a program in Inuvik with the facility that dealt with drugs and alcohol. Mr. Speaker, that has caused me to find out if in fact this government continues to hold that practice. Do we request board members of drug and alcohol societies to be following the zero tolerance guidelines? In fact, are they still in place? At the appropriate time, I will be asking the Minister responsible to find out if in fact we still hold this policy in place. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### **Member's Statement on Devolution of Student Financial Assistance Programs**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to touch briefly on the issues of student financial assistance. This is an issue that constantly comes before this House. I am now in my fifth year and since I have come here, I know that it has been raised by myself and many of my colleagues, the concerns about the problems, the complaints that we get from constituents.

The department continues to try to shore-up the system they have in headquarters. They put in advanced, impersonal voice mails. They have put out more forms. They have put out more information. The complaints do not go away, Mr. Speaker, simply because, in my opinion, that is not a program that should be delivered out of headquarters. This is a program that has to be moved as close to the students as possible, to the regional centres, to the large communities where there are career development officers.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, we do not receive, and I do not receive as an MLA, anywhere near the complaints about income support which is delivered at the community level by social workers where there are appeal committees as I do about student financial assistance because it is a headquarters program. It comes into the Minister's office. It comes into our office and into this House.

So there are fundamental concerns about the receptiveness in all the communities by aboriginal governments and regional centres to have this devolved. The students have asked for it. They have begged for it. This government continues to keep a stranglehold on this program. I have no reason why. It makes no sense. I cannot figure it out after five years. It is shored-up with more sand bags, more machine guns to man the towers and keep this program from the people.

It does not make good government sense, Mr. Speaker, so I would hope that this government would finally take a look at seriously devolving this program. We have made changes that have left some of our students adrift without adequate funding. We have changed the terms of the student financial assistance contract for some of them. Others that should have been entitled to twelve only get eight semesters, leaving some of them incomplete in their studies, having to scramble for money.

If this was located at the community level, at the regional level, Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that we would not be standing up in this House day after day, year after year, talking to the Minister trying to get his attention to move this program where it belongs, closer to the students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Merci, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

#### **Member's Statement on Grandfathering Changes to the Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, residents of the Northwest Territories should be able to trust their



government to deliver what it promises. When government makes a commitment about a program, the public should know it is a pledge. For example, when we promised to support harvesters, that support should be delivered. At self-government tables, aboriginal governments should be able to count on the Government of the Northwest Territories' word.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to hear the Premier agree with this when I questioned him last Wednesday. I note his response on page 1483 of unedited Hansard.

Not that, Mr. Speaker, the change cannot or will not happen, but when change takes place, promises still need to be respected. Typically, this government does. When the salary for a position is reduced through collective bargaining, the incumbent is protected. Their salary may be red circled, but they are still protected. In the past, when the Business Incentive Policy was changed, firms were grandfathered.

Mr. Speaker, our students deserve the same. I have a constituent who, prior to embarking on a new journey to learn a profession, went to student financial assistance to find out what she would qualify for. She was told that if successful academically, she would qualify for remissible loans through to the end of her program. After one semester in her program, the rules were changed. She no longer qualifies for remissible loans. Mr. Speaker, they must now be repaid.

Mr. Speaker, my constituent is a mature student with a family. Before making a major commitment to change her life and go back to school, she thought long and hard about the benefits available from student financial assistance and her personal financial situation. Mr. Speaker, she was told what to expect, a promise was made. After more than 20 years away from school, she went back. A change part way through a program like that is unfair.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories now has a responsibility to follow up its commitment to her and students like her by grandfathering their benefits to the same level that they were promised. As we moved into the new program, students who were receiving student financial assistance should not have received less than they would have under the old rules. Anything less is neither fair nor equitable, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my constituent and others in the same situation deserve to have this government stand by its promises.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

#### **Member's Statement on High Cost of Water and Sewage Services in Fort McPherson**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I raised a concern in regard to the water system and the costs that have increased in the community of Fort McPherson. Mr. Speaker, the thing that alarmed me in walking through the Great Hall was taking a look at the visitors' book, where visitors who come to this gallery put their name in the book and also a comment or two.

Mr. Speaker, I was surprised to read the comments from the mayor of Fort McPherson, "The meeting never went well", and

the comment from John Smith, the same comment but adding "a lack of government support" in that important phrase.

We are here to serve the people, not to serve ourselves, but yet Mr. Speaker, from the meeting that was held yesterday and the comments that I read in the visitors book in the Great Hall, it clearly states that there was no outcome to the satisfaction of the mayor of Fort McPherson, the SAO, and myself as the MLA for the riding. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of questions to be answered. Why was it that information was withheld from the community of Fort McPherson and the residents of Fort McPherson on the building practice of the Department of Public Works and Services?

The information was only revealed after I made a personal sit-down with the Minister to ask for a list of items and information for the communities. When the community met with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, they were told, after asking for detailed cost breakdowns on a monthly basis, that the information could not be provided.

Yet every month they receive in the mail an invoice for maintenance of the Fort McPherson water plant for \$67,000. No questions asked. Pay the bill and be quiet. Mr. Speaker, this problem has been apparent for over two years and this government has made it their priority. Saying it is not a priority of government or saying that it does not stand the test to require emergency funding is not called for. Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister responsible questions on this matter later.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

#### **Member's Statement on Changes to the Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a government, our responsibility is to provide programs and services that meet the needs of our people. As MLAs, one of our jobs is to share concerns that people are having with the system. Often this comes across as a series of complaints, whereas in fact they are suggestions to help us make our government system more effective for the people it serves. Having said that, today I would like to focus on this government's attempts to make the student financial system more effective.

The overwhelming reaction to people I have talked with is that the changes that were recently made to the system need to be changed. To begin with, the wording of the application form is not user-friendly. In my region, the majority of the students speak English as a second language. While I recognize that the department provides a 108-page guide to explain how to fill out the application form, this is simply unrealistic and frustrating to many applicants and even to the teachers that are helping students fill out these forms. I seriously wonder why we would create an application that requires over 100 pages to explain how to fill out the forms. At the appropriate time, I will have questions for the Minister responsible for Education about the SFA program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Member's Statement on Auditor General's Report to the NWT Legislative Assembly**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to talk about the Auditor General's report to the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly that we will be getting to in committee of the whole. Every year, Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General provides a report to help ensure accountability to the spending of public funds. In effect, they follow the cash right to the program and service delivery level. Typically, the Auditor General makes observations or recommendations to government. It is then up to this House and up to the public to ensure these issues are addressed and corrected.

Mr. Speaker, this goes for traditional line departments as well as crown corporations of this government. After all, Mr. Speaker, it is all public money. To quote the Auditor General Report year ended March 31, 1995, Mr. Speaker:

"Territorial corporations have a different accountability relationship to the Legislative Assembly from that of government departments. Many have boards of directors and other interested stakeholders. Governments have an obligation to make sure that public spending through public agencies meets the same standards for achieving results as departmental spending."

Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General, in this year's report, makes some revealing observations in the area of the Northwest Territories Development Corporation. This year's report, Mr. Speaker, taken in isolation, I am sure the public will wonder:

1. How the Development Corporation can over-expend public money without approval;
2. How the Development Corporation can provide no information as to whether or not they are achieving their mandate; and
3. How they can operate on the basis of a confidential record-of-decision issued by FMB in 1989, Mr. Speaker.

However, taken together with the Auditor General's recommendations from the past five years, the public is likely to wonder how the Development Corporation ever survived this long, given an obvious lack of accountability for public funds.

So, Mr. Speaker, when the government responds to the Auditor General's observations and our committee's recommendations this year, before we take them at their word, let us keep in mind their track record. Mr. Speaker, we say that the auditors are the ones who come around after the battle's been lost, stabbed and wounded. I say, Mr. Speaker, this government continues to defy all odds and drag itself back to the field of battle year after year undaunted. It is truly amazing, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

**Member's Statement on Congratulations to New Executive of the Gwich'in Tribal Council**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am pleased to ask my colleagues to share with me as I extend my congratulations to Mr. Fred Carmichael on his election last evening as the new president of the Gwich'in Tribal Council. Also, to Mr. Wilbert Firth who has been elected vice-president. As you know, Mr. Carmichael is a well respected, well-known aviator and an individual throughout the Mackenzie Delta and across the Northwest Territories. I am confident both will provide strong leadership and be able to represent the Gwich'in people of the Mackenzie Delta very well. I look forward to working with both Fred and Wilbert in their new leadership roles with the Gwich'in Nation.

I also wish to recognize the efforts of Mr. Richard Nerysoo, the outgoing president, for his years of hard work and dedication he provided to the Gwich'in people of the Mackenzie Delta. I wish him well and all the best in his future endeavours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Allen. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize a group of young people in the gallery who are studying about government. It is Madam Le Doze's grade 5 French immersion class from J.H. Sissons.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Bienvenue. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize in the gallery David Hessdorfer, the recipient of the Governor General of Canada Fire Service Exemplary Service Medal.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize in the gallery a former Member of the Legislative Assembly and a Minister of the government, now a senator for the Northwest Territories, our good friend, Senator Nick Sibbeston.

-- Applause

I thought he was going to make a speech there for awhile. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize my constituent, Mr. Nick Sibbeston. He

was a pioneer in this Legislative Assembly for many years and was a leader of this government, Minister and now he is a Senator. I would like to welcome him to the House as well. Mahsi.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Oral...I am sorry, Mr. Braden. I will return to Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Speaker's prerogative. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is always a pleasure to see families here in the Assembly and along with my colleague, the Minister for Transportation, I would like to recognize from the riding of Great Slave, Mr. Hessdorfer, his wife Joyce, son Craig and daughter Sheila.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. I would like to welcome everyone who has taken the time to come and visit us. Welcome to the Assembly. I hope you stay for question period, which is next. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

#### ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

##### Question 215-14(3): Eligibility for Student Financial Assistance

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question follows up from my statement. Clearly one incentive my constituent had for going back to school was the financial attractiveness for remissible loans. She got into the program with this incentive from the government only to have it changed to a much less beneficial program, just like a shopper going into a store for a product advertised at a low price only to be told there are no more available, but there is something available at a higher price. Student financial assistance is now offered as part of a bait and switch campaign.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment stand behind the promises made by his staff and grandfather students whose entitlements were reduced with the recent changes to the student financial assistance program?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

##### Return to Question 215-14(3): Eligibility for Student Financial Assistance

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the issues I have to refer back to is the Minister's Forum on Student Financial Assistance. Out of that came some recommendations that the focus should be on northern schooled and aboriginal students and that the amount of money to be given to students was to be raised and that the redesign be provided within the financial framework. Mr. Speaker, we have done that. We have provided more money for students. We have focused on more than schooled students and aboriginal students and we have done that within the financial framework. As a matter of fact, we added \$500,000 to the framework, Mr. Speaker. So to live within that, we had to recognize what we could do within the program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

##### Supplementary to Question 215-14(3): Eligibility for Student Financial Assistance

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sounded to me like the Minister was saying no, he will not stand behind the promises made. Mr. Speaker, the Minister says that he had to make these changes to live within the financial constraints of the program. Last year, his department lapsed over \$800,000 in student financial assistance.

Mr. Speaker, how can this Minister say that we could not deal with these very few students who would be affected by this and still stand behind the promises this government made? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

##### Further Return to Question 215-14(3): Eligibility for Student Financial Assistance

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, last year, as Mr. Dent says, and that particular department was under another Minister at that time for a ten-month period. The enrolments are done in the fall and close to winter, Mr. Speaker. So the lapsing of the funding obviously was a case of inappropriate allocations. Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that we have modeled this system and our model is coming in on target. We do not expect to lapse a lot of money this year, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. I must caution Members about references to former positions in government, former Ministers and portfolios. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent, supplementary.

##### Supplementary to Question 215-14(3): Eligibility for Student Financial Assistance

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the amount of money that is in the program this year is about the same as it was last year and the reductions to some students, the increases to others, should all balance out. I would argue that there cannot be very many students that would be affected by this.

So can the Minister tell us, using the exact same rules that used to apply to student financial assistance, how many students have been cut off from support who would have qualified for support under the old rules?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

##### Further Return to Question 215-14(3): Eligibility for Student Financial Assistance

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has to be remembered that the amount of money students receive has been increased. We have increased the amount of assistance

for tuition and for books and for living allowance. So there is a lot more money going to students. Our model is proving that we are going to be fairly accurate with our estimates this year and we have put in \$500,000 extra, Mr. Speaker. The number of students who could be affected by this depends on the fashion in which you look at transition and grandfathering.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 215-14(3): Eligibility for Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that there are different ways of looking at this. I asked the Minister if he could give me the numbers in terms of the number of students who have been affected. If we used the old rules, how many people would have received assistance this year who are no longer receiving assistance? Can he give us an actual number?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 215-14(3): Eligibility for Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the confusion that lies in there is, is he talking about transition? Is he talking about grandfathering? What is the definition of grandfathering? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 216-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Service Costs**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. It is in regard to the water system cost breakdown in the community of Fort McPherson.

My concern is more around the accessibility of information for the municipalities to have access to actual cost breakdowns in regard to the expenditures of those invoices and itemizing those invoices so you know exactly what those invoices refer to and what those amounts are being paid for.

In regard to the breakdown that I mentioned in my statement, the question was asked at a meeting in Fort McPherson to the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to provide this information. They were basically told that they would not provide that information or they could not share that information with them.

I would like to ask the honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs why that practice is being practiced within the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs in withholding information from the municipalities within our communities?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

**Return to Question 216-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Service Costs**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not believe that the information was withheld from the community. We have gone out and worked very diligently to keep them informed. We understand the problems the community is having with their billing. We tried to mediate a solution yesterday. Unfortunately, it was not acceptable and I have no answer as to how we are going to achieve some favourable results. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 216-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Service Costs**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when an MLA gets involved and has to request information, either through this House or directed to a Minister, to have that information revealed to his municipality where I received a letter from my municipality stating that they requested that information and they also requested an investigation on what is happening. That request was to myself as a Member of this House who represents the residents of my riding.

I had to write a letter to the Minister responsible for Public Works requesting that information. Also, I called people within your department requesting that information. So I ask again, why is it that this information was withheld from the municipality of Fort McPherson?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 216-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Service Costs**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not aware that any information was withheld. I shall take that question as notice and respond back to the Member. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Allen. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 217-14(3): Review of Seniors' Fuel Subsidy**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, there is a serious need to revisit the seniors' fuel subsidy in light of the rising cost of living and rate of inflation. Can the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment inform this Assembly whether there has been any systematic review of this program? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 217-14(3): Review of Seniors' Fuel Subsidy**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the program has been in effect since 1995. I do not believe it has had a review. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 217-14(3): Review of Seniors' Fuel Subsidy**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In light that there has not been a review in some time, and the current maximum family income for fuel subsidy is \$30,744, and that does not seem to be adequate given that the fuel prices have increased and the cost of living has increased, would the Minister consider raising that ceiling to a higher amount as a result of the higher cost of living? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 217-14(3): Review of Seniors' Fuel Subsidy**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The amount, of course, is done by zone. It is different in different zones. We have three zones. One includes the communities of Dettah, Enterprise, Fort Providence, Hay River, and that area. Then we have the zone that is halfway to the Arctic coast, and then the zone north of there. We have different amounts for those zones. We can certainly have a look at seeing how applicable this amount is today, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 217-14(3): Review of Seniors' Fuel Subsidy**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, if that answer results into a review, I would also like to ask if the Minister would consider calculation of a cost that would entail supplying a subsidy to all the seniors in the North? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** I am not sure of the question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if I could seek clarification from the Member?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. McLeod, would you be able to clarify that question?

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister was asking if he would consider reviewing the program and costing out what it would take to include all the seniors in the Northwest Territories under this program.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Minister Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 217-14(3): Review of Seniors' Fuel Subsidy**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We would have to take into consideration other programs that we have in place. We can certainly have a look at it, Mr. Speaker, but I do not know what kind of time frame could be supplied. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 217-14(3): Review of Seniors' Fuel Subsidy**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you. I take that as a commitment, and I would like to ask if there would be any kind of time frame that we would be looking at for a review. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. This is a bit of a confusing question because I think that is what the Minister wondered about as well. Mr. Minister, you may answer if you choose.

**Further Return to Question 217-14(3): Review of Seniors' Fuel Subsidy**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we would have to see what kind of workload this entails. I cannot make a commitment on the time frame. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Question 218-14(3): Aboriginal Studies and Self-Esteem**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, aboriginal studies in the curriculum relate to self-confidence by aboriginal people and how that relates to self-esteem. Self-esteem has always been an aboriginal issue in terms of education. With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Education, what effort is the Department of Education making to ensure aboriginal culture is taught at every grade level in the school system? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 218-14(3): Aboriginal Studies and Self-Esteem**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of programs that the department runs that contain aboriginal language content and aboriginal culture matters. For example, we have Dene Kede, which is taught up to grade 6 and will be expanded to include grades 7, 8, and 9. As well, we have Inuuqatigiit, which is a similar program.

The teaching and learning centres are continually working on material and resources that could be used for aboriginal languages, could be used for aboriginal content. There are a variety of these. In addition, the Western Canadian Protocol, the aboriginal language area is being headed by the territorial government to include aboriginal culture in the social studies framework. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 218-14(3): Aboriginal Studies and Self-Esteem**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, regarding the Minister's answers, I acknowledged quite a bit of that in my Member's statement and it is great work that they are doing. However, as I pointed out in my Member's statement, there is no continuity in the delivery of aboriginal language and aboriginal curriculum. I would like to ask the Minister for the Department of Education what he plans to do to ensure that there is continuity in the delivery of aboriginal curriculum? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 218-14(3): Aboriginal Studies and Self-Esteem**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a variety of programs that communities and schools and districts can choose from in the curriculum. Northern studies program is one, for example, and Dene Kede, as I mentioned. These are available. Also, schools can choose to provide first language in the aboriginal language if they so choose. So it is partially up to the community in consultation, of course, with the district education councils. A lot of authority is passed on at the community level in that respect. We do feel that the programs are consistent across the board. The curriculum is standard. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 218-14(3): Aboriginal Studies and Self-Esteem**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the schools are going to pick and choose, I do not think there is any continuity in that. What I would like to know is are there any other aboriginal cultures outside the Northwest Territories, such as the Aztec culture and history, being taught in our school system? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 218-14(3): Aboriginal Studies and Self-Esteem**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member has a very good point. What is taught in terms of North American aboriginal history within our system? That is one that I have already spoken to the department about to ensure that they start addressing these issues and bring it forward to the teaching and learning centres, as well as to the district education councils. I meet on a semi-annual basis with the chairs, so this could be a subject of discussion again in that respect. I appreciate the Member's concern. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 218-14(3): Aboriginal Studies and Self-Esteem**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The South Slave Divisional Educational Council was allocated \$15.2 million for the 1999-2000 school year. What portion of that amount went to teaching about aboriginal culture, Mr. Speaker? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 218-14(3): Aboriginal Studies and Self-Esteem**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have to take that as notice because I do not have the answer on that, but I will get the answer for the Member. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The supplementary has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

**Question 219-14(3): Assistance to Hay River Families**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated in my Member's statement, the fact that women have to leave Hay River and come to Yellowknife to give birth has many negative impacts. For most families, the birth of a child is a family event. There are many things that make this next to impossible when women have to come to Yellowknife. For example, husbands are working and they may have other children who are in school at the present time. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services what we can do to help these families that have to leave Hay River and come to Yellowknife to give birth? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Return to Question 219-14(3): Assistance to Hay River Families**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, obviously the best solution to this problem would be if we could recruit some resident positions for Hay River. However, in the immediate future, it does not seem as if that is going to happen, although the health board and the department have been very active in attempting to recruit physicians for Hay River. Now when patients, mothers need to come here to have babies, they are asked to come three weeks in advance of the delivery date. That does cause issues of separation from family, care for the other children that may be in the family, accommodation and travel. It raises a lot of not only financial, but also practical issues for families.

Recognizing that, Mr. Speaker, I have asked the department to look at what kind of support we might be able to offer to women from Hay River and other communities, for that matter, who find themselves having to come into the community ahead of time. I think it is a very important issue the Member raises, and certainly we hear about it in Hay River as a very high priority. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 219-14(3): Assistance to Hay River Families**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the Minister raises a point of cost factor and when you look at having to come to Yellowknife for three weeks and being responsible for travel, accommodations and meals, for a lot of the women, they do not have...they are not covered by any plan, and that gets to be very expensive. Could the Minister inform us as to whether there are dollars in place to be able to help these families that are finding themselves in that situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 219-14(3): Assistance to Hay River Families**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the patient or the mother themselves, there is accommodation available through the boarding home here, but that does not take into account that husbands may wish to accompany women to be with them and they would not be able to access that service. I have asked the department to look at what we might be able to do in terms of temporary accommodation for them to offset the costs of this.

As far as travel goes, it is like any other medical travel. Only those people who do not qualify for full coverage and are involved in the co-payment would be expected to pay. However, those people are a fairly significant portion of the population in Hay River. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 219-14(3): Assistance to Hay River Families**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was wondering what other professionals in Hay River in need of, apart from a full-time doctor, to enable women to give birth in their home community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 219-14(3): Assistance to Hay River Families**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Mr. Speaker, it is quite a well known fact that a lot of young doctors who are graduating from medical schools now are not interested in obstetrics. They are not interested in delivering babies. So even in some of the communities that do have resident physicians, birthing is still a problem. To the best of my knowledge, if Hay River did have a qualified physician and also a physician with a specialty in being able to offer anaesthetic services, that is all that would be required. A GP with a specialty designation for anaesthetics is all that would be required in order to reinstate the service in Hay River for delivering babies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 219-14(3): Assistance to Hay River Families**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have done a bit of research in other jurisdictions in the Western Arctic with regard to their doctor situation. In Inuvik, they have a population of 3,500 and currently employ 5.5 doctors. In Fort Smith, they currently employ two permanent doctors with a population of 2,500. In Yellowknife, they employ 20 doctors with a population of 18,000. Mr. Speaker, 20 doctors in Yellowknife seems to be a pretty rich situation. Is there anything the Minister can do to supply Hay River with a doctor out of Yellowknife on a part-time basis or on a rotation basis that can enable Hay River women to stay and give birth in their own community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 219-14(3): Assistance to Hay River Families**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the specialists do travel to the communities, including Hay River, to provide specialty services. As far as redeploying physicians from Yellowknife to serve Hay River on a rotating basis, I do not know. We have just got up to 20 physicians and that is not a full complement for Yellowknife either. I think that those physicians work under contract to the Yellowknife Health and Social Services Board. I do not know if there would be any interest in providing that kind of service in Hay River. It is certainly a question we could ask, but I think that we have just recently alleviated the very serious shortage in Yellowknife as well.

I would say that 20 is not a full complement of physicians here yet. If they had a full complement of physicians, I should say, that may be something that could be posed to them as a question, but right now I do not think that the workforce here would facilitate that. We have to be creative. We have to look at all different kinds of options. The Member mentioned that there are physicians resident in other major communities and the CEO of the Hay River board informs me that it is not a money issue. It is just trying to find a physician that matches the community and certainly there is a shortage Canada-wide, so we are doing our best to address that problem. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Question 220-14(3): Zero Tolerance Challenge Outside Government**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question goes as well to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. In my Member's statement, I discussed the past where the government put into practice zero tolerance for its staff at drug and alcohol centres. I would like to know is that practice still in place here in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Madam Groenewegen.

**Return to Question 220-14(3): Zero Tolerance Challenge Outside Government**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my information tells me that indeed the Member is correct. In the early '90s, it was the policy of the department that drug and alcohol workers not drink or consume drugs. I do not know if that was called zero tolerance or it was some kind of a sobriety clause that was attached to their employment. In the mid-90s, responsibility for alcohol and drug workers was transferred to non-government agencies and so with that transfer did not come such a policy. So if we were to suggest such a thing, it would be up to the agencies who actually employ the drug and alcohol workers to implement it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 220-14(3): Zero Tolerance Challenge Outside Government**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we could give our motion a little more bite if we went back to the groups and ask them to put this in place. We are challenging other government leaders to take up our stance on zero tolerance. Are there any plans to proceed to boards and request them to follow zero tolerance? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 220-14(3): Zero Tolerance Challenge Outside Government**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is referring to zero tolerance, which is a terminology which refers to family violence and violence. I do not think it specifically refers to the consumption of alcohol. As far as what we might do as the government in reference to the zero tolerance, we have challenged other governments and other leaders and communities to make a proclamation, sign a proclamation in respect to zero tolerance for violence.

As far as the sobriety condition for drug and alcohol workers or codes of conducts, those are the kinds of things that we can set out prototypes of standards for non-government agencies, accommodate them in that way and then leave it up to them whether their boards of directors would like to adopt such a policy. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 220-14(3): Zero Tolerance Challenge Outside Government**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fact is we do fund these organizations from public monies, is there an avenue that is open that we could challenge the boards from within the realm of your department to institute something

along these lines of zero tolerance just to give more bite to what we have done to try to be more proactive? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 220-14(3): Zero Tolerance Challenge Outside Government**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what we could commit to do is develop a code of conduct that would be standardized. It could then go out to the various regions and the various agencies and they could then take it to their boards and see if there would be an interest in adopting it rather than just asking people to do it without anything in hand that might be an example of such a code of conduct. I could commit to our department developing that.

As for the funding that we offer to these agencies, whether or not we could make that a condition of the funding or not, I do not know. I would have to think about that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 220-14(3): Zero Tolerance Challenge Outside Government**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would not want to cut off any funding from the already poor state we find ourselves in when it comes to drug and alcohol facilities in the Northwest Territories. The Minister did state she could put this in place. I think what she just suggested is an excellent idea, so my question is will she, in fact, look at developing this and bringing it forward to the health boards and other boards out there that deal with this critical area? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 220-14(3): Zero Tolerance Challenge Outside Government**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to work on such a thing and I would also invite any other Members who have a particular interest in this that would want to have input to work with me on such a prototype of a code of conduct. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

**Question 221-14(3): Application for Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Education, the Honourable Jake Ootes. In my statement, I emphasized the frustration people feel with the complex application form for student financial assistance. Most students need an adult, either a parent, a counsellor or a teacher, to assist them in filling out the application form. Often this form is confusing even to adults. Will the Minister get the department to simplify the application form? Thank you.



**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 221-14(3): Application for Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, some time ago I directed the department to review all the areas of administration on student financial assistance, including the student financial assistance guidebook and the application forms. We have taken a number of steps already, Mr. Speaker, to correct a lot of those areas. One of those includes the application form.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 221-14(3): Application for Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This fall, many of my constituents applied for adult basic education at Aurora College campus here in Yellowknife. Ninety applications were received for this program. The college had room for 60 students. The day classes began and 12 students showed up. The reason the other 48 students did not show was because they did not know whether or not they were accepted for student financial assistance.

The only communication students had was with the department's answering machine, which was located at one office in Yellowknife. Can the Minister look at setting up offices outside of Yellowknife? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 221-14(3): Application for Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was a compressed time frame in which to introduce a lot of the changes and problems were encountered. With regard to the area of service being provided in other regions, we have addressed that issue as well. I have asked the department to ensure that we provide as much information as possible to the regional career centres and involve members from the career centres in the administration of student financial assistance. Some are coming into Yellowknife for training on that end. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 221-14(3): Application for Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As teachers are most likely to assist students in filling out these application forms, we do have a regional board established in the Dogrib Region. Can you, Minister, look at having student financial assistance services turned over to the Dogrib Community Services Board? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 221-14(3): Application for Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a first step, as I stated, we are bringing regional career centre officers in to work with our SFA staff here in Yellowknife to see how the system works. We are training them on our computer system. We know the results will be better service in the future and career staff will be playing an increasing role and an active role with teachers and counsellors, so they can become aware of the programs and become more knowledgeable to assist students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 221-14(3): Application for Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question for the Minister was if he was willing to turn over financial services into the Dogrib Region. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 221-14(3): Application for Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a process to deal with self-government issues and that is handled through the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**Question 222-14(3): Coordinated Delivery of Social Programs**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. I am sure, given that tomorrow she will be a year older, that she is going to be that much wiser and the question is going to be very well answered.

Mr. Speaker, we have expressed concern in this House about the caseloads of social workers and others in that whole social services area. Over time, government has developed a stovepipe approach to delivering programs in isolation.

Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the Minister could tell us whether she has reviewed with her colleagues in all the other social program envelope departments, the mandates and policies that the departments have so that we can look at them in terms of delivering them in a more coordinated fashion? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Return to Question 222-14(3): Coordinated Delivery of Social Programs**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the deputies of the social departments do work together on quite a regular basis with respect to the programs and services that are being delivered. As far as Ministers of the social departments, we have been considering harmonization of services to certain sectors of the population as opposed to harmonization of policies and practices, but certainly if the Member could provide us with more detail, it is something we could look at. We have looked at it more in terms of programs and services to specific groups in the North. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary to Question 222-14(3): Coordinated Delivery of Social Programs**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps one example, and it is anecdotal, but I will offer it, is that there are workers who handle case loads say in the correctional services, who have work loads of perhaps ten clients. There are workers in the income support side who have case loads of over 100. Are those areas where the departments could get together to balance the work load and put resources where they are most needed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 222-14(3): Coordinated Delivery of Social Programs**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, where different departments have certain types of professionals working for them, it is something that we could look at. I would not say that any of the departments would have a situation where they are over-staffed. Certainly we do recognize that issue of the social workers that Mr. Braden refers to. I did address that briefly in the House yesterday and we are working with the Yellowknife board and the workers and the union to find a solution to that particular situation. I would not be aware of any workers with specific credentials who are working in other departments who would not have a significant work load as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary to Question 222-14(3): Coordinated Delivery of Social Programs**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister did indeed address the crisis in the social worker area. I wanted to make a point that perhaps rather than hiring more part-time workers, we could look elsewhere within our own government to make better use of our resources.

In that respect, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask if there are standardized benchmarks or performance measurement standards for front line workers in the social services area that could be applied to solving this kind of crisis? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 222-14(3): Coordinated Delivery of Social Programs**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are certain credentials that are looked for in social workers, front line workers who do work in the area of social work. When they do specific things though, such as child protection, they receive specific training related to that and that is not necessarily the kind of specialized training that other social workers who may work for hospitals or the Department of Justice or any other placement they may be trained in. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Question 223-14(3): Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is addressed to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment and it is on the issue of the student financial assistance program. My colleague for North Slave made it very clear that they are interested in having that program transferred, devolved down to their region, not through land claims right now, not through self-government, but devolved because they have a divisional board. I asked the question in this House repeatedly, why does this government hang on to that program with such a desperate grip and insist on administering it out of headquarters in spite of the endless problems and complaints? Can the Minister explain to this House why?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 223-14(3): Student Financial Assistance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have a machine gun over here holding anybody hostage over this. We are working towards ensuring it is delivered in a better way and that it is delivered through the regional offices. As I mentioned earlier, we are starting to bring career officers into headquarters. Perhaps it should have been done years ago, but in any event, we are moving on it. As well, we have a fantastic computer system that is starting to run very efficiently and can be accessed by all regions. Down the road, it can be accessed by students as well, to apply online. We have five people, Mr. Speaker, who work in this area. What are we going to devolve? We need to train people in the regional career centres and that is the move we are making. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 223-14(3): Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I sift through the verbiage trying to get to the essence of the reply,

do I understand the Minister to say yes, they are going to devolve the programs to the regions? They are going to train the career development staff? Or is he saying they are just bringing staff in to show them what a wonderful system we have in Yellowknife and that Yellowknife will continue to be the choke point in this very important system? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The question was at the beginning, Mr. Ootes. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 223-14(3): Student Financial Assistance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, we are starting to deliver a lot of this online. Students can apply online, which will facilitate the system tremendously. We are training career officers to be of assistance to teachers, to career guidance counsellors in the schools and that is the process we are following. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 223-14(3): Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the government can devolve and have income support run successfully in the communities, why can student financial assistance not be given the same kind of opportunity? My question to the Minister is when will this program be devolved to the South Slave, to the Dogribs, to the Yellowknife district office, to the Inuvik and Beaufort-Delta region, to the Sahtu? When, Mr. Speaker? When will it be devolved?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Minister Ootes, the question appears to be when.

**Further Return to Question 223-14(3): Student Financial Assistance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is getting very repetitive. We have five people working on this program at headquarters. We are training people at the regional career centres and we are delivering and making access for students to access the system online, all of which will facilitate a much better system. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 223-14(3): Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this regard, the Minister sounds like the captain of the Titanic trying to reassure his passengers. You can make it better in headquarters. The people of the South Slave would like to know will they be able to have that program delivered in Hay River and in Fort Smith where they know the students and they can do the applications and hand out the money? When can they be able to do that? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 223-14(3): Student Financial Assistance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, I just mentioned we are training the career development officers in all the areas. We are bringing them into headquarters. They are going to be dealing with students to help them fill out the application forms, et cetera. You still need somewhere a computer or whatever to deliver the program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Question 224-14(3): Public Release of Loan Information**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for RWED and it relates to the Auditor General's report. The Auditor General observed that in the various different ways that this government loans out money, repayable loans to small businesses or individuals, we do not publicize the amount, the type of project, the expected repayment terms. This is common practice in other jurisdictions. Can the Minister tell us why we do not make this information public? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. I will have to rule that question out of order. It appears the question is related to a matter that is before committee of the whole. We do not ask questions on matters that are before committee. Sorry, Mr. Bell. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**Question 225-14(3): Hotel Room Tax Survey**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today goes to the Minister responsible for Finance and it is in regard to the hotel tax, Mr. Speaker. I believe it is a common understanding that the Minister had hired someone to do a survey and hired this person to go out and ask all sorts of questions about what to do about the hotel tax. I would like to know whether or not the Minister has received the answers to that study and when he is willing to share that information with us.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**Return to Question 225-14(3): Hotel Room Tax Survey**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I expect to have the report from the individual by the end of November. I have not seen a report yet. When I do have it and whenever we get into a discussion on the hotel tax, I will be very happy to share it.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary to Question 225-14(3): Hotel Room Tax Survey**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister advise as to how much the study is going to cost the government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 225-14(3): Hotel Room Tax Survey**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that as notice. I do not know the exact amount of the contract.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. The question has been taken as notice. Order, please. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Question 226-14(3): Grandfathering Remissible Loan**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is again for the Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Earlier today, the Minister talked about the difficulty of having a definition for transition or grandfathering when developing numbers.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer to provide such definitions for him, if that would be helpful. Also, the Minister brought up the report of the Ministerial Forum on Student Financial Assistance. Having played a small part in that forum, I am fairly familiar with the report. Mr. Speaker, nowhere in that report does it recommend that students currently in the system have the remissible loans ripped away from them. Nowhere in there does it say that. So, Mr. Speaker, will this Minister agree to take a look at grandfathering students who have lost their remissible loans?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 226-14(3): Grandfathering Remissible Loan**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have implemented the redesign and they were based on decisions made last spring. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in transition to the new program, some students gained access to additional semesters and some have lost. Would the Minister say that is fair and equitable, that some people are being treated differently?

**MR. SPEAKER:** I would ask the honourable Member to rephrase that. It appears he is asking an opinion of the Minister and that is not permitted under our rules. Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 226-14(3): Grandfathering Remissible Loan**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in transition to the new program, some students have been offered more semesters of assistance while students like the constituent I spoke of earlier have lost semesters of remissible loans. Can the Minister tell me how the department justifies treating these people differently? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 226-14(3): Grandfathering Remissible Loan**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the transition was done in consultation with the standing committees. At the time, it was pointed out that we were going to increase the number of semesters in certain areas. We have not cut anyone off, Mr. Speaker. There is still availability for all students to access repayable loans. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 226-14(3): Grandfathering Remissible Loan**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, maybe there has been a misunderstanding. The Minister talked about consultation with the standing committees. Can the Minister produce one shred of evidence that the standing committees supported the transition to this new program without grandfathering the existing students?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 226-14(3): Grandfathering Remissible Loan**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The consultation took place with the standing committees last year and in the spring. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 226-14(3): Grandfathering Remissible Loan**

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Speaker, there was certainly no evidence there and I can say that the standing committee of which I am a Member did not support the change that the Minister has instituted. Will this Minister produce numbers that demonstrate how many students have been affected by this change and what the cost would be to grandfather them?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Mr. Ootes, one of the two questions.

**Further Return to Question 226-14(3): Grandfathering Remissible Loan**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will provide that information to the standing committee. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

**Question 227-14(3): Ambulance Services on NWT Highways**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a few times last week I brought up the subject of safety on our highways and I asked a couple of questions on ambulance service and who was responsible for providing that service. My questions were taken as notice twice, and the Premier promised that he would get back to me on Monday as to who the lead department is in this area. I was wondering if I could...I would like to address this question further and formulate some questions to a department, but I am still unsure as to whom I should be directing my question to. Could the Premier inform me of that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Return to Question 227-14(3): Ambulance Services on NWT Highways**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, I believe the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services deals with ambulance services to residents of the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 227-14(3): Ambulance Services on NWT Highways**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Does the department have a plan, or do we know what the exact boundaries are out on our highways, as to which communities are going to be responding to an ambulance? Do we have an exact boundary as to what area Hay River will respond to, what area Yellowknife will respond to, or is there a grey area out there? If somebody is in an accident, who do we get a hold of? Is there a plan in place, Mr. Speaker?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The question will be directed to the Premier. Mr. Premier.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, the question will be answered by the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Jane Groenewegen. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The Premier is redirecting the question to the honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Madam Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 227-14(3): Ambulance Services on NWT Highways**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, ambulance services across the Northwest Territories are delivered in a number of different ways. I can say that there is a considerable amount of consistency on how they are

delivered and how they are paid for, because there is no legislation that governs ambulance services. The Cities, Towns and Villages Act allows municipalities to pass bylaws concerning ambulance services but there is no specific legislation governing them. I can say that the department will be working with the Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Transportation to clarify the mandate and responsibility and to establish parameters for the development of ambulance services. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 227-14(3): Ambulance Services on NWT Highways**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am a little nervous if I am hearing that we do not have a plan, if we do not know who is going to be responding to emergencies on the highway. That gives me some reasons for concern. I am wondering if the department is working with communities to make sure that we get a plan and we get a plan in place quickly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 227-14(3): Ambulance Services on NWT Highways**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, our department will be working with MACA and Transportation to clarify mandates and responsibilities for ambulance services. Right now, some of the contracts and some of the services are provided by municipalities. In some instances, it is a contract that is awarded by a health board in a certain region and we are attempting to work with those other departments to clarify this mandate. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 227-14(3): Ambulance Services on NWT Highways**

**MR. DELOREY:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the complaints that I am getting, Mr. Speaker, from some of the people who are providing ambulance service is the fact that the number that is being provided in some areas is the RCMP, to contact the RCMP. When the RCMP receive a call, they ask for very little information as to where the accident is, how many people are involved, how bad the injuries are, and this is vital information to the ambulance services. I am wondering if there is anything being done to improve the communication to make sure that ambulance services are getting the proper information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Health, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 227-14(3): Ambulance Services on NWT Highways**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in addition to addressing the issue of standardization

of ambulance services in the Northwest Territories, I will ask my department to also discuss with the regions how we could standardize a protocol for how calls are received and how these services are delivered. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 228-14(3): Water Treatment System Maintenance**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Public Works and it is in regard to the service contract that is presently in place between the Hamlet of Fort McPherson and Public Works. In regard to some of the items I mentioned yesterday, one of the big problem areas seems to be freeze-ups in regard to the maintenance of the water system, where last year there were three freeze-ups.

One freeze-up in particular was because of the lack of ensuring the equipment is in operational condition, where one pump at the water treatment plant was down and apparently the other pump went down. Since they did not have the equipment to maintain them, the line froze.

I am just wondering, from the Minister, because it is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that they will maintain and also provide safe drinking water to the community, that this question has caused some concerns to the community. It did put the community into a pretty vulnerable position, where the community had no water for a period of time and then everything froze up. I would like to ask the Minister how seriously does the department take its responsibilities for ensuring that the equipment is in good working order? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Public Works and Services, Mr. Steen.

**Return to Question 228-14(3): Water Treatment System Maintenance**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Member requested some specific information from me as a Minister in regard to this particular agreement between the department and the community, and I do not have that information off hand, so I am going to have to take the Member's question as notice and get back to him with the exact information.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you Mr. Minister. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Question 229-14(3): Publishing Loans to NWT Residents and Businesses**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try this question again, and I will try not to be as specific. The question is for the Minister responsible for RWED. When this government loans money to people or companies from one of its lending agencies, we do not require publication of the amount, type of project, or expected repayment terms. This is common in other

jurisdictions with public money. Can the Minister tell us why we would not want to publish this information?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

**Return to Question 229-14(3): Publishing Loans to NWT Residents and Businesses**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, if the Member is referring to all the loans that we make to individuals and to businesses, is he suggesting that we print a list of how much people borrowed and under what conditions and so on? I think that could be very detrimental to the company in terms of their ability to carry on their business, where everybody knows all of their circumstances. We have as a practice not printed lists of everybody who has a loan with us. It is information that is considered to be confidential. As long as they are making their repayments, it remains between the entity that made the loan and the borrower. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 229-14(3): Publishing Loans to NWT Residents and Businesses**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not talking about the release of confidential information that could jeopardize the competitive advantage of a business, Mr. Speaker. The federal Department of Western Economic Diversification used to make such a press release at any time money was loaned. After all, this is public funds, Mr. Speaker. I do not understand. Could the Minister restate why he figures any information of any sort would jeopardize the competitive advantage of a business?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 229-14(3): Publishing Loans to NWT Residents and Businesses**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with the list that the Member refers to from Western Economic Diversification, but certainly in terms of any amounts of money that we are making as grants or amounts of money that we are putting into a particular initiative, we make those available. If it comes to specific information to a specific company, then we do not make that available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 229-14(3): Publishing Loans to NWT Residents and Businesses**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I know they do not make it available but I am wondering why they would not. Clearly they could ask for written consent from a client before releasing this information. We do not have to spring this on anybody, but if I go to a chartered bank I think am expecting a different standard than if I go to the government for public money. Would the Minister not agree?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 229-14(3): Publishing Loans to NWT Residents and Businesses**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, as a government, we do not make loans. We give grants and contributions. We lend money through the Business Credit Corporation. The Business Credit Corporation is a lender of last resort. The businesses have to go to the banks first and show us that they are not able to get the money through a conventional lending agency. So they come to the Business Credit Corporation very much as they would to a bank, except this is a last resort. We operate the Business Credit Corporation very much on the kind of guidelines that a bank would make. This is money that is loaned to companies. It is not money that we do not expect them to pay back, but it is money we expect they will pay back with interest and we operate very much like a bank.

In terms of changing it and suddenly making or giving notice to borrowers that their name is going to be published and the amount they have borrowed will be published even though they make regular payments, I could take that under advisement and refer back to the department. As a practice, we have not done that up to now. We consider it to be a confidential matter between the business and the Business Credit Corporation and there is not, in our view, anything to be gained by making lists like that public unless, of course, there are some other extenuating circumstances. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Bell. Before that, I am a bit uncomfortable with the line of questioning that is going because I did caution the honourable Member about referring to a matter that was before the committee of the whole. It does relate very closely to a recommendation that is in this report that is before the committee. So I will allow the final supplementary, Mr. Bell, but be cautious of how you ask it.

**Supplementary to Question 229-14(3): Publishing Loans to NWT Residents and Businesses**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hear what the Minister is saying, but I see the big difference between the BCC and a chartered bank is that these are public funds. If we are looking to what end and for what reason would we publish this information, Mr. Speaker, it is clear to me for transparency and accountability. So I am still at a loss as to why we would not. Cursory information, amount, type of project, expected repayment term. Nothing that is going to compromise a business. Mr. Speaker, when he suggested that he would take it under advisement, I would appreciate it if he would and if he could just restate that he in fact intends to do that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 229-14(3): Publishing Loans to NWT Residents and Businesses**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I say, the Business Credit Corporation Act is pretty specific that we do not release this kind of confidential information. At the same time, there is a clause in the Act that does say unless the business enterprise consents. Looking at that clause, I am

willing to take this under advisement and have a look at it. If businesses consent to it, then I would like to talk to the department of it and see the merits of it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. The time allocated for question period has expired. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**Written Question 14-14(3): Funding to Offset Fort McPherson Water System Costs**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A written question to the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. What funds have been offered to the Hamlet of Fort McPherson to help offset the high cost of the water system? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

**ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS**

**Tabled Document 63-14(3): A Human Resource Development Proposal Related to Non-Renewable Resources in the NWT**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled A Human Resources Development Proposal Related to Non-Renewable Resources in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**Tabled Document 64-14(3): Letter to Sandy Lee, MLA, From NWT Hotel Association re: Hotel Tax Proposal**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table three documents this afternoon all regarding hotel tax. Mr. Speaker, the first document I would like to table is a letter from the Northwest Territories Hotel Association that I received on August 7, 2000, which outlines some of the hardships that will be experienced by the hotel operators all over the North, especially in Hay River and Fort Smith.

**Tabled Document 65-14(3): Letter From Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce re: Proposed Hotel Tax**

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to table a letter from the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce addressed to Minister Handley and a copy was made available to me. It outlines eight points that the Chamber of Commerce would like to see visited and worked on in order to make this hotel tax viable.

The third letter that I would like to table, Mr. Speaker, is a letter from the Hotel Association of the Northwest Territories, once again addressed to Minister Handley. It is a result of the surveys conducted by the Hotel Association which shows that 80 percent of the respondents do not support the tax and...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Ms. Lee, when tabling documents, you should just give the title of the document and not go through the entire document. Just table it. It will be read accordingly.

**Tabled Document 66-14(3): Letter From Hotel Association of the NWT re: Proposed Hotel Tax Survey**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Should I just read the letter again? Okay. The third document is a letter from the Hotel Association of the Northwest Territories dated November 6, 2000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. I will just remind Members that these are your rules and that it is done in order to expedite the business of the House. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr Krutko.

**Tabled Document 67-14(3): Letter From Hamlet of Fort McPherson re: Water System Costs**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the first letter is from the Hamlet of Fort McPherson to myself with regard to the water system costs in Fort McPherson.

**Tabled Document 68-14(3): Letter From Hamlet of Fort McPherson to Residents re: Water Rates**

The second letter is to the residents of Fort McPherson in regards to the water rates and the increases that have taken place because of the fivefold increase in the cost of water because of the water concerns in McPherson.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 13, tabling of documents. At this point in the business of the day, I would suggest that we take a short break. During the break, I would invite all of the Members to attend in the Great Hall where we have a bit of a surprise to help celebrate the birthday of Mr. Premier and the anticipated birthday of our Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. We will take a short break.

-- Break

**MR. SPEAKER:** I will call the House back to order. Item 14, notices of motion. Mr. Dent.

**ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION**

**Motion 11-14(3): Referral of Tabled Document 63-14(3): Human Resource Development Proposal Related to Non-Renewable Resources in the NWT to the Committee of the Whole**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, November 9, 2000, I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Tabled Document 63-14(3), A Human Resource Development Proposal Related to Non-Renewable Resources in the Northwest Territories, be referred to committee of the whole for consideration. Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with this motion today.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

**ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS**

**Bill 16: An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, November 9, 2000, I will move that Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, be read for the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**ITEM 16: MOTIONS**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Dent, you may proceed with your motion.

**Motion 11-14(3): Referral of Tabled Document 63-14(3): Human Resource Development Proposal Related to Non-Renewable Resources in the NWT to the Committee of the Whole**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you. Mr. Speaker, honourable colleagues.

WHEREAS the document titled A Human Resource Development Proposal Related to Non-Renewable Resources in the Northwest Territories has been tabled in this House;

AND WHEREAS the document is a proposal designed to provide a coordinated and effective approach to human resource development associated with non-renewable resources;

AND WHEREAS the document is a proposal that identifies a four-year schedule of activities to promote human resource planning, career development, short-term industry specific training, basic education, long-term career training, evaluation and financial supports;

AND WHEREAS the document is a proposal that indicates the funding required to carry out these initiatives with a total of \$12,680,000 over the period 2000-2001 to 2004-05;

AND WHEREAS this report requires detailed consideration;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Tabled Document 62-14(3), A Human Resource Development Proposal Related to Non-Renewable Resources in the Northwest Territories, be referred to committee of the whole for consideration.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Tabled Document 62-14(3) is thereby moved to committee of the whole for further consideration. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.



**ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS****Bill 13: Hotel Room Tax Act**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 13, Hotel Room Tax Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Bill 13 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

**Bill 15: An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Power Corporation Act and the Public Service Act**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Power Corporation Act and the Public Service Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 15 has had first reading.

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. Committee Report 4-14(3) with Mr. Lafferty in the chair.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** I will call the committee to order. On the Report of the Review of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly for the Years 1997, 1998 and Transcripts From the Public Hearings Held September 27 and 28, 2000, I open the floor for general comments. Are there any general comments? No general comments? Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our committee has been through the Auditor General's report and had some serious concerns, but I think the one thing we keep coming back to is that the concerns we are expressing this year are not new. These are not revelations, as it were. There have been problems in various areas that seem to be ongoing and you can track these things back through many years, so I think it really begs the question as to whether when the government actually speaks to these issues, they really intend to address them. We say we are serious about correcting certain problems and issues, but I have brought up the Development Corporation before.

I am just going to go to a 1994 Auditor General's report and just try to illustrate the trend here that has been ongoing. In 1994, the Auditor General states that government corporations need to be held accountable for the responsibilities given to them. Immediately after, it says the Development Corporation has not complied with the FAA, the Financial Administration Act, in any of the last three years. This is in 1994.

It does not get any better for the Development Corporation. In 1995, the very next year, it talks about compliance with accountability requirements and specifically section 91 of the FAA, which sets out content requirements for corporate plans. The Act requires the plan to encompass all of the corporation's business and activities, including investments.

Mr. Chairman, it then says, and speaking to other corporations as well:

"The entities all presented some information on the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of their operations. We could not see that they had included, for all business activities, appropriate details of their performance compared with previously stated corporate objectives impossible to measure."

On to the annual report. The Development Corporation submitted, in 1995, to the Minister their annual report. At least 240 days elapsed. A 60-day extension was requested.

Now go to the next year, that is two brutal years in a row and obviously not much was addressed. In 1996, the Auditor General suggests that there has to be some way to link the Development Corporation's results to the government's economic objectives. They suggest:

"To demonstrate results, the corporation should have developed strategy and indicators that it could measure in response to the requirements and requests of the Minister. This type of response, commenting on successes and shortcomings, would demonstrate whether the objectives are being met."

We asked officials of the Development Corporation whether the board of directors had ever prepared a response and none could be found. This year, 1997-98, the years that we are dealing with now, we again go to compliance with reporting requirements. In the category, past performance and results included in the corporate plan or annual report, the answer is no. The annual report submitted on time? No annual report submitted. It amazes me that we continue to dole money out to the Development Corporation, which seems to have absolutely no ability or interest in maintaining accountability. Clearly this is one example. It is not isolated. There are other problems that the Auditor General has raised.

The Development Corporation really smacks us in the face here and makes us painfully aware that we are doing very little to ensure accountability. I talked earlier today about transparency when we are dealing with lending agencies that this government controls. It seems to me very obvious that if I go to a chartered bank, certain things are going to be kept confidential. I do not expect to have my name, the name of my company, the amount of money that I am borrowing, the date of repayment, all of these things publicized. If I am going after public money, public funds, I think we should be clear, Mr. Chairman, that this is not government money. This is public money. The government is simply there maintaining accountability, watching over the funds and ensuring that they are properly expended.

I do not know why. It just seems that the bureaucracy has a tight grip on this. We are saying we are very concerned about competitive advantages of businesses, and surely nobody could operate a business if these very simple details were released, but I think we have a long way to go in assuring the

public that we are operating an open and transparent government.

I am glad Mr. Handley has agreed to take this under advisement and look at it. It is done in other jurisdictions and they do not seem to find a problem with it. Western Economic Diversification, this was the norm. They would have a press release and announce when monies were being loaned.

As I go through the recommendations that we will get in our committee report after dealing with the Auditor General's report, another one that strikes me, and this is again something that is not here for the first time, but contracting is a serious problem. Contracting to northern businesses is on the decline for some reason, Mr. Chairman. Sole-sourcing is on the increase. I have no idea why we have not been able to clean up the tendering process and why we continue to slide further and further in this area. It is an ongoing trend. This is not something that has just popped up this year. It is something that we have not seemed to want to address for quite some years and it is not getting any better. I think the public and the business community have had enough. We have seen enough of storefront companies being set up under the guise of being a northern local business and allowing that to secure them contracts and a northern preference in the bidding process. It is not fair.

I think clearly everybody in the public can see the difference between a shell company that is set up here and a company that actually employs Northerners...if it is obvious to us and it is obvious to the public, and even obvious to the people in government who administer these policies, I do not know why we cannot find policies that will treat the situation fairly. I know we have looked at a review of the Business Incentive Policy this year. We are doing that this fall. I am glad to see that. I think it is high time, but we have to reverse this trend and I think that is going to take a political will.

Oftentimes, we have northern companies fully capable of doing the work but there is some sort of stigma attached. We assume that if this is highly technical or important work, we have to go south because surely nobody in the North could be qualified. I do not think that is the case, Mr. Chairman. As far as this government's contracting tendencies, we have a lot of work to do to turn the train around and start heading in the right direction. I hope the Minister will address that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. General comments? Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as we reviewed this in committee and the public hearings regarding this area, there were a number of areas of concern raised by Members. The area of accountability was a significant area. You heard Mr. Bell. There have been some concerns in the past of how things were allowed to proceed.

In this area, Mr. Chairman, I question specifically the party at the table, the assistant deputy minister regarding accounting and reporting procedures. I ask the question, how is this reporting done and what is the actual structure that is in place for reporting and if there are any inconsistencies? The assistant deputy minister told me that there is a reporting structure and a monitoring protocol. This draws concern because that questioning takes part in our report on page 12. I

start questioning on page 11 and go over to page 12, and Mr. Doan's response is on page 12. The beginning of his response talks about there being a structure in place and protocol.

In light of the lack of information, because it was conflicting between the president of the Northwest Territories Development Corporation and the comptroller, Mr. Voytilla, there was a discussion about the lack of information. Mr. Koe responded that in fact he had reams of information on the subsidiaries and how they operated. It was a matter of pulling it together and that was what they were in the process of doing.

However, in a later response when Mr. Voytilla was before us, I questioned Mr. Voytilla as to the fact that there was reams of information and that goes again on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, in that portion of the document, page 12. Once again, I questioned Mr. Voytilla and responded to how Mr. Koe referred that in fact there were reams of information.

So I am very concerned that there would be a lot of information. We have heard about concerns in committee, the fact that there was no monitoring of the actual subsidy that was given out and the jobs it did create or did not create, how successful or unsuccessful, and the fact that Mr. Koe pointed out quite clearly that he reports directly to the Minister as well as the chairperson of the Northwest Territories Development Corporation. If that is the case, it shows me that there is that direct reporting structure from the Development Corporation right to the Minister. For as long as there were concerns regarding the Development Corporation and how it functions, somebody was asleep at the wheel.

To me, it is very clear that in fact the Development Corporation reported directly to the Minister, as was stated quite clearly, and there would have been direct contact. However, for a number of years, this Development Corporation was allowed to proceed without accountability and that draws serious concern to the management of it.

We know there has been a fair bit of work done this last year to try to correct that and hopefully, as we go about this and doing this report and reporting back to the House, that in fact this department and a new Minister will take this seriously and respond to what the committee is suggesting and motions that come out of this, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. General comments? Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, if there are no other general comments on the other side, I would like to just make a few comments. First of all, we have to keep in mind that we are dealing with a 1997-98 Auditor General's report. There has been considerable change since that time, and I assure the Members that I do take the motions and the recommendations very seriously.

We are undertaking a number of things since I became Minister responsible for Finance and Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, and the Development Corporation to sort out and straighten out some of the weaknesses in the system.

We are doing a review. I have a committee that is doing a review of the role, purpose, delivery of services of the Development Corporation, Business Credit Corporation,

Community Futures and all of the programs that we deliver through Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and Development Corporation, for either providing loans or grants or contributions to businesses and to individuals. So that is underway right now and I hope to have a report back from the committee by the first of April.

Though the Financial Management Board Secretariat is in the process of developing a third-party accountability framework which will ensure that third parties, corporations, agencies, and so on that we fund money through, that there is a standard expectation or requirement both in terms of accountability and also in reporting that is all standardized. That is being worked on through the Financial Management Board Secretariat right now.

The Business Incentive Policy, Mr. Bell already referenced that one. We are doing a review of the Business Incentive Policy, the BIP Program. I hope to have a draft of that in my hands within the next week or so and we will have a look at it. Again, we are aiming by April 1<sup>st</sup> to be able to bring back to the House a revised BIP that does ensure that we have a better process in place to provide incentives for Northern businesses.

In terms of another point that was raised, which was the trend toward increasing negotiated contracts, less tendering and so on, I think if we look at it since 1997-98, I expect we will see that the trend is beginning to turn around the other way.

The Minister responsible for Transportation and Public Works and Services just gave some figures on the tenders and the bids and so on, the projects were handled through both Transportation and Public Works.

In Transportation this year, 85 percent of the projects have been by public tender. Only 23 percent were by negotiated contracts. Invitational offers or proposals were 36 percent and 5.5...sorry, less than that on sole-source, much less than that.

In terms of Public Works and Services, we see 78 percent are by public tender. I think there is a trend that is going on here and we intend to keep that moving in that direction, that we do get back to a competitive system but also one that does give bonafide northern businesses, not just somebody who hangs up a sign, some advantage here.

The other issue I want to comment on is the publication or making public of information on loans that individuals have. We have to keep in mind that through the Business Credit Corporation I mentioned earlier, this is basically a banking operation, a bank of last resort. I did say I would take that under advisement and I am. I have talked briefly to a representative from one of the chambers of commerce. I want to talk to the business people and see how comfortable they are with this because it may not be a route that our business community wants to go. However, I want to check that and make sure it is a direction we want to take.

So, Mr. Chairman, I just want to make it clear that we do take the recommendations seriously. We are taking steps to turn around some of these things that have been recommended and commented on by the Auditor General. We take your comments and recommendations seriously and I intend to make some changes here so we do get much more positive reports from the Auditor General in future years. In fact, I think if you look at the Auditor General's report for the year ending 1999 that was tabled I believe on October 31<sup>st</sup>, that you will find

the Auditor General's report indicates that there have been some improvements, particularly with the Northwest Territories Development Corporation, since that time. I am committed to turning around some of these questionable practices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Minister Handley. General comments? Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. I just want to make the point that we are dealing with the 97-98 report, but the '99 report has been tabled and there are still problems with the Development Corporation. So I agree, maybe we are turning things around in certain areas, but clearly there has been at least a ten-year trend here. I think the governments have come and gone, but we seem to not have been able to get this under control. I think that is disturbing.

So I am glad the Minister takes the recommendation seriously, but I think if we back up and start right at the mandate, he said he has a committee to address the roles of the various lending agencies of this government. I think that is important. I think at the root of the problem with the Development Corporation is we cannot decide if we want to have a social or economic mandate.

What business is the Development Corporation in? Is this social assistance? Is this something that Education, Culture and Employment should be in charge of? Or is this economic creation and economic development? One of the criteria when we get involved in investments and subsidiaries with the Development Corporation is that we do not invest in anything that we do not believe within three years can be self-sustaining. The idea is that these will be sold. Well, I mean if we ask the Minister how many of the businesses it has created have been self-sustaining after three years, I am willing to bet it is none or very close to none. So I think we have to set realistic goals.

I think we have to re-look at the mandate and decide if it is a social agency or if it is the business of economic development because clearly it is not, in my opinion, achieving. It is achieving job creation, but in some instances, it could be argued that these are make-work projects, that they are not economically viable. So again in 1999, we do see considerable problems with the Development Corporation still, so I hope we are working to get a handle on this. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. General comments? Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There were a few areas that I wanted to make some comment on and then ask the Minister some questions for clarification. One of the areas that the Auditor General pointed out that he was concerned about was in multiple dipping. The Minister just now talked about a committee that is reviewing the activities of the Development Corporation, the Business Credit Corporation and the other agencies within the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development that hand out money.

I am hoping that what we will see is some rationalization of the program so that we do not see situations where one body is providing equity funding which is then used to get loan funding for another part of the proposed operation.

I think that we need to be clear about how much of an investment this government is going to make in each proposed

new program or new company or new operation. It gets to be very unclear when there can be different pots of money that can be accessed for the same company or the same start-up. I am hoping that one of the ideals behind this proposed rationalization is the issue of multiple dipping.

The other area I wanted to talk about is one that Mr. Bell just got into and maybe ask the Minister in the transcripts from the committee to have a look at page 7 from the Wednesday, September 28<sup>th</sup> session. If he has a copy of our report, you will find that the transcripts are in there.

In the response, the chair of the board which administers the operations of the Development Corporation says that she believes that their mandate really means that they are taking social service directed money and using it to distribute in a business plan. I think that is cause for concern, for me at least, because I wonder if this is income support money. If this really is income support money, should the administration not involve Education, Culture and Employment so that we are sure we are getting the training aspect that is required to come to bear on this expenditure as well?

In terms of openness and transparency, public reporting, the Minister has said that he has some concerns about monies that are basically coming from a government run bank being disclosed. Part of the problem we have is that among the public right now, there is a lack of confidence. I have had a number of people come up to me and say I understand this company got money from this pot and this pot and this pot and there is no way now to confirm or deny that because there is no public reporting.

These are public funds. I think people have a right to expect that if this government does provide a grant to a company, then that grant will be reported on publicly. If this government provides a loan to people, it will be reported on publicly. I think one thing to remember is that the Aurora funds, both Aurora funds, the recipient of loan monies from those funds have been made public. Again, this was a program of loans, not grants, which were administered by this government. So the amounts and the names of the loans and the names of the companies receiving the loans have been made public by this government over the past couple of years.

I would say that we should not segregate our programs. If we have one program where we are comfortable insisting that people who take advantage of the funding know that their name and the amount that they borrow, that they have to pay back will be made public, then I think we should expect that will be required in all situations.

The bottom line is these are public monies and yes, there is a different standard for getting public money into the economy. One of those standards is there has to be public accountability and transparency. People have to be able to be comfortable that government will stand behind the grant or the loan and say this was given for the right reasons, the assessments were done properly and we are prepared to say that this was the right way to go. If you do not come out and tell people where the monies have gone though, there will always be some people who say that there was some preference that was given in the awards. So I think it is absolutely essential that we move, as most jurisdictions in Canada have, to public reporting of funds that are given out in business development.

The Minister also just recently talked about a revised Business Incentive Policy. So one other area that I would ask him to address is, he has talked a number of times now about wanting to revise the Business Incentive Policy, but I have not heard what the philosophical reason for that is. The Business Incentive Policy was developed solely to provide an incentive for business to develop. It was felt by the government of the day that if northern ownership was enhanced that monies would be kept in the North, and that was a sufficient reason to come up with this policy. It had nothing to do, it has never had anything to do with labour. It has to do with the fostering of the ownership of businesses by northern people. Is the philosophy then going to change from that?

If we are going to now change it from what the Minister said, I understand it is now headed towards a plan that would foster employment rather than perhaps northern ownership. Mr. Chairman, just some general comments and some questions in those four areas that I would hope that the Minister would address. Those were:

- Multiple dipping;
- Whether or not the Development Corp is in fact a social agency and should be moved within the social envelope;
- The issue of openness and transparency, in particular since in one area of lending, we do now and have for a number of years publicly reported on loan recipients; and
- What is the revised philosophy underpinning the proposed Business Incentive Policy that the Minister plans to bring forward?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. General comments. Minister Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I will reply briefly to these. I am comfortable doing that. If we are going to get into more detailed questioning, or a lot of detailed questioning, then I would want to ask the witness to come in. In the meantime, I will answer these four questions.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Proceed, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, if I can just answer the four issues that Mr. Dent raised and if there are further questions, I would be more comfortable if I had a witness with me. In terms of the role of the Development Corporation, the Northwest Territories Development Corporation basically has two roles.

One of its roles is to operate what we call subsidiaries in communities where a private venture would not make money, but yet it is possible to operate a venture, a business, with a limited loss each year. The reason for doing that is to create employment in communities where employment would not exist. We do have a number of those that the Development Corporation has been operating for years.

With those subsidiaries, there is no short-term plan to have those necessarily turn into viable businesses. In many cases it

is worthwhile and we still do use the figure of \$10,000 per job. It is worthwhile subsidizing those subsidiaries in order to generate the employment that is more cost effective for the government than it would be if we were simply to provide social assistance or other forms of support. That is one role of the Development Corporation.

A second role is to provide assistance to ventures, which are running into short-term difficulties. It is normally done through the purchase of preferred shares. In those cases, the Development Corporation enters into those businesses with the intention of having their preferred shares bought out within a reasonable period of time. That is to help northern businesses that are in temporary difficulty but who can be viable as operating entities. Very generally, those are the two roles of the Northwest Territories Development Corporation.

In response to the issue raised with regard to the review that is being undertaken of the Business Credit Corporation, Northwest Territories Development Corporation, and Community Futures, as well as our business development funds, Mr. Dent is correct. The intention there is not just to review the delivery of the programs by each of those entities but rather to rationalize the whole mix of services that we provide through these various programs. The underlying question on that is, is there a more effective way of providing loans, grants and contributions to the various clients who access those services?

The third question related to accountability and the need to be more open. As I said, that one I take under advisement. The way the Business Credit Corporation Act is written, if we were going to change this and be more open in terms of divulging names and amounts and so on, then we would have to have a change to the Act to enable us to do it. Otherwise, we would be relying on a clause that is not meant for that broad purpose. I want to take that under advisement.

I would want to talk to the Chamber of Commerce and to others who represent the business community to determine whether or not they would be in agreement with us moving more in that direction. In the past, we have received mixed reviews from them. A lot of people are afraid that this is just the thin edge of the wedge here. Pretty soon they are going to have all of their affairs spread out. So there are various opinions. I am not saying that is my opinion, but there are various views on it and I want to check that out before making any commitment.

In terms of the review of the Business Incentive Policy, that policy is very important to us in developing northern businesses and it can be very effective if designed properly and administered effectively. A problem with the Business Incentive Policy is the definition of a "northern business" to begin with and then it goes from there.

We have many companies who have been grandfathered, who are no longer really northern entities. We have companies that are no more than a shell. We have companies that have joint ventures that again really are not a joint venture but just using someone's name and paying them off a little bit but claiming it as a joint venture. So there are a whole bunch of questions.

I want to make the Business Incentive Policy work well and I want to do that through measuring the benefits to the Northwest Territories. That includes both employment benefits and benefits to the Territories through investment in the North. If a company invests heavily in the North, then they are truly a

northern business, in my view. If they are just using the name, then I do not agree with giving them the level of benefits that some of them enjoy right now. So I want to look at what are the benefits to us as the Northwest Territories in doing that review. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Minister Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. I would like to say I agree with Minister Handley's assessment of the Business Incentive Policy and exactly what and who we should be providing incentives to. So I look forward to the re-tooling of this policy to address this as I see it going forward. I do disagree with Mr. Handley about the mandate of investments made by the Development Corporation. He suggested that these investments happen and limited losses are acceptable for as many years as necessary. In reading the Act, unless I have old information, section 21(4) of the Act states:

"The corporation (Development Corporation) shall not invest in a business enterprise from the venture investment fund unless the rate of return expected within three years from the date of investment is positive."

This would suggest that limited losses are not acceptable for years and years on end unless this Act has been updated and I am unaware. Possibly the Minister will have to bring his witnesses in to address this question, but I am hoping that he can speak to this question. I could be entirely off base here, Mr. Chairman, but I would like the Minister to answer the question. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I do not have a copy of the Act in front of me but the section Mr. Bell is referring to deals with business ventures and it is true. They should not and cannot invest in business ventures that are not going to show a positive return within a matter of a few years. However, there is another section of the Act that you have to look at dealing with subsidiaries. Ventures and subsidiaries are two different creations and it is possible and it is a purpose of the Northwest Territories Development Corporation to own and manage these subsidiaries for the purpose of creating employment in situations where the private sector would not go and where losses are going to be limited. So there are two different functions, subsidiaries and business ventures. You have to look at both sections of the Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** General comments? Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think in the area of subsidiaries, though, we still have criteria laid out as to how much of the investment or the money we contribute is direct subsidization. For instance, we cannot be subsidizing 100 percent. There has to be some sort of money that is coming in. In 1996 when subsidiaries were looked at, an analysis indicated that on average for every dollar of payroll paid by a Development Corporation subsidiary, 91 cents was subsidized. This seems extraordinarily high to me. I am wondering if the Minister would agree that the goal of subsidiaries here is not to be entirely or almost entirely subsidized but we do expect them to be, if not marginally profitable, at least not losing boatloads of public money? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, the purpose of subsidiaries is to subsidize these businesses in situations where the private business would not go. Within that, there is a guideline of \$10,000 per job. That was what the government considered when that was set up in 1984 to be a reasonable expectation. As part of the review, we are looking at the whole operation of the Northwest Territories Development Corporation. Certainly the definition of a job has to be looked at and so does the \$10,000 figure.

The Member is correct. We do not want to have these things 100 percent subsidized. Hopefully, some of them, and we have had a couple of experiences in the past where some of them do become viable businesses and can be turned over to the private sector. There is a guideline. I will say that in the past, you will find that the Northwest Territories Development Corporation has not been diligent in living within those guidelines. I intend to correct that as well. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. I am glad that the Minister intends to correct that. I think he mentioned that the Development Corporation has to come up with an agreement with themselves and FMB on the definition of a job, and also look at the \$10,000 subsidy mark. I would entirely agree. I agree that the Development Corporation has not been diligent. Not only have they not kept to this \$10,000 figure...well, actually we have no idea if they have kept to this because they do not even count jobs. Instead of counting jobs, they have suggested we do not know how to define jobs, so we cannot count it. No attempt has been made to. Instead of analyzing the number of jobs, they have been able to rely on the fact that it was not laid out clearly and explicitly what a job was.

Before we take a look and decide whether \$10,000 is adequate, we have to start counting these jobs and measuring, analyzing exactly if we are not hitting this \$10,000 figure for subsidy maximums, where are we? Are we at \$100,000? Clearly a review of this is not going to be adequate if we do not know where we are now. I think that we need to take an honest hard look at ourselves and see where we are before we even start to address whether \$10,000 is enough.

It seems to me that in ten years, we could have been able to define "job". It is just amazing. I am glad the Minister has committed to look at this and I do not want to continue to beat him over the head with this stuff. I just think that it has been an ongoing problem for many years. Clearly we have been operating under a record of decision from FMB and we have heard that we are moving to regulation. The department agrees that this is the way we have to go. We have to be publicly accountable, and I am sure they have agreed with that for years and years. I would like to know a timeline. When can we see these regulations? When will we move away from it operating under this secret record of decision? How long are we talking about here?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned earlier, I will take that under advisement. I would like to talk to my staff about it. I would like to talk to the business community. I would like to talk to the committee that is doing a review of the three

entities; the Business Credit Corporation, Northwest Territories Development Corporation and Community Futures, as well as our Business Loan Fund. I would like to consult with them before I give a specific timeline, but I can assure you that we will not delay in getting a response back. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I may have misspoken. I did not mean to refer to the BCC and our other lending agencies with regard to the publishing of information that I would consider should be appropriate. I am talking about the record of decision in 1989 in the Financial Management Board Secretariat that the Development Corporation operates under.

In this record of decision is this \$10,000 stipulation, but the public has no idea of what is in this record of decision because it is not by public regulation. It seems crazy that it is not but it has been ten years and here we are still with no regulations. The department insists that it is addressing this matter, but I am talking about a time frame for having the Development Corporation operating under regulation, not a record of decision, not referring to BCC and other lending agencies and the publishing of loans. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** That was more of a comment. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Specifically, the ROD that the Development Corporation operates under, the department indicates they agree they want to move to having it operate under regulations which would be public and there would be some accountability there. I think they are working on this. Can the Minister clarify whether or not they are moving away from an ROD for the Development Corporation to regulation? Again, I am not talking about the publishing of loan information. I am just strictly talking about where the Development Corporation gets its authority from to operate.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I do not want to try to guess the results of the review that is going on. Clearly we have to move away from operating under an ROD and to one where we operate under an act and regulations. What that new entity will look like or entities will look like after the review is done is hard to guess. However, I agree with the Member. Let us have it operate under an act and regulations. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to explore an area that is very much about a government's philosophical approach, if you will, to the value of putting taxpayers money at risk as an equity investment in a business.

The track record that we seem to have established over the years or the past decade or longer, is difficult to really pin down, Mr. Chairman, to see just whether or not the dollars that have been put in place have made good sense, at least from a business point of view, and whether it is something that this government should indeed consider in the long run, whether it wants to take its limited financial resources and put them at this kind of risk.

My colleague, Mr. Dent, made a reference I think in this same vein a little while ago to express whether we are making

business investments here in the conventional sense of the business world where there is competition, there is risk and reward, or are we really putting money into our society and economy more from a social connotation? The intent of the government to explore or to look at all of our business assistance programs is a very good one, Mr. Chairman, and I am very encouraged and am looking forward to the recommendations that the committee will come forward with.

I would like to see what the Minister might have to say, at least at this point, especially if we look at the way other business assistance is made available in the Northwest Territories. The banking and investment climate that we have in the Northwest Territories has changed quite a bit in the last ten years. There were very few and limited abilities of banks to service the smaller, especially the smaller communities, Mr. Chairman.

I think we now have a much broader basket of services and options for businesses. Government is not the only game any more. I am wondering in this context, does the Minister still feel strongly that this government should be putting money, taxpayer and public money, into high-risk business ventures? Or is it time to recognize what is going on out there? Are there indeed other options that could see government backing away? Maybe I will leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, like most governments across the country, we do offer through the Business Credit Corporation a service which is a lender of last resort. There is a fairly high risk. I believe our losses are somewhere around 14 percent, which is not bad when we look at the experience of other provinces.

There is a need to assist northern businesses. Very often, northern businesses that are going into new ventures or areas where things have not been tried before, do face high risk. If we did not do it, we might end up in a situation where either businesses would never get started, we would never see the diversification we need in our economy, or we would just see the more well-healed bigger companies coming in and basically owning everything. I think there is a need to continue to provide that kind of higher risk, but the risk has to be within reason. The need to provide a higher risk support, but it has to be within reason. It cannot get out of hand.

I think we have good people in the Business Credit Corporation and RWED and Development Corporation who manage to maintain a fairly good record, compared to other jurisdictions. I am pleased with some of the changes we have made recently. I think we are heading in the right direction.

As we do the review of all of our services, then we have to, of course, revisit that and decide what level we are going to provide it. Some of the cases we have done it through loans. In some cases, we have done it through preferred shares in ventures. In other cases, we have simply done loan guarantees. As a government, we have a responsibility to assist our businesses, northern businesses, in order that we develop a fairly diversified economy. I expect that we will stay in it as a government. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** If we consider that approach, the aspect of lender of last resort, I guess again, for me, it calls into some

question. If a business venture through conventional banking sources or some of the other sources of capital that are out there, and I would include in this some of the aboriginal development corporations, there are national aboriginal development funds that are quite rich and relatively easily accessed.

If we have projects that cannot meet some criteria with the range of services that are out there, I am still wondering of what value are some of these last resort and really high risk ventures to our economy?

My point, and I guess my question, is would we actually be looking at sharing risk with other lenders, with other financial organizations, so they could sort of share our criteria and we can share theirs, and we come up with things that in a business sense do make more sense? If we are really putting money out there in very high-risk ventures that no one else will touch...I just do not think that they have a place in a business format. Maybe there is somewhere else that we can put them and be accountable for how the money is spent or how it is put at risk. These really long stretches, these high risk things, I do not know if we have a place to be there if no other institution will touch them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** I agree with the Member that we have to keep it within reason. There are times that banks will not go into a situation. Often it is not because of the particular company or individual, but it is simply that they do not know anything about the community. They do not have a branch there. There is no experience there. I think in some of those situations as a government, we have an obligation to go there. Otherwise, we will never see the smaller communities in particular ever getting a fair opportunity. There is a role for government there. We cannot go into what you referred to as those very high risk things. We should not be there. This all has to be done within reason. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** General comments? Comments in regard to the Auditor General report, 1997. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Bell.

**Committee Motion 29-14(3): Recommendation to Transfer NWT Development Corporation Subsidy Limits to Regulations**

**MR. BELL:** Mr. Chairman,

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the present Financial Management Board's record of decision setting the limits for subsidies issued by the Northwest Territories Development Corporation be transferred into regulations by December 31, 2000.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The motion has been circulated and everyone has a copy. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Dent.

**Committee Motion 30-14(3): Recommendation to Publicize Loan Information Under NWT Development Corporation Subsidy Limits to Regulations**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have another committee motion. Mr. Chairman,

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Northwest Territories Business Credit Corporation Act be reviewed to make appropriate information on loans available to the public where such information will not jeopardize a business;

AND FURTHER that the Act be changed to allow for information on bad debts to become public after a suitable period of time.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mrs. Groenewegen.

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my business interests are in the administrative trust but I feel uncomfortable being here to go on this motion. I think it is very well publicized that my business did have a loan with the BDC, so I would like it known for the record that I have abstained from the vote and left the Chamber. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. She is abstaining from the vote and is leaving the Chamber. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Braden.

**Committee Motion 31-14(3): Recommendation to Review the Financial Administration Act**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a motion.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Financial Administration Act be reviewed to address requirements for accountability frameworks, monitoring and tracking systems and more tools for ensuring compliance with policies, regulations, directives and procedures.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to speak very briefly to this. The lead up to this motion is well outlined in the report. I think it should be reinforced that the Financial Administration Act is where our system of government tests accountability and baseline and standards. As the report indicates, we learned from the Comptroller General that our ability to set out all sorts of criteria and standards and measurements may be there, but the ability in an act to really hold the departments or corporations or staff accountable is very weak. This motion helps for me to advance and enhance our ability to measure, to assess, to evaluate the success or lack of success of the objectives and the kinds of things we want to see in departments. It is going to help me when it comes time to vote on various programs, on various budgets and the targets that departments want to bring forward. So that is why we want to go to the Act to address these requirements. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Miltenberger.

**Committee Motion 32-14(3): Recommendation That Contribution Agreements Include a Monitoring and Reporting System**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that it be a condition for all future contribution agreements to include a functioning, monitoring and reporting system to ensure compliance with Government of the Northwest Territories objectives;

AND FURTHER that the Financial Administration Act be reviewed to address requirements for accountability frameworks, monitoring and tracking systems and more tools for ensuring third party compliance with Government of the Northwest Territories objectives. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Delorey.

**Committee Motion 33-14(3): Legislative Assembly to Request the Auditor General Review Government Contracting**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a motion as well. Mr. Chairman,

I MOVE that the Legislative Assembly request the Auditor General for Canada to conduct an independent review of government contracting to ascertain the assessment of areas of risk to government.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Nitah.

**Committee Motion 34-14(3): Recommendation to Re-address Environmental Clean-up and Restoration Costs**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Chairman.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the government readdress the recommendations regarding environmental clean-up and related restoration costs presented in the Report of the Review of the Report of the Auditor General to the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly for the Year Ended March 31, 1996. Mahsi cho, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Ms. Lee.

**Committee Motion 35-14(3): Recommendation That Government Develop an Action Plan to Deal with Auditor General's Recommendations**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the government develop an action plan for presentation to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight that deals with the recommendations raised in the Report of the Auditor General to the Legislative Assembly for the Years 1997 and 1998 and the recommendations in this report;

AND FURTHER that the action plan contain benchmarks on accountability framework and firm timelines. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Roland.



**Committee Motion 36-14(3): Government to Table a Comprehensive Response to Committee Report 4-14(3)**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I MOVE that the government table a comprehensive response to Committee Report 4-14(3) in accordance with rule 93(5) of the rules of the Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Does the committee agree that Committee Report 4-14(3) is concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** There are no other items on the order paper, so with that we will rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Krutko.

**ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Committee Report 4-14(3) and would like to report progress with eight motions being adopted and that Committee Report 4-14(3) is concluded. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

**ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS**

**Bill 8: Justice Statutes Amendment Act**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 8, the Justice Statutes Amendment Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The motion is in order. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 8 has had third reading. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

**ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Speaker, a meeting of the Striking Committee immediately after adjournment, as well as a meeting of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development; for tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, at 10:30 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Social Programs and also at 10:30 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development.

Orders of the day for Wednesday, November 8, 2000:

1. Prayer

2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 12, Supplementary Appropriation Act No. 7, 2000-2001
  - Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act
  - Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and the Executive Council Act
18. Second Reading of Bills
  - Bill 13, Hotel Room Tax Act
  - Bill 15, An Act to Amend the NWT Power Corporation Act and the Public Service Act
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Adoption Act
  - Tabled Document 63-14(3), A Human Resource Development Proposal Related to Non-Renewable Resources in the NWT
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned to Wednesday, November 8, 2000 at 1:30 p.m.

The House adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

