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The Honourable Samuel Gargan, Speaker

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MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Orders of the day, item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Morin.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 4-13(2): Premier's Statement

HON. DON MORIN:

Mr. Speaker, I do have an emergency statement and since it is Friday and I know that Members have put many long hours in all week, we also have to take time for a bit of ha-ha in our lives, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to speak to an issue of significant public concern. Public servants, and others, may have noticed a recent change on the face of cheques issued by the Government of the Northwest Territories. The change is located in the lower right hand corner of GNWT cheques, where you will now find the signature of the Honourable John Todd. I wish to assure everyone that I have received legal and financial advice which confirms that even with Mr. Todd's signature, the cheques remain good.

---Laughter

This is only the first of several changes planned by Mr. Todd. GNWT will soon issue its own currency to complement federal changes.

---Laughter

Our contribution will be a \$3 coin. Therefore, the public should be preparing for use of not only the

loonie, but also the federal "twonie" and the GNWT "Toddie." Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

---Laughter

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Morin. Minister's Statement 5-13(2): Minister Absent From The House

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Jim Antoine will be absent from the House today as he is representing the Government of the Northwest Territories in Chicago, Illinois, to promote tourism and marketing for the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Are there any further Ministers' statements? Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Enuaraq.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Delay Of Community Action Fund In Broughton Island

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I was very interested to hear the statement that was made yesterday by the Honourable Kelvin Ng, Minister of Health, about community wellness. Mr. Ng stated that community wellness was a top priority for this government. The statement also made mention of the \$2.9 million for the community action fund which was established for the current fiscal year.

The community of Broughton Island in my constituency has some good ideas for community action projects. In Broughton Island, they want to bring elders into the school to work with some people imparting traditional knowledge. They also want to help the young mothers to develop parenting skills at the community health centre. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, although these projects have been worked

on for months, nothing is yet happening because the Department of Health and Social Services apparently cannot agree to pay administration fee is to the hamlet of Broughton Island, which has been asked to administer the funds.

When this government asks hamlets to administer funds at the community level, an administration fee is paid. I believe this is a usual business arrangement entered into between parties, when one party is delivering service for another. When public funds are involved, paying the hamlet for its administration costs also means that most of the available money can go into programs, rather than staff people dealing with administration.

Later today, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Honourable Kelvin Ng why this simple issue has been delayed -- Broughton Island's community action plan - - for so long. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Enuaraq. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Roland.

Member's Statement On Equal Distribution Of NWT College Funds

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Honourable Members, at this time I would like to say hello to my wife and children back home. Mr. Speaker, during my campaign I spoke of our youth and how they would be the future of our communities. At present, the youth represents 44 per cent of our population. We have seen the numbers of how many are making it through the system and how many fall between the cracks. We, as a government, have to make it possible for our youth to move on with their lives. This also applies to those who have already failed in the present system. We have to give them the necessary tools to become more successful and to prepare them for the many changes that will be coming their way.

That is why I say that we, as a government, should allow our education system to plan for the longer term and the running of programs on a year-to-year basis is not a good way of doing business.

Our college, as it presently exists, needs to distribute on a more equitable basis the core funding it receives. We, as a government, should give our education

system the tools necessary to do this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Barnabas.

Member's Statement On Travel Delays For High Arctic Medical Patients

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement today is about medical patients from Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay and Arctic Bay, who have experienced delays getting home following treatment or going to the hospital in Iqaluit. I have heard several complaints that people from these communities are approved to return home, go to the airport to travel on a scheduled flight and end up being very disappointed and inconvenienced when they are told they cannot have a seat on the plane.

This is especially frustrating for my constituents, since there are not very many scheduled flights going to my constituency from Iqaluit anymore. This concern has been expressed by the mayors of those three communities and was discussed at a recent Baffin leaders' summit meeting. In attempting to solve this problem, I have approached senior officials with First Air and I have also written to the chair of the Baffin Regional Health Board to ask the health board to assist in solving this problem. I am hopeful with better communication between health officials and the airlines, this frustrating problem for my constituents will soon be resolved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement On Opposition To Public Service Act Amendment And Transfer Of Nunavut Arctic College Programs

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I note that later today on the order paper is a bill to amend the Public Service Act. Mr. Speaker, I have expressed in Caucus very strong concerns with this proposed amendment. I publicly

state that I am against the amendment and look forward to debating it in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to say that I have been asking the Minister of Education, over the past several days, questions concerning the financial implications of transferring Nunavut Arctic College programs and will continue that line of questioning in the House today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I would like to remind the Members that a topic on the order paper for the day shouldn't be made reference to until the issue has been dealt with. That is just a reminder. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement On Placing Of NWT Dog Musers At World Championship Dog Derby

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was provided some information on some dog mushers who are at the 105-mile world championship at The Pas, Manitoba, practising up for the Arctic Winter Games. In first place after the first day was Richard Beck from Yellowknife.

---Applause

Third place is Frank Kelly from Yellowknife.

---Applause

Fourth place is Grant Beck from Yellowknife.

---Applause

Fifth place is Raymond Beck from Hay River.

---Applause

Eighth place is Ernie Campbell from Yellowknife.

---Applause

Twelfth place is the only girl in the race, and a rookie, Heather Beck.

---Applause

In thirteenth place is Jim Essrey from Hay River.

---Applause

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. O'Brien.

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Member's Statement On Arviat Press Release Re Rankin Inlet Tank Farm

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the issue I will once again speak to today is with regard to the Rankin Inlet tank farm project. Mr. Speaker, since it appears we are still in a holding pattern for information relating to this project, I feel compelled to read the following press release that was issued last week by the Arviat hamlet council.

It reads as follows:

The Arviat hamlet council once again questions the need for the proposed Rankin Inlet fuel resupply hub.

Arviat (February 6th) - Acting Mayor Peter Kritaqliluk, reacting to the press release from Public Works and Services Minister Goo Arlooktoo announcing the resumption of negotiations for a contract to construct a P.O.L. hub tank farm at Rankin Inlet, wishes to bring the following issues to the attention of the general public.

Does the GNWT, in light of division of the NWT in 1999, have the mandate to negotiate and enter into a contract for 20 to 25 years?

With the councils of Baker Lake, Arviat and Coral Harbour previously on record as being opposed to this project, on what authority does the GNWT feel it can proceed with this project?

"With clearly more than 50 per cent of the representative population of the Keewatin region against this project, why is it that the GNWT is treating this as a priority project and proceeding with negotiations? Is the government refusing to listen to the people?" said Kritaqliluk.

The Churchill tank farm, owned by the Government of Canada, as noted in Arlooktoo's press release of February 2, 1996 is, "scheduled to shut down in 1998. The territorial government had the opportunity to purchase this facility, but declined."

"Our initial inquiries indicate that the Churchill facility will close in 1998 because it would no longer have a purpose if the GNWT isn't going to store fuel for the Keewatin there." said Kriqalilik.

A committee struck by the Arviat hamlet council has discovered that the cost of upgrading the existing Churchill fuel storage facility was estimated at a fraction of the estimated \$16 million required to construct a Rankin Inlet facility. The tank farm component of the Rankin Inlet project, by the GNWT's own estimate, would be in excess of \$6 million alone. In addition, marine and navigational improvements for the Rankin project would cost in excess...

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Your time is up.

MR. O'BRIEN:

I am seeking permission to continue my statement, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Kivallivik is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Conclude your statement, Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

...marine and navigational improvements for the Rankin project would cost in excess of another \$10 million, making the total cost of the project in excess of \$16 million.

"In light of the GNWT's projected \$150 million deficit, how can this project still be justified?" asks Kriqalilik.

Mr. Speaker, I will speak to this further during question period. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Article Titled "Civil Servants Lead Lives Of Quiet Collusion"

MR. OOTES:

Good morning, everyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to refer to a commentary in the Globe and Mail titled: "Civil Servants Lead Lives of Quiet Collusion."

It is by a fellow named Chris Dray. I will just refer to portions of it.

I am a public servant. I have been in the workforce for 20 years and spent half that time as an employee of one government or another. I have always done my best to do good work and like so many public servants, I have seen most of that work come to nothing. Programs go off the rails, studies get shelved, ideas get dropped or sent round and round from desk to desk until they grow stale or get lost along the way. At times it has been hard for me to justify the lack of results after all the hours of effort and money expended.

There is a quiet collusion amongst public servants about this kind of thing. We acknowledge that government is ineffective. We tell each other that there is nothing we can do about it. We absolve each other of responsibility. We blame others or the system for the global conditions. Yet, somewhere deep within us, there is an unthinkable thought that rises like bile to sour our outlook. Once you have to have that unthinkable thought, you pass beyond the comfort of absolution. As I sit at my desk, a single public servant very deep within the bowels of government, the unthinkable thought comes to me as a litany.

Whether you produce results or not, the pay is the same; whether you work hard or not, the pay is the same; whether you care or not, the pay is the same.

And as long as you don't take a risk, question too deeply or speak the truth to power, the pay cheques keep rolling in like waves on a beach.

In business, if you forget who your customer is or produce a poor product or let costs get out of hand,

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you fail and the price of failure is clear; You go out of business. This is not the case with government. In government, you can ignore the customer, as long as you satisfy the politicians, because that's who the money comes from. You can produce a poor product because, in most cases, the customer...

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ootes, your time is up. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

I seek permission to carry on.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

...And you can get lost out of hand because there is no competition to provide the same product at less cost and there is little accountability except to the politicians, but they are dependent on you for information. If you tell them everything is going well, how can they say otherwise? After all, they are well-meaning amateurs while you are the professional. Public servants simply know better.

Is government really this dysfunctional? To me, it's hard to tell because I don't know the public service today. I do know that from the ones I've talked to, many public servants elsewhere like this person who, by the way, is a Member of the Yukon government, is very disillusioned and they are very disillusioned. Perhaps it is time for us to find out as well what the morale is within our government and to deal with some of the problems facing that morale.

We're the leaders of the government. We here can make the changes. There are tremendously important resource for us here in the North. Perhaps it's time for us to think about different methods and different approaches and become unconventional in government ways of treating our public servants. Perhaps, like industry, we have to establish some incentives for our public servants. Hypothetically, if it's a deputy minister or assistant deputy minister, perhaps even program managers, there is a financial incentive. If they bring their budgets in line, then they get rewarded. If they overspend they get tagged for that and perhaps there's a penalty for it. If they bring it in under budget perhaps there's a reward for them.

I think we have to start thinking of these types of incentives when we face the kind of budget cuts that we're looking at. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement On Amalgamation Of Renewable Resources And ED&T

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement is with regard to the Honourable Donnie Morin's statement on amalgamating the departments of Renewable Resources and Economic Development and Tourism. It's with regard to natural resource development, especially in my region, the Delta, where we have a long, great history of trapping in the Delta except for the downturn of the trapping industry.

In order for us to proceed with that process of amalgamating these departments, we have to take into account the interest groups that are out there. We have land claims groups in the Delta, we have hunters' and trappers' associations. When it comes to commercializing anything, especially what we've seen with regard to commercial harvesting of muskox and caribou and also the history of big game hunting, especially what we've seen in the Mackenzie Mountains, it has to be taken into account that the local hunters and trappers have to be involved with how that amalgamation takes place, also with regard to how the NWT Act will be amended to streamline the commercial harvesting and also allow people to get back to a wage economy.

Also keeping in mind that there are some clear obligations which are under land claims agreements that we have to adhere to with regard to the wildlife sections of the Inuvialuit agreement, the Gwich'in agreement and also the commercial harvesting sectors that are in there when we look at amending any of these acts to allow for this amalgamation to take place. There are also economic factors that we have to consider.

In closing, I would like the Ministers to keep in mind that when these amalgamations do take place that there are interest groups in the communities and in the regions with regard to land claims settlements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Henry.

Member's Statement On Need For Additional Speech Pathologists

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Communication is an integral part of our society today. New technologies are developed every day, therefore the ability to

communicate is critical in our world. Most of us communicate through the use of speech; however, many members of an important segment of society -- school-age children -- have difficulty with speech and language. Fortunately, there are trained specialists who can work with those children. Currently, the Stanton Regional Hospital has two speech pathologists on staff. These pathologists have to service the entire Western Arctic. The two pathologists cannot keep up with the workload. The previous government promised an additional three pathologists to assist with that workload. Sadly, the additional pathologists to date have not been hired.

Mr. Speaker, in these times of fiscal restraint I recognize it is difficult to expand services such as this. However, the problem remains. Our school-age children who are experiencing speech difficulties are not receiving the care they require and continue to be a large financial drain on the territorial budgets through incarceration of those particular individuals.

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A group of concerned parents are interested in starting a speech pathology clinic -- I may have to go there myself.

---Laughter

To do so they would require government funding. Ideally, this funding could come in the form of coverage by the NWT health care for services rendered.

We often say our children are our future. By ensuring they are given the tools with which they may be successful, we will be making an investment in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Rabesca.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. RABESCA:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize some of the student/trainees from my constituency who are in the gallery. They are student/trainees in the retail supermarket training program by Aurora College of the new Tli Cho Co-operative Supermarket being built

in Rae. The instructor is Wilfred Barranoik. Mary Adele Dryneck, Virginia Weyallon, Georgina Migwi, Ron Mackeinzo and Peter Huskey are in the gallery.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a media representative, whose current stint as a Legislative Assembly reporter is ending today, that's Ms. Ronna Bremer.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a well-known union activist, Ben McDonald, Brother Ben.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to have the House recognize Dave Talbot who is the regional vice-president of the Union of Northern Workers.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize all those who haven't been recognized.

---Laughter

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Enuaraq.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 39-13(2): Administration Costs Of Community Wellness Programs

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it must be getting pretty close to the weekend, I can see everybody is smiling. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health. Yesterday, the Minister made a positive statement about community wellness and what a top priority it is for the government. However, Mr. Speaker, two worthwhile projects are being held up in Broughton Island because the Department of Health cannot seem to accept that they should pay the hamlet the administration fee for administering the funds. Is the Minister aware of this problem? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 39-13(2): Administration Costs Of Community Wellness Programs

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member has pointed out the situation to me and I am aware of it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 39-13(2): Administration Costs Of Community Wellness Programs

MR. ENUARAQ:

Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. When will this problem be resolved so that the project can be started in Broughton Island?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 39-13(2): Administration Costs Of Community Wellness Programs

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the community action funding was targeted to try to provide funding for projects. In defining the criteria, they decided not to allow for general administration costs in order to maximize the amount of dollars going into the actual programs themselves. However, I recognize the honourable Member has brought up concerns about not having his communities being able to access this because of their request for general administration. But I would like to say that the department would be willing to consider specific costs if they were to be identified within the project applications; things such as direct telephone costs or materials and supplies. But at this time, for general administration overhead costs, we wouldn't be willing to look at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Enuaraq.

Supplementary To Question 39-13(2): Administration Costs Of Community Wellness Programs

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, the Minister said that he was working on a framework to allow communities to take on responsibilities for a full range of wellness programs and services. Will this framework include provisions for reimbursing hamlets for administration costs when they go to the expense and trouble of administering these programs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 39-13(2): Administration Costs Of Community Wellness Programs

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in general terms, yes. Once negotiations between the department and the municipalities or the groups taking on these programs are finalized, I would imagine that an administrative component would be a

part of those negotiations. It would depend upon the negotiations that would be undertaken before they finalized their agreements, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 40-13(2): Status Of Mackenzie Delta/Arctic Coast Fuel Resupply

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for NTPC regarding the proposed fuel supply for the Mackenzie Delta/Arctic coast fuel resupply. I would like to know the status on that. Exactly when will the decision be made on that proposal?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 40-13(2): Status Of Mackenzie Delta/Arctic Coast Fuel Resupply

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the decision on that issue has basically been to reject all the proposals were received in the initial RFP. We're going up for a new RFP I believe later this week in conjunction with the Department of Public Works.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 41-13(2): Medical Travel To And From Community Airports

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to the Minister of Health. The health centre in Hall Beach has a vehicle but they don't use it to deliver patients to and from the airport. I'm wondering if you can check into this because the patients who have to leave their community for medical attention have to take taxis. Are you aware of this? If not, could you please check into this, Mr. Minister? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 41-13(2): Medical Travel To And From Community Airports

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I am aware of it. There is a policy in place that medical patients travelling for treatment are responsible for providing their own transportation to and from the airport unless they're indigent and then at that time Social Services will pay for it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 42-13(2): Release Of Report On Nunavut Arctic College Program Transfers

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions, as always, is for the Minister of Education. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday Mr. Dent stated that he would get back to the House and inform us if he could release the consultant's report

on college transfers to the House. Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister is will he release this report.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 42-13(2): Release Of Report On Nunavut Arctic College Program Transfers

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I did, in fact, the next day sign and send a letter to Mr. Ohokannoak, asking him if the board would agree to the release of that document. I have not yet had a response to that letter.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 42-13(2): Release Of Report On Nunavut Arctic College Program Transfers

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to seeing the report, hopefully next week. Mr. Speaker, at the present time, almost 28 per cent of the total college budget is eaten up by headquarters. Mr. Speaker, a reduction of 10 or 12 per cent in headquarters could provide the needed monies to accomplish program transfers without negatively affecting the individual campuses. Mr. Speaker, has the Minister asked the college to look at this?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 42-13(2): Release Of Report On Nunavut Arctic College Program Transfers

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in talking to both colleges, East and West, about the amount of funding this government will likely include in

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their budget next year for them, I have suggested that both colleges take a very hard look at their administration and ensure that they are operating as lean and efficient an operation as possible to ensure that as much money as possible continues to go to the programs.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 42-13(2): Release Of Report On Nunavut Arctic College Program Transfers

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to hear the Minister say that and I look forward to seeing that happening. Mr. Speaker, over the course of the past several weeks we have talked about empowering communities with CTI and block transfers, et cetera. Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister is has he looked at block transferring funds to the college campuses so that the campus can deliver and be accountable for the programs and services it wants to run.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 42-13(2): Release Of Report On Nunavut Arctic College Program Transfers

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Mr. Speaker, I guess I would say that it is currently already a block-funded operation. The funds are delivered to the college, and the board of governors determine the day-to-day operations of the college.

One area that we are examining that I think the Member will be interested in is a block transfer of funds for student financial assistance. I'm discussing that with the board of governors to see whether or not that might improve the delivery of assistance to students in coming years.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 42-13(2): Release Of Report On Nunavut Arctic College Program Transfers

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the past couple of days and including today, I have asked the Minister to justify approving the transfer of these programs. Mr. Speaker, the process of the transfers was not well thought out. Mr. Speaker, input from the majority of staff and students affected stated that they were opposed to this transfer. It seems that this transfer of the programs is a political move and not one for financial, logistic or administrative reasons. If on March 31st the college reports the costs and lease costs are substantial, will the Minister reconsider the transfers? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 42-13(2): Release Of Report On Nunavut Arctic College Program Transfers

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, several months before the new colleges were created in January of 1995, both colleges, East and West, undertook planning exercises to find out just where they should be going. The planning process for Nunavut Arctic College incorporated the views expressed to the steering committee in a number of communities across Nunavut. One of the major

things that this steering committee was told was that the new college had strengthened its regional presence. Subsequently, regional balance was adopted as one of the five strategic objectives in the college corporate plan.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that the program relocation does, as the Member says, reflect a political demand for a regional strengthening of the campuses. I think that it represents the views of the people throughout Nunavut. I have to respect the views of the representative body that provides the governance for Nunavut Arctic College; that being the board of governors. So, Mr. Speaker, I cannot make the commitment the Member seeks.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 43-13(2): Responsibility For Final Decision On Nunatta Program Transfers

MR. OOTES:

Mr. Speaker, while we're on the subject of Arctic College transfers from the East, I understand that the ultimate decision for this move does lie with the Minister. Could the Minister please answer that?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 43-13(2): Responsibility For Final Decision On Nunatta Program Transfers

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answer is yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 43-13(2): Responsibility For Final Decision On Nunatta Program Transfers

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I'm still concerned and I'm somewhat confused as to what the cost factor of this may be. Could the Minister clarify that for me?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 43-13(2): Responsibility For Final Decision On Nunatta Program Transfers

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the Member for Iqaluit, the costs are to be explained to my office in detail by March 31st of this year. Until that time, I don't have a detailed cost breakdown or how the college intends to cover those costs.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

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Supplementary To Question 43-13(2): Responsibility For Final Decision On Nunatta Program Transfers

MR. OOTES:

Could the Minister tell me how many staff might be affected by this?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 43-13(2): Responsibility For Final Decision On Nunatta Program Transfers

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the conditions that I have asked the board of governors to provide my office by March 31st was a breakdown of all person years and funding that would be transferred. So it will be subsequent to that date that I will be able to properly answer that question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 43-13(2): Responsibility For Final Decision On Nunatta Program Transfers

MR. OOTES:

Will the present staff be offered the opportunity to transfer to new locations?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 43-13(2): Responsibility For Final Decision On Nunatta Program Transfers

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely. The intention is to ensure that all staff are treated as valuable employees, which they are. Those who are not willing to transfer, every attempt will be made to find other positions for them within the college. I am informed that Nunatta Campus is seen as having tremendous potential for third-party funding for programs and it is not expected that classrooms will go empty as a result of this transfer. So there is a fairly good possibility that people will still continue to find jobs at Nunatta Campus.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 44-13(2): Speech Pathology Service Levels

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I believe the Minister is aware of the ongoing problems of providing services in the areas of speech and language pathology for school-age children. I know the government isn't able to provide services to all the children in the Western Arctic who require speech therapy with the current staff of two. Would the Minister be prepared to review the current regulations with a view to amending them to enable private speech and language pathology clinics coverage under the NWT health care system in keeping with the government's priority of privatization?

Also, could the Minister report -- if not today, at a later time -- to this House on the status of the additional speech language pathologists that were promised by the previous government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng. Two questions, I believe.

Return To Question 44-13(2): Speech Pathology Service Levels

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I would be prepared to look at the proposals from private speech pathologists and I would be willing to report back on the matters that Mr. Henry raised. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 45-13(2): Implications Of Transferring Nunatta Campus Programs

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education. Why are we transferring programs from the Nunatta Campus when the Minister and the Arctic College board of governors know that the long-term costs of doing this outweigh the regional balance that we are trying to achieve?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 45-13(2): Implications Of Transferring Nunatta Campus Programs

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that you can say it outweighs the regional balance. I am responding to direction provided by the board of governors. The board of governors are representative of the population of Nunavut, and they determined that they should make this recommendation based on public consultation which took place across Nunavut. So they heard in a lot of communities that regional balance for base-funded programming was seen as an important step in strengthening Nunavut Arctic College and making sure that it was seen as an institution that was supported throughout Nunavut much more equitably than was thought to be the case at that time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 45-13(2): Implications Of Transferring Nunatta Campus Programs

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For example, Mr. Speaker, students from my riding of High Arctic, if they want to attend these transferred programs, it will cost the government at least 35 per cent more in the airfare alone.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 45-13(2): Implications Of Transferring Nunatta Campus Programs

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if this was the question, but while the Member talks about there being an increased cost for Baffin students to travel to the Keewatin or Kitikmeot campuses, I think that the Member needs to recognize that Nunavut Arctic College

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is intended to provide education for students from across Nunavut. Those costs are there whether a Kitikmeot student travels to Nunatta Campus or a Keewatin student travels to Nunatta Campus or a Baffin student travels to the Keewatin or Kitikmeot. In fact, we have programs at certain campuses that are not offered at all of them.

The same is true with the western college. Aurora College does not offer all programs at all campuses and students have to travel from one region to another in order to attend some of the courses.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 45-13(2): Implications Of Transferring Nunatta Campus Programs

MR. BARNABAS:

Mr. Speaker, a lot of the students of my riding of High Arctic are married. The college in Iqaluit has married accommodations. Mr. Speaker, has the Minister looked at this extra cost associated with funding of married accommodations with the transfer communities?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 45-13(2): Implications Of Transferring Nunatta Campus Programs

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have, in fact, directed the college board to ensure that they advise me how accommodations will be handled. I have expressed a particular concern about the transfer to Cambridge Bay and the problem that there may be some lack of accommodation there. I have to wait until March 31st, which is the deadline I've given the college board, to find out exactly how they are going to respond to that concern.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 46-13(2): Request To Delay Rankin Inlet Tank Farm

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in view of my Member's statement this morning regarding the hamlet of Arviat's press release and the apparent lack of financial details on the multi-million dollar Rankin tank farm project, I'm requesting that the honourable Minister consider delaying this project until all parties are in agreement pending a full cost-benefit analysis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Matna.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 46-13(2): Request To Delay Rankin Inlet Tank Farm

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said yesterday, the government will be conducting a detailed briefing for all Members next week on this particular project and other projects. At that time, the Department of Public Works will show Members the exact costing of the project.

As for the status of the project, I've asked the Department of Public Works to conduct a review of all the concerns that have been raised by the Member and of his communities and come back to me with a recommendation on how to proceed with it.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. O'Brien, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 46-13(2): Request To Delay Rankin Inlet Tank Farm

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister of Public Works come back to the House with the results of this decision? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 46-13(2): Request To Delay Rankin Inlet Tank Farm

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 47-13(2): Requirement For Additional Community Adult Educators

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Education. This is in relation to adult education. According to studies that the GNWT has done, the majority of aboriginal people drop out of school around the grade 9 level. As a result, many of those people usually go onto social assistance, and also they are more likely to be incarcerated and place a greater burden on our resources. I would like to see more emphasis placed on adult education so that we can help these people who have dropped out of school for one reason or another. It seems that some areas are more lucky than others as far as having base-funded adult educators in their communities, and other communities have to scramble to maintain an adult educator from whatever source possible and then to get allowances for their students. I would ask the Minister if there is any way that we can place adult educators in all the communities where the numbers of student warrant it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 47-13(2): Requirement For Additional Community Adult Educators

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is absolutely right, that we need to have a real priority on adult education in the Northwest Territories. I think that that priority has been demonstrated in the past couple of years with the \$8 million that was put into the investing in people program across the Northwest Territories. I sincerely regret that the federal government has chosen not to renew that initiative with us.

I can assure the Member that I am sympathetic. I know, for instance, that 40 per cent of all of Arctic College students

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are adult students who are taking basic education courses in their home community. And I know that we do have a problem. We have only 35 communities which have base-funded adult educator positions. I am committed to working with the Standing Committee on Social Programs to discuss approaches to see whether or not we can find, within the budget, a way to manoeuvre some funding into a program like investing in people -- obviously, we won't have the same sort of resources to put forward there without the federal participation -- and to talk about adult education.

But as the Member knows, at the end of the day, the budget is calling a lot of the shots for us. It becomes very difficult for me to stand here and make a commitment to provide increased services in areas across the Northwest Territories. I will certainly do what we can and I'm willing to work with all Members to try and improve what we can offer to adults in need of this basic service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 47-13(2): Requirement For Additional Community Adult Educators

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In working with the Social Programs committee, I would ask that the Minister attempt to find a program that is a little bit simpler than the one that has been used in the past where it's difficult to qualify and many people do not want to go to upgrading if it means having to be on social assistance.

A lot of the students in Yellowknife, for instance, have said that I'm going to school to get off social assistance. I don't want to have the stigma of having to be on social assistance while I'm in school. So can we at least change the name of the allowances that the students receive instead of being on social assistance; call it some kind of an education allowance or some other type of income support. And can we make it a little bit simpler? I might suggest that we work with the people who are currently using Pathways' dollars to ensure that these programs are implemented in as many communities as possible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 47-13(2): Requirement For Additional Community Adult Educators

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the one advantage of not having the federal participation is that we can do with the program whatever we see fit. So it's going to be that we can determine all the parameters of the program ourselves. So I can certainly take the Member's comments to heart in that way.

The Member mentioned Pathways' funding and I have to say that we have some concern about what impact the change in the way in which Pathways' funding is being delivered may have on some of our programs. In the past, a lot of that funding has gone directly to purchase programs at the college. What the colleges are doing right now is moving to establish contact with aboriginal groups that will be directly funded with Pathways' money. Hopefully, we can establish partnerships to ensure that that money continues to be used for adult basic education.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 48-13(2): Costs Associated With Nunavut Arctic College Programs Transfer

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Honourable John Todd, Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education has stated that the costs of transferring college programs have not been identified and won't be until March 31st, hopefully. My question to the Minister of Finance is if the costs associated are not logistically feasible because of the mandate of spending reductions, will the Minister of Finance negate the transfers?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 48-13(2): Costs Associated With Nunavut Arctic College Programs Transfer

HON. JOHN TODD:

As the Minister said earlier, the instruction he has given to the board of governors is to look at these transfers within the current fiscal situation that we have. It has to be done within the fiscal parameters of the budgets that are set and the targets that are set, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 48-13(2): Costs Associated With Nunavut Arctic College Programs Transfer

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if that is a yes, a no or a maybe. The Minister of Finance has been preaching restraint, rollbacks and reductions. I am saying if the costs are going to be too great within the college budget, will these transfers be negated; the point being we are preaching rollbacks and the college has decided to do these transfers. Do we expect those same people to say it is going to be too expensive to do their own transfers? I don't think so. Yes or no?

MR. SPEAKER:

That is a hypothetical question. We don't know if the study has been concluded yet. Mr. Picco, you are requesting if it was done, what his decision would be.

Until the document is available, they can't make that determination. I will ask the Minister to respond. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 48-13(2): Costs Associated With Nunavut Arctic College Programs Transfer

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought we were preaching equality and fairness. However, the answer is no.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about hypothetical questions. It is all hypothetical because the programs haven't been transferred yet. The principle of the transfer is

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that we will transfer the programs if the cost is not there, but it is hypothetical because we don't know what the cost is. I disagree with the call of the Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oooh.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Picco, will you please sit down? The question may be hypothetical, but I allowed the Minister to respond. I want to remind Members that you cannot challenge the chair, once a decision has been made. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

I apologize to the chair.

---Applause

Supplementary To Question 48-13(2): Costs Associated With Nunavut Arctic College Programs Transfer

Is the cost final for the decision-making process for the transfer of these programs?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 48-13(2): Costs Associated With Nunavut Arctic College Programs Transfer

HON. JOHN TODD:

In this time of fiscal restraint, Mr. Speaker, the cost will be a factor in the transfer of programs. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 49-13(2): Price Control Assurance In Privatization Of Petroleum Products

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Public Works and Services. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in Committee of the Whole, we heard the Premier indicate to us that privatization of the petroleum products includes privatization of the tank farms and fuel or gas in the tanks. Mr. Speaker, in my communities and in many other communities on the coast, there has to be some way of assuring a price for fuel that is reasonable and I am now concerned about the possibility of monopolies being created. My question to the Minister is when they do privatize these tank farms and the contents of the tanks, how are they going to assure the communities a reasonable price for fuel and a reasonable form of delivery for this essential service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 49-13(2): Price Control Assurance In Privatization Of Petroleum Products

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a good question. The cost of fuel is a concern that I have looked into. In terms of privatization, it is put into the business plan as part of the parameters on the final cost of the product. The price in the end is fair to the general public. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Steen.

Supplementary To Question 49-13(2): Price Control Assurance In Privatization Of Petroleum Products

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Speaker, I would ask for some examples as to how this government would suggest to assure a fair price at the community level without creating monopolies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 49-13(2): Price Control Assurance In Privatization Of Petroleum Products

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, that is a complex question. I do look forward to hearing the Member's suggestions in the detailed briefings. What we envision is something similar to the Public Utilities Board process where there is some form of control in prices to ensure that the public in different regions aren't paying prices that are totally different from their neighbours.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Steen.

Supplementary To Question 49-13(2): Price Control Assurance In Privatization Of Petroleum Products

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Speaker, I have one other supplementary. Is the Minister suggesting that there will no longer be subsidies for fuel to those communities that are presently subsidized? In other words, in some of my communities like Sachs Harbour, Tuktoyaktuk and Holman Island, we all pay a subsidized rate for fuel. I am wondering whether or not this is going to be cut off and that will have a user-pay system.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 49-13(2): Price Control Assurance In Privatization Of Petroleum Products

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, there is a complex system of cross-subsidies which takes into account the cost of the product, the cost of shipping and storage. We are looking at all the different aspects of the cost of fuel. As we move towards privatization, the Member's concerns will be looked into and addressed.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 50-13(2): Application Of Rules To Negotiated Contracts

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question about negotiated contracts which I would like to direct to the Premier. I would just like the Premier to confirm that the three basic rules for negotiated contracts still apply at this point; that is, for a negotiated contract to be arranged in a community, there has to be community support for that contract; it has to be within budget; and, it has to be northern. Do those three basic rules still apply? Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 50-13(2): Application Of Rules To Negotiated Contracts

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is absolutely correct. The guiding principles in negotiating contracts in the Northwest Territories is political peace where you are negotiating the contract; 100 per cent northern benefits, not to benefit southern people; and, within budget. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Are there any further oral questions? item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have three documents to table today. I wish to table Tabled Document 3-13(2), the Northwest Territories Power Corporation Annual Report for 1994-95; Tabled Document 4-13(2), the Auditor General's report for Nunavut Arctic College, the financial statements as of June 30, 1995; Tabled Document 5-13(2), the Auditor General's report for Aurora College, the financial statements as of June 30, 1995. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have three documents I would like tabled today. I wish to table Tabled Document 6-13(2), the Public Utilities Board of the Northwest Territories 1995 Annual Report; Tabled Document 7-13(2), NWT Workers' Compensation Board, 1996-98 corporate plan; and, Tabled Document 8-13(2), the public accounts of the Government of the Northwest Territories for the year ending March 31, 1995. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I only have one document to table today. I wish to table Tabled Document 9-13(6), the NWT Housing Corporation annual report, 1994-95.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTIONS FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

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

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, February 19, 1996, I shall move that Bill 1,

Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 2: An Act To Amend The Public Service Act

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin South, that Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 2 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to go back to Ministers' statements. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Keewatin Central is seeking unanimous consent to go to back to item 2, Ministers' statements. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Todd.

REVERT TO ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 6-13(2): Amendment To The Public Service Act

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, earlier today I introduced a bill to amend the Public Service Act.

As I have stated previously, the government is facing a \$150 million deficit in 1996-97 if no action is taken to bring expenditures in line with revenues. All areas of expenditure, including wages and benefits for our employees, must be considered for reductions to accomplish this. This has to be done in a manner that is fair and responsible to the people affected.

Mr. Speaker, the government, its public service and the public they serve are facing tough challenges to ensure that we live within our means. While the choices we face are difficult, I am confident that the situation can be managed if we all work together to meet these challenges. I am also confident, Mr. Speaker, that within the right framework we can work with our employees to find solutions that reflect our common interests.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments to the Public Service Act are required to set a more positive framework for negotiations with representatives of unionized employees on changes that will affect them. The current framework for

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collective bargaining requires that disagreements arising during the negotiation of a collective agreement be referred to a southern arbitrator. Under this framework, tough decisions are not being taken but are simply being referred to arbitration for decision.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the bill I introduced today would remove the ability of the parties to rely on an outside arbitrator to solve our disagreements. Instead, the proposed new framework requires the parties to work together to find a common solution. If negotiations do not achieve a new collective agreement within a reasonable time after the old agreement expires, the government will have the ability to change the terms and conditions of employment. The union and employees, in turn, will have the right to withdraw their services if these changes are unacceptable to them.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed framework for collective bargaining for government public sector employees is the same as the framework for all other unionized employees in the Northwest Territories. It places the full responsibility for resolving issues of common interest on the parties.

Mr. Speaker, the government values its employees and remains hopeful that all employee groups, including our unionized employees, will work with the government on finding solutions to our common problems. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Item 20, report of Committee of the Whole. Item 21, third reading of bills. Before I go onto the orders of the day, I want to invite the Members for lunch in the Members' Lounge after the House is closed. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Hamilton.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. and on Monday morning at 10:30 there will be a DND briefing.

Orders of the day for Monday, February 19th:

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 1, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96
18. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. This House stands adjourned until Monday, February 19th at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT