



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Samuel Gargan, Speaker

TUESDAY, MAY 28, 1996

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MEMBERS PRESENT

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

--- Prayer

ITEM 1: PRAYER

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Good afternoon. It is my understanding that Her Honour, The Commissioner, is available to assent to bills. Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain if Her Honour, The Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to bills.

Assent To Bill 10, Budget Measures Implementation Act, 1996-97

COMMISSIONER MAKSAGAK:

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, it gives me pleasure to assent to the following bill: Bill 10, Budget Measures Implementation Act, 1996-97. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

If Members will permit, I would like to make a few comments, in my own language, before we all leave here in the next few days to go home to our families and communities. As you know, I am not the oldest Member in years, but here in the House, I do have the honour of being the longest-serving Member.

--- Applause

I was first elected many, many years ago in the general election of 1983.

(Translation) At that time, I came into what was then the 10th Legislative Assembly with a dream to change the world and the way we do things. I had a vision that I would make a difference and would not be like

all the other Members. I would open the doors to make the Assembly more culturally relevant to the people it is supposed to serve. I think, as I look around the Chamber today, after 13 years of service in this Assembly, a lot has changed; mostly for the better, but some things still need a little work.

When you elected me as your Speaker, I looked around this Chamber in November last year and saw many much younger, eager faces and of course, several returning Members who looked as young as ever. As a newly elected Assembly, we faced many difficult issues that even the more experienced Members could not have imagined. I see now that, after the first seven months of this Assembly, some of you are looking a little bit tired, and a little bit older, yet as eager as ever to do the best you can for our people. Even I have developed a bit of grey in my hair.

I feel that you all have come a long way in developing a new system of doing business in this House and its committees, especially in establishing a new relationship with the Premier and Ministers. (Translation ends) I would, however, like to make a brief comment on the conduct of business in the House. Members have learned the rules as you have gone along and, for the most part, have understood the reasons for our rules and why we must have them to assist with the orderly and efficient conduct of business. I do note, however, that the use of unanimous consent to complete Members' statements must be a record. In order to curb this trend, I will be issuing you each a stop watch so over the summer you can time yourself talking to the animals in the wilderness...

--- Applause

... as you get ready for the fall session.

On a more serious note, being a Member of the Legislative Assembly takes its toll on our families. We are away from home for long periods of time and we sometimes forget that day-to-day life goes on outside this building. As many of you have expressed, on a number of occasions in the House -and particularly our friend from Inuvik who I note has not said "hello" to his family for some time -without the understanding, support and love from our families, I don't think that we would be able to carry on. I am sure you will all agree that they deserve our heartfelt thanks.

--- Applause

I know we will not be recessing until tomorrow, but I just wanted to take the opportunity to wish you all a safe journey home and wherever your travels take you over the summer, I hope you come back refreshed in October to once again take up the many challenges facing us as the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Mahsi cho.

--- Applause

Orders of the day, item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 73-13(3): Impaired Driving Enforcement Campaign

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, our debates this session have made it clear that the people of the Northwest

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Territories confront a multitude of social and economic problems that stand as barriers to a better northern society and a worthwhile future.

One very serious problem we face is the problem of alcohol. I know I have been troubled this session with the amount of time we have spent discussing the many different ways that alcohol afflicts northern society. It would be a sorry revelation to go back through the departmental budgets and total up the precious dollars we allocate to cleaning up the damage caused by alcohol in one way or another.

In the Transportation portfolio, alcohol appears as the menace of impaired driving. Impaired driving has been a criminal offence for almost 30 years now and still there are so many who have yet to get the message. It is a crime to operate a high-speed and heavy piece of machinery on a public road with poor reflexes and faulty judgement. Driving is a public activity. Impaired driving is a crime against society. The impaired driver is a dangerous threat to anyone and everyone close by; passengers, people in other vehicles and pedestrians.

These observations seem so painfully obvious and still people insist on drinking and driving. They kill or injure their passengers, smash into other vehicles and run over pedestrians. Many of those who survive are maimed or crippled for life.

Already this year, impaired drivers have caused too many deaths and injuries on our highways. Impaired drivers have no excuse for the pain, misery and suffering they have thoughtlessly inflicted on others. I am angry and I intend to do something about it, Mr. Speaker.

I have instructed the Department of Transportation's motor vehicles division to arrange with the RCMP and our highway patrol officers to carry out a series of checkstop operations on our highways. For a start, I have asked them to begin with Highway 3 between Yellowknife and Rae-Edzo, where several deaths have occurred most recently. People have told me that they are frightened and anxious travelling this section of highway because of the numbers of impaired drivers on it. We will find them and take them off the road, Mr. Speaker.

One should never make promises one cannot keep; much as I might like, it would be foolhardy for me to tell the Legislative Assembly that I will put a stop to drinking and driving. However, I can and will tell the Members that I am going to put a dent in it. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

Minister's Statement 74-13(3): Seal Coat Fashion Show

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday afternoon, May 28th, at 3:00 p.m., we will be showing 13 new sealskin coats in the great hall of the Legislative Assembly. These are high-fashion coats, made of the Northwest Territories sealskins and designed in Montreal.

The coats were recently shown at the Montreal International Fur Show, where they generated a great deal of enthusiasm and literally stole the show. Partly as a result of these developments, the sealskin harvest for this year has risen to about 20,000 pelts.

The interest shown in these coats may represent a tremendous opportunity for Nunavut seal harvesters. We invite you to come down, enjoy our show and see these new coats for yourself. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 75-13(3): BHP Project Status

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring Members up to date on the status of BHP's NWT diamonds project.

It has been four and a half years since the first announcement of the discovery of a diamond-bearing kimberlite pipe at Point Lake. Since that time, BHP has found diamond-bearing kimberlite pipes that are sufficient to support a mine development with a life of 25 plus years. As of this April, BHP has spent \$172 million on the project, including about \$50 million in expenditures here in the Northwest Territories.

This project has the potential of providing a very large infusion of jobs and business opportunities into the northern economy. It has also raised a number of issues and concerns about environmental impacts of large-scale development on our lands.

A federal environmental assessment panel was established in late 1994 and, by the end of June, will submit its report and recommendations to the federal Ministers of the Environment and Indian Affairs and Northern Development, as well as the Premier of the Northwest Territories, The Dogrib Treaty 11 Council, the Yellowknives Dene Band and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.

The report and its recommendations will be reviewed by federal Cabinet; the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development will issue the formal federal response about the project's acceptability. Ultimately, the decision on whether the project will proceed is the responsibility of the federal government.

This project, and the review of the project, has been precedent-setting in many ways. We are looking at the first major diamond mine in North America. The mine will generate revenues and economic benefits on a scale that has not been seen before for a mining project in the Northwest Territories.

The panel was the first federal panel that required a proponent to give full and equal consideration of traditional knowledge of the aboriginal people.

Scoping sessions and public meetings were held in many communities. The panel visited Wha Ti, Rae Lakes, Rae-Edzo, Snare Lake, Lutsel K'e, Kugluktuk, Umingmaktok, Deline, Ndilo, Dettah and Yellowknife. Northerners were given the opportunity to make their views known to the panel members.

The environmental and socio-economic impacts of the project are a major concern to northerners. After hearing many presentations and studying many reports during the review process, this government has concluded that no significant adverse social, economic or environmental impacts are likely to occur if the appropriate mitigation and monitoring is done. DIAND is of a similar opinion and has concluded that the project could be adequately regulated based on the information provided by BHP during the review process.

If the federal government approves the project, we are not at the end of the decision-making process, but rather the beginning. A first step in a process of regulating mine development, operation, closure and abandonment; a process that will span decades.

There are many opportunities ahead to influence the way this mine is developed and operated, to ensure that the environment is protected, that northerners benefit from the project and that BHP lives up to its commitments and promises.

One of the first opportunities is the permitting process for the mine. BHP has applied for the permits they need for mine development, including their water licence, surface lease and approvals from the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canada Coast Guard. Even though there has been a full panel review of the project, there will be additional opportunities for public comment and comments from the territorial government, as BHP's applications are circulated for review. This will be a chance to ensure that environmental safeguards are built into the permits and approvals.

Assuming a positive federal response to the panel report around mid-July or early August, BHP has sketched out a work schedule for the next few years. They will start hiring construction workers in the fall of this year for construction of a 400-person permanent camp. The construction workforce will be about 1,000 people. The camp will be built over the 1996-97 winter road season and will be used as a base for construction of the rest of the mine facilities.

BHP expects to start hiring mine workers mid-1997. They are two years away from having their full complement of workers for the mine. BHP hopes to start production in the early part of 1998 with a mine workforce of about 830 people during full operation. BHP has agreed to make Yellowknife their point of hire and has a policy of aboriginal and northern hiring preference.

The agreements cover subjects such as training, employment, business opportunities, workplace conditions and environmental protection. These agreements are an important vehicle for making sure that aboriginal people can benefit fully from the project.

The territorial government is also participating in a precedent setting initiative called the "NWT community mobilization partnership strategy."

The community mobilization strategy is more comprehensive and more inclusive than anything that has been tried here in the past. It includes government, business and community members. The strategy works with the skills, capacities and talents of community members. It does not dwell on problems or what is missing but focuses on what can be done. It looks beyond just employment and business opportunities at a single mine, to an array of other opportunities in a growing, healthy NWT economy.

Relationships and partnerships between communities, business, government and non-government partners are being built and evolved in this process.

Mr. Speaker, this week, about 130 community members and business and government partners are participating in phase III of the strategy: an action planning forum being held at BHP's Koala Camp. This is a forum for discussing short and long-term job development strategies, including business and career opportunities.

This type of forum is important if BHP is going to meet its stated objective of making 69 per cent of its mine operation expenditures in the NWT and having a mine workforce where two-thirds of the workers are northerners and of the northern workers, one-half are aboriginal people. These objectives may be optimistic and will not be met unless northerners are trained and prepared.

BHP has made commitments to ensure northern and aboriginal benefits. However, mining companies in the

past have had problems living up to their promises about participation levels of northerners.

I, therefore, intend to work with BHP on an agreement to itemize the commitments they have made and monitor their success in meeting the commitments. If there are problems, we will need to examine what we can do to work together and correct them.

In looking at this project, I am concerned about the fact that there are already a large number of jobs in the mining and oil and gas industries, as well as other sectors of the economy, which are filled by imported workers, while our residents and long-term northerners stay on social assistance. Mr. Speaker, we have to take a serious look at the design of our income support programs to ensure that adequate incentives and support are in place to ensure that employable northern residents take advantage of the available employment opportunities.

The departments of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and Education, Culture and Employment are looking at new strategies for training northerners for jobs in the mineral industry. One of the projects that we are working on through the community mobilization strategy is a pilot project

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for a phased approach to a mining and related-industry jobshadowing training program. It will lead to meaningful job experience in the mineral and related industry and will expose students to potential employers.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, this mine offers many significant opportunities for northerners. As a government, we cannot become complacent once we hear the federal decision has been made. We must continue to work with BHP, the communities and the federal government to maximize the benefits from this mine, and minimize any negative impacts. Thank you.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 76-13(3): Commercialization Of The Air Navigation System

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mr. Speaker, during the session, several Members have approached me with a number of questions about Nav Canada and the move to commercialize the Canadian air navigation system. This afternoon, I would like to inform the House of current developments and likely implications for the Northwest Territories.

The Canadian air navigation system is the network of communication centres and radio beacons that identify the airways in Canadian air space. Aircraft depend on the system to determine their position and direction in flight. At airport terminals, the air navigation system includes the instrument landing systems, air traffic control, flight information and weather advisory services.

Our most direct contact with the air navigation system in the Northwest Territories is through the aviation services available at our airports. Transport Canada operates flight service stations directly at 10 of our largest airports. The territorial Department of Transportation delivers the community aerodrome radio station, CARS, program on behalf of Transport Canada at 32 airports.

In conjunction with the national airports policy, the federal Minister of Transport announced, in July of 1994, his intention to commercialize Canada's air navigation system. The purpose of commercialization is to offer the services of the air navigation system to the civil aviation industry on a cost-recovery basis. In putting its air navigation system on a commercial footing, Canada follows the examples of other countries; such as, Great Britain, Ireland, Austria, Germany, Portugal, New Zealand and Australia. The United States is likely to take a similar course in the near future.

In one important respect, Canada has taken commercialization a step further than other countries where the national governments have retained ownership of the corporation. Nav Canada was incorporated in May 1995 as a wholly independent, non-share, capital corporation. Nav Canada is not a Crown corporation and it does not answer to the Parliament of Canada. Its board of directors is appointed to represent the interests of industry, labour and the public.

The Civil Air Navigation Services Commercialization Act was introduced in the House of Commons this March. Parliament should pass Bill C-20 in the next few weeks. When the act comes into effect, perhaps as early as September, control and ownership of the

air navigation system will pass from Transport Canada to Nav Canada.

In preparing for the transfer of the air navigation system to Nav Canada, Transport Canada, much to its credit, conducted extensive consultations with the many parties who have an interest in the commercialization.

In these consultations, the Department of Transportation represented the interests of the Northwest Territories. Given the importance of air transportation to our communities, the department had two primary concerns: first of all, commercialization should not diminish the level of air navigation services available in the North; secondly, commercialization should not add to the high cost of transportation in the North.

From the outset, Transport Canada recognized the vital role of air transportation in the North. It also understood that the lower volumes of air traffic in the North could not support air navigation services on a full cost-recovery basis.

Bill C-20 includes special provisions for northern or remote services. Should Nav Canada propose to reduce northern or remote services, sections 18 to 22 of the act spell out a rigorous consultation process, specifically including the provincial or territorial government of the affected area. If the provincial or territorial government objects to the reduction in service, then Nav Canada must obtain approval from the federal Minister of Transport to introduce the change.

On the issue of the fees Nav Canada will set for air navigation services, section 35(G) stipulates that the fees charged for northern or remote services may not be any higher than the fees for comparable services elsewhere in Canada.

The two special provisions in Bill C-20 for northern or remote services give us a good deal of confidence that commercialization will maintain the air navigation services we need in the North and at a reasonable cost.

I might also suggest that commercialization is not necessarily at odds with our interests as northerners. Nav Canada is likely to prove more responsive to the needs of the aviation industry than Transport Canada. Nav Canada is also more likely to accelerate technology transfers in the air navigation system. The

rate of technological advances in the aviation industry is truly remarkable.

Under Nav Canada, I suspect the benefits of new technologies will penetrate the North all the faster. If the past is any indication for the future, I have every reason to believe that air navigation services in the North will continue to improve, as they have, with even greater accuracy, reliability and availability.
Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Now Health Centre For Gjoa Haven

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the issue of the Gjoa Haven Health Centre is not a new one, nor a small matter. The issue of the Gjoa Haven Health Centre is not something that someone dreamed of. Mr. Speaker, it is something that is essential, practical and a request from the community of Gjoa Haven. It is based on many years of thorough discussion and planning by the people of Gjoa Haven.

Mr. Speaker, let's take a few moments and look around the neighbourhood and see the great facilities being built while our old structure is still there standing and there are no plans to replace it. Mr. Speaker, we talk about being compassionate, equitable and fair. While the community of Gjoa Haven is suffering the consequences unfairness within the system, we pretend to be compassionate. Mr. Speaker, the people of Gjoa Haven no longer want to see a renovation to an old structure. The people of Gjoa Haven want to see a new health centre built for that community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement On Fort McPherson Drinking Water

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I first raised my concern on the water quality in Fort McPherson in March of this year. Members have also heard me make statements and ask many questions to the Minister of Public Works and Services. My constituents are very concerned about their drinking water. They are concerned about the source of the drinking water, which is next to a busy highway and also next to the sewage lagoon. They are concerned about the notable discolouration of the water and they are very concerned that some tests have shown unacceptable levels of cancer-causing chemicals in the water.

Mr. Speaker, I have concerns that these problems are not taken seriously by this government. I went as far as collecting samples myself, which I have here in the House. I wish to report to this House that I have had recent discussions with the Ministers of Public Works and Municipal and Community Affairs, and I am pleased to report that I have been told that the matter has been discussed in Cabinet and will be dealt with as a priority.

I have also been assured that, at the first opportune time, following the closure of this session, senior government officials will travel with me to Fort McPherson to discuss this with the community. What steps will be taken to deal with this urgent problem, Mr. Speaker? I am now assured that the Ministers responsible are now prepared to take the necessary action to deal with our concerns and I will hold them to those commitments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Community Wellness Conference In Iqaluit

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak about the happenings this past weekend in Iqaluit. The community hosted the first regional community wellness conference in the Baffin. Delegates from all over the region converged on the community for a series of workshops dealing with this most useful government strategy.

Mr. Speaker, our communities have seen the rise of family violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and unemployment. However, as the conference showed,

the people of the Baffin are pulling together to deal with these issues in a very proactive way. With the advent of the creation of Nunavut only a short 34 months away, community pride and belief in this dream is creating and fostering a new sense of hope and pride in our community people and our collective future.

Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to participate on the last day of this conference, with a panel, to discuss and hear the delegates speak about community wellness in their communities. It was a very moving afternoon. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the organizers and volunteers and single out Mary Wilman, Lena Evic Twerdin, Elisapee Davidee, Madeline D'Argencourt and the facilitators of the various workshops for running a very professional and well-attended conference.

Mr. Speaker, while in the community this past weekend, the community was host to the Anglican General Synod, as well as the visit of the Honourable John Todd. Mr. Todd held meetings with the Iqaluit and Baffin chambers of commerce and a very well-attended public meeting. Mr. Speaker, there was some excellent give and take with the Minister. I think the Minister now realizes the difference, for example, in the housing policies of this government that have negatively affected our community.

Mr. Todd had an opportunity to visit with various community leaders, as well as spending time with yours truly. I am wearing my John Todd tie today, Mr. Speaker, in honour of the Honourable John Todd, who I have had many disagreements with over the past few months in this House. I do give him credit for his ability to deal with the public on difficult issues and, ever the resourceful student, I have been monitoring the honourable Member for tips, as well as the art of the understatement.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Todd has been called many things, but I can say I have heard him called the only public figure who could out-talk, out-act, out-work and look better at a meeting than myself. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--- Laughter

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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Member's Statement On Attendance At Graduation Ceremonies

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the weekend, I was privileged to attend two graduation ceremonies. The first took place here in Yellowknife at the office of the Native Women's Association. This graduation ceremony was well-attended, including the honourable Minister, Manikot Thompson. I thank her for attending this important event.

This program was sponsored by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment; Investing in People. It gave the participants a base in upgrading, life skills and work experience. Judging by the reactions of the participants of this program, it was a successful one.

It is hoped that these ten individuals will continue with future education and they will be assisted in getting into the workforce.

The other graduation I attended was for the grade 12 graduating class of Chief Jimmy Bruneau High School. For the third year, Rae-Edzo has had this ceremony and, again, it was a successful event with 17 young people graduating. Each young person had the look of determination to go along with their dreams and hopes for the future. All of these students can be used as a role model to show the hope and opportunities available.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate all graduates for their hard work and dedication in taking this step to achieve their goals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Absence Of NTPC Staff At Resolute Bay Power Plant

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends) Mr. Speaker, an alarming situation in Resolute Bay has been brought to my attention today. I am told that the powerhouse in Resolute Bay has been

unattended since May 26th, and will be unattended until June 26th because both the superintendent and the lineman are working for a private company, moving equipment about 250 miles from Resolute Bay.

The powerhouse is apparently open. Employees of that private company are checking now and then. However, apparently anybody could walk in and take anything from the powerhouse most of the time and nobody would know about it. The stock and inventory of tools are not secure. Also, if there are any problems with the power, there is no one to call. I am told that this is not the first time that this has happened.

I will be asking the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation how both employees could be allowed to be away at the same time, leaving the powerhouse vulnerable to theft, accident or vandalism. I would also like to know why NWTTPC employees are apparently available to work for a private company and why this company has been given responsibility for the plant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Preparing Union Members For Strike Vote

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I received a call from a constituent at home telling me about an ad they had seen on the local channel in Inuvik advising of a union meeting that would be occurring in the near future. In this ad, it stated "strike preparedness."

I have concerns, Mr. Speaker, when I speak of this issue. I know of many people, as I have worked in the government before, who were at the time, as I continue to do today, go from pay day to pay day to pay the mortgage, pay the truck, et cetera.

I have concern about what the union is putting forward. Are they letting the membership know what the possible consequences are of voting no? They are free to vote whatever way they want, but while they are having these meetings, I hope that someone is telling these people that, when the banker calls when you miss a payment, what is the next step to take. I hope that when -- and I hope they don't -- the vote goes in favour of a strike, that they prepare their

membership for what truly will be a hard time. Thank you.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Suggestions On Saving Money In Justice System

MR. ENUARAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, I was very happy to receive a letter from one of my constituents. There was a suggestion as to how this government could use less money in the area of justice. When the Supreme Court goes to Pangnirtung, I am sure it costs a lot of money. Before they get to Pangnirtung, they would proceed with a summons for jurors. When people are summoned to appear in court as jurors, they are paid \$25 per day. When there are over 200 people who have been summoned, it costs over \$5,000 just to show up in court.

For that reason, the person who is in one of my communities has made a suggestion on how not to use as much money. For example, when the Supreme Court goes to Pangnirtung, the people who have to appear in court, would also have to go to court. When they do and if the jurors are too closely related to the person who will be appearing in court, they are excused. The person who wrote a letter to me, indicated, using Pangnirtung as an example, that the people of Pangnirtung would be able to help out.

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

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MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Baffin Central is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent, Mr. Enuaraq. Conclude your statement.

MR. ENUARAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the people of the community have received a summons from the Supreme Court to go to court as potential

jurors, since the people know the other people living in the same community, they would be able to make decisions as to who was too closely related to the person who has to appear in court.

When there are people who make suggestions as to how we would use less money, I think they deserve to be appreciated by the government; or is that done only to government staff? That I'm not sure of, but I would like to ask the Minister of Finance whether there is a program in place where individuals could make suggestions to save more money by doing that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On High School Graduation In Arviat

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, I attended the high school graduation in Arviat. I would like to acknowledge the graduates: Elaine Owljoot; Elizabeth Issakaik; Ronald Sulak; Jimmy Main; and, Barney Kalluak. Mr. Speaker, I also attended the kindergarten graduation yesterday morning, where I had the pleasure of meeting our future leaders of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge that our MP, Jack Anawak, attended the graduation ceremonies in Arviat on the weekend. Thank you.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Morin.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 313-13(3): Use Of Existing Human Resource Officers In Hiring Process

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Erasmus on May 24, 1996, regarding use of existing human resource officers in the hiring process.

No, all departments do not have human resource practitioners in their regional offices. For most departments, the regional superintendents and finance and administration staff will handle regional competitions, with the assistance of a headquarters' staffing practitioner. The Personnel Secretariat is also available to provide recruitment advice and assistance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mrs. Thompson.

Return To Question 244-13(3): Cost Recovery For Search And Rescue In The Arctic

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a return to an oral question that was asked by Mr. Barnabas on May 16th, on cost recovery for search and rescue in the Arctic.

Most costs for search and rescue efforts are incurred by the federal government. The Canadian Forces have primary responsibility for the coordination of national search and rescue arrangements, the conduct of air and marine searches and support search efforts of territorial search and rescue agencies. The Canadian Forces incurred more than two thirds of the expenses in responding to the specific incident the Member was aware of. The total costs of our resources were closer to \$200,000, than the estimate of \$500,000 given by the Member.

The Member's question does address the need to realize the best return for every public dollar. This includes maximizing all potential sources of cost recovery. My department is currently working with the departments of Renewable Resources, Economic Development and Tourism and Justice to determine the most appropriate means of recovering search and rescue costs. The RCMP and the Canadian Forces are also involved in these discussions. A working committee is in place to review issues related to search and rescue activities at the community level. The committee is considering arrangements that other polar countries have instituted to address problems such as the Member has raised, and it will report its findings to me.

I will endeavour to have recommendations to this initiative considered by Cabinet in time for the next

season of Arctic expeditions, in the first month of 1997. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Thompson. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 284-13(3): Criteria For Sale/Purchase Of Staff Housing

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two returns to oral questions; one asked by Mr. Rabesca on May 22nd, with respect to the criteria for the sale and purchase of staff housing.

In September 1995, employees living in communities where staff housing was available for sale were provided with the following information regarding the criteria to be used in establishing eligibility lists.

Employees renting a GNWT-owned single detached unit will have first priority to purchase the unit they live in.

Provided the present tenant can be relocated to another staff housing unit and the staff housing needs in that community have been met:

1) For occupied units:

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- Employees in social housing units will have second priority;
- Employees in other staff housing units will have third priority;
- All other eligible employees will have fourth priority.

2) For vacant, unallocated units:

- Employees in social housing will have first priority;
- Employees in staff housing units will have second priority;
- All other eligible employees will have third priority.

The above criteria have been utilized to establish eligibility lists for sale of all GNWT-owned single detached units, including the unit known locally in Rae as the doctor's residence.

Return To Question 267-13(3): Amount Of Grants-in-Lieu of Taxes Paid In Yellowknife

The second return is in response to a question asked by Mr. Erasmus on May 17th, with respect to the amount of grants in-lieu of taxes paid in Yellowknife.

Mr. Erasmus asked what is the approximate amount of money paid by this government to the city of Yellowknife in grants in lieu of taxes.

A total of \$1.642 million was paid to the city of Yellowknife for the 1995 year. This amount included \$1.144 million for municipal purposes, and \$498,000 for school purposes. Of this total amount, \$72,000 represents grants in lieu paid for Arctic airports. As responsibility for Arctic airports was transferred mid-year, in 1996, the full amount will be paid. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 185-13(3): Transfer Of Justice Responsibilities To Communities

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. John Ningark on May 8, 1996, with respect to transfer of justice responsibilities to communities.

Mr. Speaker, this government has, for some time, been committed to empowering communities to undertake greater responsibility for justice. We are heartened to note that, during the past three years, communities and their justice committees in the Natilikmiot have already undertaken alternative measures for young offenders. They have provided advice to Corrections Canada and to our corrections division on the parole and early release of offenders from jail and have taken a lead role in developing program proposals. We are informed that those community justice committees are preparing themselves to become more active in Justice of the Peace Court and to also take a role in assisting Territorial Court. They have expressed clear interest in the promotion of support groups and healing activities. It is gratifying to note that communities across the Northwest Territories are taking more and more responsibility for the administration of justice and we encourage all citizens to support these efforts in every possible way.

To foster greater community direction and involvement in the administration of justice, the Department of Justice maintains community justice specialists in each region who respond to the training and resource needs of communities. Furthermore, contribution funds are annually made available to communities to support community justice initiatives. The Department of Justice is currently proceeding to contract, on a per them basis, with individuals across the North to provide supervised accommodation for young and adult offenders in homes and outpost camps. We are aware that the community of Gjoa Haven and its neighbours wish to have a traditional skills and cultural camp established in the area for the purpose of treating offenders. We will be assessing the needs of that area and the funds available and will address the request of Gjoa Haven before the summer is out.

As the Premier has indicated, I would welcome the opportunity to meet with Mr. Ningark to discuss this issue further. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 260-13(3): GNWT Control Of Fuel Prices

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Roland on May 17th, regarding the GNWT control of fuel prices.

Both the Government of Canada and the Government of the NWT collect tax revenues from all fuel sales. This includes sales by the Government of the NWT fuel contractors and private fuel operators. The GNWT collects 6.3 cents tax per litre of gasoline, while the federal government collects 10 cents per litre excise tax as well as seven per cent GST on the total selling price. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize two people in the gallery today; first, the man who gave me my first job in the Northwest Territories many, many, many years ago...

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Shame, shame.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

He still looks much younger than I do today and he is now the president of the Northern Transportation Company Limited, Mr. Cameron Clement. I also have a constituent in the gallery today, Mrs. Joan Schollar.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't tell if they're still here, but I would like to recognize a group of students today. There are seven students and their teacher, June Robinson, from the School Draw open custody facility. The students are from Coppermine, Rae, Paulatuk, Cambridge Bay and Yellowknife.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 326-13(3): Reward Program For Cost-Saving Ideas

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the Minister of Finance heard my Member's statement today. I am sure the Minister is happy to get some ideas on how to save money, rather than how to spend money.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear! Hear!

MR. ENUARAQ:

Maybe if the government were to spend a little money, to offer some rewards, they would end up with some good ideas which could save a lot of money. My first question to the Minister is whether this government has had a program in the past to reward people who come up with cost-saving ideas.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 326-13(3): Reward Program For Cost-Saving Ideas

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe there was --and may still be -- an employee suggestion award program that my honourable colleague talks about, that did reward employees with coming up with constructive suggestions as to where this government can save money. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Enuaraq.

Supplementary To Question 326-13(3): Reward Program For Cost-Saving Ideas

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the program may only be in place for government employees. Would the Minister consider revising the program to consider suggestions from people, like my constituent, who is not a government employee?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 326-13(3): Reward Program For Cost-Saving Ideas

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, I think that's an excellent idea offered by my honourable colleague and I would be only too happy to broaden the scope of this award program, given the difficult times that we all live in and these days of fiscal restraint. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 327-13(3): Adherence To Annual Report Requirements Under FAA

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of FMBS. Mr. Speaker, I will refer to Tabled Document 53-13(3), Report of the Auditor General for Canada on the Legislative Assembly of the NWT. Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General states that the Financial Administration Act -- FAA -- sets out requirements for every public agency to prepare and submit an annual report.

The annual report is an important part of the accountability process. The report can provide standing committee Members, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, with important information to help them hold and to keep management accountable. However, Mr. Speaker, the NWT Power Corporation, the NWT Business Corporation and the NWT Liquor Commission have lapsed over 240 days without submitting said annual report, and no 60-day extension was requested. Mr. Speaker, has the Minister directed FMBS to follow up with said agencies and boards to ensure that the annual reports are tabled in a timely manner, allowing for the accountability process that I have been continually asking about? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 327-13(3): Adherence To Annual Report Requirements Under FAA

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me assure the House and my honourable colleague that we are attempting to be accountable. The issues that he addresses, I will have to look into and report back to him in the coming weeks. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 327-13(3): Adherence To Annual Report Requirements Under FAA

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General reports that FMBS is studying changes in the Financial Administration Act for accountability and performance measurement. Will the Minister update this House now, today, right now, what accountability and performance measurements the FMBS is specifically looking at as stated in the Auditor General's report? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take that question as notice so I can report back to my honourable colleague in a full and comprehensive way to ensure that he doesn't continue to ask me the same question in the future. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ningark.

Question 328-13(3): New Health Centre For Gjoa Haven

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the honourable Minister of Health and Social Services. At the outset, I would like to thank the honourable Minister for supplying me with a return regarding the justice responsibilities to the communities of my area.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my Member's statement regarding the health centre in Gjoa Haven to be renovated over the coming months, as the Minister has indicated during Committee of the Whole regarding the same issue, that he's willing to talk to the people of Gjoa Haven, I have communicated with the mayor of Gjoa Haven this morning and a few days ago regarding the plan of the government to renovate the health centre instead of building a new one.

The mayor of Gjoa Haven has made it very clear to me that the community leaders of that community are not prepared to go ahead with the renovations. That community wants a new health centre. Will the honourable Minister now direct his staff to communicate with the people of Gjoa Haven to begin

planning and reinstating the prior commitment to build a new centre in Gjoa Haven? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 328-13(3): New Health Centre For Gjoa Haven

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will commit to having departmental staff sit down with the municipal leaders in Gjoa Haven to try to reach an accommodation on timing, given the unavailability of funding for this current fiscal year that has been approved in this House for a new facility, and to try to work out the timetable where the possibility of a new facility could be planned. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 328-13(3): New Health Centre For Gjoa Haven

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it isn't the first time that the people of Gjoa Haven have been told that there is no money in the system. Two years ago, there was a commitment to build a new centre. Will the Minister make sure the request from that community for a new centre is upheld by this government? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 328-13(3): New Health Centre For Gjoa Haven

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will commit to doing my utmost in working with the community to try to reach an accommodation that would be satisfactory to them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 329-13(3): Status Of Negotiations With Tl'oondih Healing Society

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng. My question is with regard to a motion that was passed in committee to enter into negotiations with the Tl'oondih Healing Society. Has the Minister made a decision on that and how soon does he see the negotiations taking place?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 329-13(3): Status Of Negotiations With Tl'oondih Healing Society

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the recommendation passed in the House, I haven't had a chance to speak to my officials specifically with respect to that issue. However, I will advise the Member that within a week, I will have someone identified from the department to enter into negotiations with the Tl'oondih operators. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 329-13(3): Status Of Negotiations With Tl'oondih Healing Society

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister get back to me regarding this, prior to the closing of the House?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 329-13(3): Status Of Negotiations With Tl'oondih Healing Society

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I indicated earlier, I will do it within a week and advise the honourable Member at that time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 330-13(3): Reason For Unattended Power Plant At Resolute Bay

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, I will be raising some questions to the Honourable Charles Dent, who is Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation. I believe the Minister has heard of my concerns about neglect of the powerhouse in Resolute Bay. (Translation ends) The

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power house in Resolute Bay has been unattended since last Sunday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 330-13(3): Reason For Unattended Power Plant At Resolute Bay

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the power plant is not unattended. I repeat that. It isn't unattended. In fact, a casual employee of the corporation is in charge of the plant. This employee has successfully passed the appropriate operator training courses and is considered to be a very capable and responsible employee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 330-13(3): Reason For Unattended Power Plant At Resolute Bay

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister explain why both employees of the Power Corporation in Resolute Bay have apparently been allowed to leave town at the same time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 330-13(3): Reason For Unattended Power Plant At Resolute Bay

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said, we still have an employee of the Power Corporation on site. He is a casual employee, but he is in Resolute and is in charge of the operation of the plant. So far, there have been no incidents or concerns raised to indicate that there may be a problem with the plant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 330-13(3): Reason For Unattended Power Plant At Resolute Bay

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister explain why two employees of the Power Corporation are working for a private company on the land 250 miles from Resolute Bay?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 330-13(3): Reason For Unattended Power Plant At Resolute Bay

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the plant superintendent and the lineman are both on leave. Being on leave, it isn't up to the corporation to know what they do with themselves when they are on leave. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 330-13(3): Reason For Unattended Power Plant At Resolute Bay

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned before, the powerhouse in Resolute Bay was being neglected. Can the Minister tell me whether the corporation will take any steps to ensure that this type of thing doesn't happen again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 330-13(3): Reason For Unattended Power Plant At Resolute Bay

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not certain that there has been any problem in Resolute. I have directed regional staff to look into the Member's allegations about the door being left open and tools being at risk. I have so far been assured that that isn't the case. It is a situation where we do have an employee of the corporation in the community who is in charge of the power plant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 331-13(3): Status Of Regional Changes To PWS

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Public Works and Services. Back on May 2nd, the Minister indicated he would provide some information on the restructuring of Public Works and Services. Could the Minister indicate the status of that information? I am particularly interested in further changes to the regional and area structure in Fort Smith in light of all the other cuts and rollbacks that have already taken place. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 331-13(3): Status Of Regional Changes To PWS

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, the deputy minister of Public Works and Services is presently in Iqaluit and is travelling to all the other regions in the next few days to meet and consult with all the regional offices. Through a conference call this morning, we discussed the report the Member is asking about. I will be, within the next week or so, providing the appropriate committee with a copy of that report.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 331-13(3): Status Of Regional Changes To PWS

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The House is scheduled to adjourn tomorrow and people will be leaving on Thursday and Friday. My concern is I will arrive home and find out, as a result of these meetings -- the rumour mills being how they are and various telegraphs working as efficiently as they do -- that we will be faced with a lot of

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questions on this particular issue. I won't be in a position to address those issues and people will probably have better information than I. I was hoping the Minister could give us some advance notice, so that we could avoid that kind of potentially embarrassing situation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 331-13(3): Status Of Regional Changes To PWS

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I would never want to be in a position to embarrass the Member. I do not have that information at this time. I have delegated the work to the deputy minister to go around the regions and to provide myself, as Minister, options on how to go about this restructuring. I will commit to advising the appropriate committees as soon as possible with those changes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 331-13(3): Status Of Regional Changes To PWS

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister, as well, commit to possibly pulling out the sections that pertain to specific constituencies and letting the respective MLAs have access to that information? If we stick it in with the committees, we may not see that information

for some time unless we get it forwarded on to us. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 331-13(3): Status Of Regional Changes To PWS

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, once the plans have been forwarded to me and I have reviewed and approved them, I will provide the appropriate MLAs with details on how their constituency will be affected.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 332-13(3): GNWT Financial Assistance To NWT Construction Association

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have here a publication by the Northwest Territories Construction Association; their annual publication. It's nice with coloured pictures and all the rest of that. The association had asked me to advertise in their publication, some time back, and I declined to do so. But I just got a copy of it today, and I noticed that it has been published by Naylor Communications Limited in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Shame, shame.

MR. ERASMUS:

Mr. Speaker, I have checked and there are many companies in the Northwest Territories that could publish this magazine. My question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, does this government provide any funding to the NWT Construction Association?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 332-13(3): GNWT Financial Assistance. To NWT Construction Association

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm as surprised as the Member to hear of this magazine being published in southern Canada, when I know there are people in the Northwest Territories who are capable of publishing such a magazine. I remember, as the Minister of DPW, that we used to give the NWT Construction Association money in the past. I don't think we do today, and rightfully so if they're going to use southern publications. We shouldn't be supporting them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 332-13(3): GNWT Financial Assistance To NWT Construction Association

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Premier indicated, there are many companies who could do this. Especially since the NWT Construction Association is always talking about buying north, I was wondering if the government buys any advertising in this magazine.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 332-13(3): GNWT Financial Assistance To NWT Construction Association

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now, I am sure that we do not; but I will check into it and if we do, then I'll make sure that we do not. If it's to support a southern publication, then we should not be doing that. We should support northern business and continue to support those people who help people develop in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 333-13(3): Communities' Choices In Community Empowerment

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be for the Premier and it's on community empowerment. I know we've discussed this many times during this session but, as we learn about community empowerment, naturally, we see other areas that crop up that may be of concern. My concern is that some communities in a certain region may choose to take over responsibilities for certain programs and not others, yet another community in that region may take over a different choice of programs. One community, for example, may choose to deliver services connected with housing and health, but not training for employment. Another community in that region may choose to control employment training only and take no other responsibilities.

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The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs has frequently stated that no community will be forced to take on any responsibility it does not want. However, does that mean that the GNWT will have to keep departmental staff levels up in order to continue to provide adequate services to communities that choose not to deliver some services? This means that our government will have to pay for staff to deliver services to some communities, but provide block funding to other communities who take over their own responsibilities. It seems to me that our government will soon have a very confusing arrangement in some cases; and, in some cases, a duplicate cost of service delivery. My question, Mr. Speaker, is under the mandate of community empowerment, can a community choose some responsibilities and not others.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 333-13(3): Communities' Choices In Community Empowerment

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is our intention, as well as the Minister of MACA's intention, to work with the communities. Every community leader I've talked to, many, many years in the past, has always said that they want the responsibility and they want to make the decisions at the community level. I would be very surprised to see communities that would not move ahead with this priority of this government, and embrace it with great enthusiasm. It's the full intention of this government to sit down and assess every

community with the community and the community leadership, of exactly where it is today, and develop a plan with the community to move ahead so that they're empowered to handle all issues in their community as well as capital projects, maintenance, O and M of those buildings, and health and social programs, as well.

Different communities are at different levels today, Mr. Speaker. We fully realize that and understand that. So there will have to be different packages put together for different communities. But in the end, the people in the communities want to make those decisions, they don't want them made in Yellowknife. I'm sure and I'm confident that I can say today that the vast majority of our communities will embrace community empowerment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 333-13(3): Communities' Choices In Community Empowerment

MR. OOTES:

I wouldn't argue at all with the point that people in the communities likely want to control more of their own services. There is a transitional period that we're going through, and we do have communities that do not want to control certain services. The concern I have is does this government plan to keep up staff levels in all the departments so that the service will not be diminished for those communities who do not want to undertake community empowerment.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 333-13(3): Communities' Choices In Community Empowerment

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have made it very clear many times in this Legislative Assembly or in Committee of the Whole that we no longer can afford to have the level of civil service that we have today. We no longer can afford to spend the dollars that we're spending today, in the future, if we're going to balance the budget and move ahead and have good programs and program delivery at our community level. The message I've gotten out -- and I've said it publicly many times, and I've said it to my own chiefs -

- is that it's completely up to you. You can make the decisions where the cuts are, or you can make the decisions of how things happen in your community, or they can be made in Yellowknife, but it's up to you. If you take on community empowerment, you will make those decisions. Our government will not keep the same level of civil servants, or layers of levels of civil servants at the regional and headquarters' levels. We no longer can afford it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 333-13(3): Communities' Choices In Community Empowerment

MR. OOTES:

From what I heard, the Premier is stating that community empowerment has to happen; it's not a choice. The Premier has just stated that we're going to downsize the number of civil servants and that's the area of my concern. I appreciate that, yes, communities want to control their own services, but I also want to ensure that those communities that don't want to take on control of services, that the level of service amongst our public servants is maintained. I guess that's the question that I wanted to originally ask of the Premier. Will this government assure us that our level of service will be maintained for those communities that do not wish to undertake community empowerment?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 333-13(3): Communities' Choices In Community Empowerment

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said previously, I've already made it quite clear to all the communities; where do you want the decisions made, at your community or in Yellowknife? The majority of them got back to me and the majority of the ones I've talked to have said that they want to make those decisions. Moving ahead and moving towards April 1, 1999, moving ahead even next year, there's no doubt in my mind that we are not going to have the same level of civil servants that we have today. We have to reduce those numbers, we no longer can afford it. So whether you have community empowerment or if we decide not to have it, you will have fewer civil servants

serving the program delivery portion of this government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

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Supplementary To Question 333-13(3): Communities' Choices In Community Empowerment

MR. OOTES:

I'll ask a very blunt question, in that event. Does that mean that community empowerment has to be accepted by the communities?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 333-13(3): Communities' Choices In Community Empowerment

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll give him a very blunt answer: No. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Roland.

Question 334-13(3): Class Of All-Weather Road From Inuvik To Tuktoyaktuk

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I had asked questions to the Minister responsible for Transportation, and I have more questions today to the Minister responsible for Transportation, to do with the all weather road between Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. Yesterday, the Minister told me that there were different classes of roads, and the one that was in the proposal was based on the roads that were in the area. Can the Minister tell me, for example, the Dempster Highway, what class of road is that? Are there different classes? Is there a level of A, B, C; 1, 2, 3; or so on? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 334-13(3): Class Of All-Weather Road From Inuvik To Tuktoyaktuk

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the road that the people in the Delta, Inuvik and Tuk have been asking for has been in the plans for quite some time now. I just want to refer back to the 1990 transportation strategy, the 1993 transportation agenda and the 1994 transportation strategy update that all had in their plans for such a road to be eventually built. This is a long-time, longterm plan to build such a road. The type of road that we're talking about was just a very rough estimate, to the tune of \$160 million that it would cost. This was based on similar types of work that was done in that area, in the Delta; the Dempster Highway. The type of material, the type of work that all went into the construction of the Dempster Highway to Inuvik. That was what it was based on.

As for whether it's A, B, C; 1, 2, 3; 1 can't tell you at this time. But if you want the specifics of that, I could get back to the Member at a later time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. We've only had half an hour of question period, but there is going to be a seal coat fashion show that the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism invited us to see, so we will take a break until the fashion show is over. There will also be refreshments out there, following the fashion show. So we will take a break.

--SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. We are still on question period. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 335-13(3): Explanation Of WCB Investment Returns

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will refer again to Tabled Document 53-13(3), Report of the Auditor General for Canada on the Legislative Assembly of the NWT. Mr. Speaker, the WCB manages an investment portfolio of some \$135 million on behalf of the stakeholders. In 1993, the income from the investment holdings was reported in its

financial statement as \$13.6 million, some 60 per cent of its assessment income for that year.

However, in 1994, investment income fell to \$4.8 million and represented less than 20 per cent of the assessment revenue. The WCB's recently-tabled corporate plan contains a reference to the board's 1994 investment returns being lower than projected, but notes that increased assessment revenue and reduced operating costs managed to offset this adverse effect. This does not explain, as is explicitly required by the FAA, the year over year changes and returns from this significant business activity. My question is why.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 335-13(3): Explanation Of WCB Investment Returns

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The returns on WCB's investment portfolio are based upon the marketplace; what they invest in, what the market is doing at the time. Sometimes it is up, sometimes it is down and that is why its investment strategy is over a five and 10-year period of time and eventually it balances itself out. I believe I said in the House earlier last week that they have done an outstanding job and have been able to get somewhere around a 21 per cent return of its investment. So the investment component of the WCB is no different than your own personal investments when you invest in the stock market or bonds. They fluctuate up and down based on the market.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 335-13(3): Explanation Of WCB Investment Returns

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I understand that, but it doesn't explain, as required by the FAA, why it wasn't reported. So without information on results like this, the Legislative Assembly and the Members can't review the effectiveness of managers and the board. This was pointed out by the Auditor General. Again, my question to the Minister is has he been investigating this, after tabling a report by the

Auditor General for Canada, which points out that the investment of the Workers' Compensation Board is not following the principles of the FAA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

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Further Return To Question 335-13(3): Explanation Of WCB Investment Returns

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Auditor General says lots of things, but that doesn't necessarily mean to say we agree with him. However, I will look into the matter and get back to the Member.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 335-13(3): Explanation Of WCB Investment Returns

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, the Minister said he would get back to me on the investment plans of the Workers' Compensation Board. Of course, we know there is only one day left. Because the FMBS is under the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, of which I happen to be the chair, will the Minister provide said information on the investment activity of the WCB and why it isn't conforming to the Auditor General's report under the FAA, which is the Financial Administration Act?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 335-13(3): Explanation Of WCB Investment Returns

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, I have just been advised by Mr. Hamilton that this report by the Auditor General -- this bogeyman who comes out once a year -- does go to the Government Operations committee for review and I believe Mr. Picco is on that committee, so he will have the opportunity to fully review it and ask these

very demanding questions that he is asking at the present time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 335-13(3): Explanation Of WCB Investment Returns

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are many bogeymen in the world. I am sure the Auditor General for Canada doesn't like to be called the bogeyman. However, after saying that and after hearing what the honourable Member has said, I appreciate it. I also wonder if FMBS is putting a process in place so that the different departments, agencies, boards and corporate entities of the Government of the Northwest Territories are actually following the Financial Administration Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 335-13(3): Explanation Of WCB Investment Returns

HON. JOHN TODD:

Everyone is entitled to their opinion on what they think of the Auditor General, Mr. Speaker. I want to assure my honourable colleague that we will do whatever is necessary to ensure that we meet the Financial Administration Act, at this late juncture of this long session. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 336-13(3): Monitoring Of BIP Hiring Provisions

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The subject of the business incentive policy has been discussed a number of times during the session, and I have some questions in that regard. The business incentive policy gives contractual preference to companies based in the NWT, and one of the terms of the BIP is that northerners be hired if they are qualified and

available. My question will be for the Minister responsible for the BIP.

Recently I was informed of a joint venture company that won a highways contract and subsequently subcontracted the work out to an Alberta firm. The Alberta firm has all of its own equipment and will be bringing in all of its own operators and, therefore, no northerners are to be hired. Now, I have been informed that experienced heavy equipment operators have phoned the company for jobs, but they are told that all the equipment operators will come from the Alberta subcontractor. This particular contract was awarded by the Department of Transportation, but my question will be for the Minister responsible for BIP: After the department has awarded a contract under the BIP provisions, is the BIP monitored to ensure that the hiring policies are followed by the company and its subcontractors?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 336-13(3): Monitoring Of BIP Hiring Provisions

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, it is the Department of Transportation's responsibility to monitor the contracts that they issue to ensure that the contractors live up to the conditions and policies that were set out as part of the contract. So we will be asking for the Minister of Transportation to review that specific contract to ensure that everything has been done according to policy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 336-13(3): Monitoring Of BIP Hiring Provisions

MR. OOTES:

That raises a further question in generalities, and that question really is, if a contractor contravenes the intent of the BIP but it already has the contract, will the department or will the government suspend the contract with that contractor.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 336-13(3): Monitoring Of BIP Hiring Provisions

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, there are specific provisions within the policy to remedy situations where the contractors are not complying with the original conditions of the contract that they accept responsibility for. As I said

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earlier, once we know the specifics of the situation, the Minister of Transportation will review it along with myself to see what, if anything, has occurred that needs to be remedied and we will provide the appropriate remedy as set out in our policy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Item 6, oral questions.

Supplementary To Question 336-13(3): Monitoring Of BIP Hiring Provisions

MR. OOTES:

The concern I have, **MR. SPEAKER:** Is there a monitoring system of the contractors once the contract is given to ensure that the BIP is adhered to; and, is there a policy in effect that allows the government to follow up on BIP contracts?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 336-13(3): Monitoring Of BIP Hiring Provisions

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, it is the responsibility of the departments under whose jurisdiction the contracts are issued, to monitor and ensure that the contractors are complying with the conditions set out in the original tenders of the negotiated contracts. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 336-13(3): Monitoring Of BIP Hiring Provisions

MR. OOTES:

Now that the BIP has been transferred to the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, will the Minister assure me that he and his department will be the ones to follow up and to do the monitoring on the awarding of BIP contracts to ensure that northerners are hired on projects?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 336-13(3): Monitoring Of BIP Hiring Provisions

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, although I am the Minister responsible for the business incentive policy, it will be each respective department that issues contracts to monitor their contractors to ensure that they comply with the conditions set out in the original tenders, the conditions set out in the negotiated contracts and to ensure that each contractor complies with the policies of the Northwest Territories government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 337-13(3): Status Of Request To Extend Gjoa Haven Runway

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the honourable Minister of Transportation. Mr. Speaker, some time during the month of May, the mayor of Gjoa Haven and I met with the Ministers' officials to talk about the construction of the air terminal building in Gjoa Haven. The request from the mayor at that meeting with the officials of the Minister, was to delay the construction of the airport terminal in Gjoa Haven; and, instead of that, to go ahead with the extension of the runway in Gjoa Haven by using the money slated for the construction of the air terminal building. They would like to use the money to extend the runway in that community. What is the status of the request?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 337-13(3): Status Of Request To Extend Gjoa Haven Runway

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since the meeting that the honourable Member is referring to happened between the Department of Transportation staff and the community representative, in April of this year, a construction management contract was awarded to the hamlet of Pelly Bay for construction of a new airport terminal building, by the negotiations that took place prior to that meeting. The hamlet has recently tendered the subcontracts which are expected to be awarded soon. Therefore, the construction of this new building is expected to start in early July of 1996, Mr. Speaker.

In reply to the Member, arrangements have been made with the representative of the municipality. As a result, work has already been contracted out to build this new building. As for transferring these funds for extension of the airport, it's something that I have to check on with my department, and will have to get back to the Member at some point in the future, hopefully before the House closes. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 337-13(3): Status Of Request To Extend Gjoa Haven Runway

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you. I was momentarily distracted, Mr. Speaker. I was talking about Gjoa Haven and I think the honourable Minister was talking about Pelly Bay.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 337-13(3): Status Of Request To Extend Gjoa Haven Runway

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have to apologize to the Member because I was referring to Pelly Bay in this briefing document, rather than Gjoa Haven. Like I said at the end of my reply, I will get together with my officials and see where this request is at. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 338-13(3): Criteria For Sale Of Staff Housing

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of FMBS. Thank you for answering my question regarding the disposal of the doctor's house in Rae.

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Could the Minister inform the House as to how a priority can be made, where more than one employee meets all criteria, without showing favouritism?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 338-13(3): Criteria For Sale Of Staff Housing

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly not the intent in these housing sales to show favouritism one over the other. The original intent, as I said in my reply to my honourable colleague, was that we provided the first option to the tenant who currently resides in the house. If they choose not to, then there is a series of other criteria that are set in how we would dispose of the house.

If my honourable colleague could be more specific, I would be only too happy to try to address the particular issue as it relates to his constituency. I suspect it may not necessarily be a policy one. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Rabesca.

Supplementary To Question 338-13(3): Criteria For Sale Of Staff Housing

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regarding the disposal of the unit, what will the time frame be?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 338-13(3): Criteria For Sale Of Staff Housing

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the unit is currently occupied, it's our intention to have another letter go out to the individual tenants -- I believe it's the third letter we'll be sending out -indicating to all tenants across the system, that if they haven't bought their house they should do so, and give the tenant one more opportunity to purchase his housing unit, if he hasn't already done so. If they choose not to, then we are developing a paper, which I don't yet have concluded, as to how we would then dispose of the houses: -whether it would be through public tender, whether it would be through community tender, et cetera. Unfortunately -- and I apologize -- I'm not in a position today, because it's currently being worked on, to explain fully to my colleague the final outcome of how we will dispose of the houses, should the tenant who is in it decide not to purchase it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 339-13(3): Economic Opportunities For Seal Harvesters

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We were all very recently treated to a seal coat fashion show and I must congratulate the Department of Renewable Resources. The coats were fantastic. Somebody out there mentioned that every politician's wardrobe should include one of those coats. I noticed it was mostly the staff who were trying on the jackets; maybe they're the only ones who can afford it.

My question is for the Minister of Renewable Resources. I noticed that these coats were manufactured in Montreal, but his statement indicated that there would be economic opportunities to the seal harvesters. Could the Minister expand a little bit on what he means by "economic opportunities," please?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 339-13(3): Economic Opportunities For Seal Harvesters

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, it is possible for us to finish the sealskins here in the Northwest Territories and to manufacture a finished product, whether it be coats, briefcases, mitts, footwear or other accessories. We believe we can create opportunities for businesses to get into manufacturing so that we don't just ship out sealskins to southern manufacturers to do the production down South. That's what I meant. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 339-13(3): Economic Opportunities For Seal Harvesters

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are there currently any plans to start training people or to implement the manufacturing of the sealskin coats in the North? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 339-13(3): Economic Opportunities For Seal Harvesters

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, we are presently looking at the viability of manufacturing products here in the Northwest Territories, but I have no specific details to provide at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 340-13(3): Status Of Material For Gjoa Haven Seniors' Facility

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the fourplex senior citizens' facility for Gjoa Haven. I had a telephone conversation earlier this morning with the mayor of Gjoa Haven and he has indicated to me

that the community is under the impression that material for the senior citizens' facility will be shipped during the summer. He wants to know what the status is of that.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng.

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Return To Question 340-13(3): Status Of Material For Gjoa Haven Seniors' Facility

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, the capital end of that project is sponsored by the NWT Housing Corporation. Because of some potential difficulties in federal reductions from CMHC with the Housing Corporation, I have been in discussion with the Minister responsible to try and identify a manner in proceeding with the seniors' independent housing strategy to address those needs, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 340-13(3): Status Of Material For Gjoa Haven Seniors' Facility

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. Is the honourable Minister saying to this House that the possibility of building that facility in Gjoa Haven is off for the fiscal year? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 340-13(3): Status Of Material For Gjoa Haven Seniors' Facility

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, I am working with the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation to try to continue on with that program for this current fiscal year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 340-13(3): Status Of Material For Gjoa Haven Seniors' Facility

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Minister direct his official to now communicate with Gjoa Haven, to the people of Gjoa Haven, especially the hamlet council of Gjoa Haven, and see what type of facility the option will be for that community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 340-13(3): Status Of Material For Gjoa Haven Seniors' Facility

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can commit, between my staff and the NWT Housing Corporation staff, to contact the community and update them on the status of that project. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Item 9, replies to Opening Address. Mr. Picco.

ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

Mr. Picco's Reply

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Commissioner opened the 13th Assembly by talking about change and challenges. The 13th and final Legislative Assembly has, over the past several months, tried to address these changes with an increasing deficit and division looming on the horizon. It hasn't been easy.

When I return to Iqaluit, people keep asking me, what's it like in Yellowknife; what have we been doing. Mr. Speaker, coming into the election last fall, I guess I was guilty of the misconception that affects the public at large. Mr. Speaker, that misconception was and is that MLAs receive big salaries, that MLAs talk a lot and accomplish little, that MLAs spend a few

days a month sitting in the Legislature and the rest of the time attending a few meetings. Well, Mr. Speaker, this Member was in for a rude shock when I came here. I also believed those things. I have kept a day-to-day account of my activities in a diary since being elected. Reviewing my said diary on the way back to Yellowknife yesterday, on the long flight from Iqaluit, I realized that for the amount of work I have put in, the hours that were allotted and my remuneration for said work, I earn approximately \$11 an hour.

--- Interjection

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that there is no higher honour than serving the populace in public office. While this is true, there are also pitfalls: you lose your anonymity; you become a judge and jury, social worker and counsellor; you become an ombudsman and a sounding board; you have to allow people to vent their frustration and you take abuse and criticism that are out of your control.

Mr. Speaker, I used to wonder why so many MLAs seemed to have marital and other problems when they were elected. Now I know why. Mr. Speaker, during the period January 6th and up to yesterday, I had only spent about seven weeks in total time at home. The rest of the time was spent here in Yellowknife, commuting or attending meetings somewhere else. This puts tremendous pressure on the people we leave behind. Mr. Speaker, I married my wife to try and provide a better life for her and me. We were blessed with three small children and yet, when I return home after spending three weeks away, I have even less time to spend with them because people need your ear. They want to speak to you, give you advice, invite you to functions, et cetera. Mr. Speaker, it is the role of the MLA to fulfil these functions and, when you represent a large riding with diversity, it is almost impossible for one Member to do it.

Someone once told me that in the North you have to believe in reincarnation. Mr. Speaker, that story goes like this: One day you're a lonely Bay clerk and the next moment you're a successful entrepreneur or senior civil servant. I guess in some circles, I am one of those reincarnated individuals. I am proud to say that I apprenticed with the Hudson's Bay Company and became a manager. I then gravitated, becoming the first adult educator working for Arctic College in Hall Beach. After completing my diploma in adult

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education at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, I went on to manage the Baffin Business Development Corporation, where I lent over \$1.2 million to Baffin small businesses; 80 per cent of which were Inuit-owned enterprises.

Now I am an MLA. Yes, I've had my detractors along the way but I don't believe anyone can say I was lazy or self-serving. I've always tried to be honest in my dealings with clients, customers and constituents. I am not a professional, a doctor or a lawyer. I am not rich or a successful businessman. But I am hardworking and, I believe, honest. My first job was at the age of 11, shovelling manure in a hen farm for \$1.75 an hour. I wasn't born with a silver spoon in my mouth and I know the value of hard work. That is why I'm in the Legislative Assembly until 9:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. every evening and that is why usually only Kelvin Ng or Mike Miltenberger beat me into the office at 7:00 a.m. or 7:30 a.m. each morning. But again, here in Yellowknife, my family is in Iqaluit and I have an opportunity, unlike the Members from Yellowknife, to put this time in. I believe it makes the MLA more effective for their constituents.

The job of MLA may seem glorious and glamorous in some circles. Every time I'm at the airport in Iqaluit, my constituents come up and say, Ed, you're travelling again. What a great life. Well, long absences from home, hard work and continual pressure from various stakeholders begins to wear you down. I've tried to keep my sense of humour and I've tried to spread it around the House, although some people say I'm not very funny and that's fine. I have nothing but respect for anyone who puts their name forward for public office, and I have greater respect for the individuals who have served a long tenure like yourself, Mr. Speaker.

Our preoccupation with the deficit has made us, in my mind, make decisions like the regional personnel offices that Mr. Erasmus has raised as maybe being short-sighted. And as Mr. Steen said yesterday, pigs may fly before we balance the budget. But we have to try. We have to try, Mr. Speaker. Accountability and integrity must remain first and foremost in our dealings. I honestly believe this, Mr. Speaker, and will continue to push for transparency at all levels of the bogeyman government.

This weekend, while in Iqaluit, some of the media asked Mr. Todd about my performance. I think he was complimentary, although I didn't hear what he had to

say. And at that meeting, it was advanced that maybe I was being ostracized by my colleagues here in the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, since I have been here in the Legislative Assembly, I've tried to represent the wishes of my constituents and not the wishes of Members. That is my higher power: my constituents. I do not feel I have been ostracized, although some Members may not agree with my ideas or suggestions. I do ask a lots of questions. Last night, sitting in my office until 11:00, I had a chance to review said questions from the Hansard and, in my opinion, they were neither flippant or solely Iqaluit based. If anything, the record will show an almost even split between constituency and NWT-wide questions. I make no apology for that.

---Laughter

... because of my fragile ego.

--- Laughter

Mr. Speaker, I have learned many lessons over the past several months, and I will continue to learn the role of MLA, as will my colleagues. Recent statements about Nunavut and decentralization have bothered me. As a Member of the Iqaluit for capital campaign, I can honestly say we promoted our community with the logistic, financial and administrative reasons why it was the best choice. Now the spectre of less decentralization has raised its ugly head. It appears Iqaluit bashing is becoming the in thing.

Mr. Speaker, for the record, this government is committed to the community empowerment model. This means that many of the regional jobs identified in the NIC report may not happen; not because of the lack of funds but because of the lack of regional jobs to transfer. For example, if the community of Hard Luck Bay takes over Social Services, Renewable Resources and EDO positions, then why do you need someone in the regional headquarters supervising these positions which will now be supervised by the hamlet?

Mr. Speaker, I did know some Members when I came here. I knew Tommy; Levi; and, Mark, of course; I knew of Goo; I had met Mani before; I knew Kelvin Ng; and, of course, John Todd. I spent an enjoyable week with those two gentlemen in Iqaluit. I did not know any of the western Members except Steve.

A former Member of this House used to do report cards on the Cabinet. I do not want to go back to my education role, so I cannot do that; but I would like to

make some observations, starting with my friends, the ordinary Members.

Seamus Henry; a good pilot, confidante and friend. I would like to hear him speak more in the House. Roy Erasmus, the legal eagle; and, Jake Ootes, an honourable man. Mike Miltenberger, a mental giant...

--- Laughter

... quick wit and a tad conceited. Floyd Roland and James Rabesca. quiet and effective Members. David Krutko, nice

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haircut and an astute politician. Kevin O'Brien, not just any ordinary flash. Tommy Enuaraq, Levi Barnabas and Mark Evaloarjuk, the three musketeers. John Ningark; good sense of humour and an excellent chairman. Vince Steen reminds me of Mr. Hemmingway's classic, 'The Old Man in the Sea.' Jane Groenewegen plays a mean accordion, laughs at my jokes and has a keen intellect.

On the Cabinet side of the House; Manikot Thompson is concerned and motivated. Jimmy Antoine is hardworking and honest. Kelvin Ng gets up earlier in the morning than me. Steve Kakfwi is an excellent speaker and dedicated. Charles Dent is articulate and informed. Goo Arlooktoo is sincere and has a great future in politics. Donnie Morin is an excellent pool player...

--- Laughter

... and a very intuitive man. John Todd is an older Ed Picco...

--- Laughter

... in some ways. He's hardworking and, of course, he has a good sense of humour.

Mr. Speaker, I have not forgotten the most dapper and fashion-shoe-conscious Member, yourself. Thank you.

--- Laughter

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 9, replies to Opening Address. Item 10, petitions. Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

MR. OOTES:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition dealing with the matter of funding for community wellness youth programs in the city of Yellowknife. Mr. Speaker, Petition 49-13(3) contains 18 signatures and, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners request that the Minister of Health and Social Services grant funding for community wellness programs to the city of Yellowknife in 1996; however, place a condition on the funding that 50 per cent of the allocated funds be designated for youth programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 10, petitions. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present a petition dealing with the matter of funding for community wellness youth programs in the city of Yellowknife. Mr. Speaker, Petition 50-13(3) contains 28 signatures and, Mr. Speaker, the petitions request that the Minister of Health and Social Services grant funding for community wellness programs to the city of Yellowknife in 1996; however, place a condition on the funding that 50 per cent of the allocated funds be designated for youth programs.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. 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. Antoine.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Tabled Document 59-13(3), the most excellent speech made by Stephen Kakfwi, MLA for Sahtu, in the Legislative Assembly on Thursday, May 16, 1996: "Not a Name but a Geopolitical Description: The Northwest Territories." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Tabled Document 60-13(3), job creation charts referenced from the document "Choosing a Capital, A Supplementary Report of the Nunavut implementation Commission", pages 8 and 814.4.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table Tabled Document 61-13(3), statistics concerning accidents and use of headlights in other areas.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents.

In accordance with section 34(1) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table Tabled Document 62-13(3), a report on the amounts paid by way of indemnities, allowances or expenses to Members and former Members of the Legislative Assembly for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1996.

Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions, Motion 12-13(3), with Mr. O'Brien.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 12-13(3): Rates Charged To Seniors Resident In Long-Term Care Facilities, Carried

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the people of the Northwest Territories accept the responsibility for the care and well-being of our seniors and elders where there is a need to do so;

AND WHEREAS increasing the rates charged to some seniors and elders currently residing in long-term care facilities through the standardization of room and board rates will cause unnecessary hardship to these seniors who have limited resources;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife North, that this Legislative Assembly reaffirm its support and

commitment to the care, well-being and good health of our senior citizens;

AND FURTHER, that the Minister of Health and Social Services re-examine the initiative and reconsider the decision

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to standardize the room and board rates applicable to seniors residing in long-term care facilities in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Your motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be brief in my comments on this issue, as there has been a number of ordinary Members who have spoken on the proposed elders' residential rent schedule.

Mr. Speaker, I stated in this Chamber last week that six of the seven residents in the Arviat elders' centre will be vacating the centre because of the increase in rent and their lack of funding. Mr. Speaker, these elders have worked and struggled on the land for the past 50 years. I do not want to compare East to West, and I will not do so, but I will refer to the eastern elders and their meagre existence during their life on the land. Mr. Speaker, we all know and are aware of the hardship and the extreme climate that our elders had to endure in the early days. Their work consisted of daily survival and the nomadic search for food and shelter. To compound the situation, they also had to raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, one has to only scan this year's budget to see the millions and millions of dollars being spent on various projects, some of which I question their merit.

Mr. Speaker, the Finance Minister has publicly stated on many occasions that the budget will not be balanced on the backs of the poor and less fortunate. Mr. Speaker, with this statement, I naturally understood it to include our precious elders; I surely hope so. Mr. Speaker, we recently heard my fellow MLA for Thebacha speak in the House regarding Mother's Day and the love and admiration that we hold for our parents.

Mr. Speaker, I need not say any more on this issue and further request the support of my fellow Members on this important motion, as it will illustrate that we are indeed practising what we preach and not just posturing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The seconder of the motion. Mr. Erasmus, do you wish to speak to the motion? Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This particular policy did come through the Social Programs committee but, since that time, a new policy has been implemented, and it seems as though there are some elders who are going through hardships because of this, and particularly elders who smoke. It's easy enough to say that, well, they should just quit smoking, but if you smoked a package of cigarettes a day, that could use up your whole \$200 in a month, and you might need more, depending where you live. So, I have seconded this motion because I believe, not that we should do away with the standardization, but that the disposable income an elder, a senior, should be able to retain should be raised a little bit. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support the motion; however, I don't see any amount or anything specified in the motion, so I would like to move a motion to amend the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Motion To Amend Motion 12-13(3), Rates Charged To Seniors Resident In Long-Term Care Facilities, Carried

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move a motion to amend Motion 12-13(3). My motion to amend is as follows:

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Motion 12-13(3) be amended by adding the following:

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Minister of Health and Social Services consider increasing the guaranteed monthly allowance provided to seniors residing in long-term care facilities from the current

rate of \$200 per month to a guaranteed monthly allowance of \$300 per month.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

May I have a copy of the motion? Thank you, Mr. Picco. Your motion is in order. In order for the Members to have a copy of the motion, we will take a break until this document is translated and circulated to all the Members.

--- SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. The motion was in order. To the amendment. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

I think the motion is self-explanatory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes, do you wish to speak to your amendment?

MR. OOTES:

No, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

To the motion, as amended. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

That's fine, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the motion. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

(Microphone turned off) ... Social Programs committee since November looking at the business plans. We were in the House last week -- I think it was last week -- with the Department of Health and Social Services reviewing the budget line by line. This issue now at the eleventh hour, once we've agreed Health and Social Services -- comes up in a fashion that doesn't have the capability of changing things, as far as I can see.

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It wasn't an issue when we reviewed the budgets. I am satisfied that the mechanisms and the checks and balances are there to protect our beloved elders; that nobody is going to suffer undue hardship. 1, unfortunately, can't support this motion because I don't see it as being very relevant at this point. It makes a nice gesture but the time when we should have put this on the table and forced the issue through was when we did the budgets last week. Not when we're standing here a day before we adjourn, saying we want to make a change because we've reconsidered. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the motion, as amended. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't support the motion that has been put forward. It's my understanding, for one thing, it's just come to my attention that the information in here that the seniors are now guaranteed a living allowance of \$200 is incorrect and, in fact, it's more like \$288. What we're asking for here is a \$ 12 a month increase. This seems like a lot of exercise to go through to accomplish that small increase.

Also, with respect to the equalization of the rates in general, I believe it's something that a fair amount of thought went into. In fact, a lot of rates for seniors requiring more specialized care have gone down while some have gone up, and the Minister did provide those numbers for us here in the House when he was questioned about it. In view of the fact that I don't believe the information in this motion is correct and that the seniors are already getting approximately \$288, I won't be supporting the motion. thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion, as amended. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, listening to the mover of the motion and to the seconder of the motion, I believe that both the mover and the seconder have a valid point. Mr. Speaker, in the Eastern Arctic -- and I speak for the Eastern Arctic, I'm not about to make a comparison between the East and West; I believe that seniors suffer equally in the Western Arctic and the Eastern Arctic -- we have a very high rate of unemployment. We have limited job opportunities for the family members of elders. In many cases, elders are supporting the families. In many cases, elders have to give money out so that the family, the extended family can buy gas and go out hunting, where the elders are very dependent upon the country food.

Mr. Speaker, in some cases, I believe we have overcrowding in homes. In some cases, Mr. Speaker, the elders are subject to noise in their own homes. They may have many reasons to leave their homes and move to facilities such as senior citizen facilities. Therefore, I support the motion and I urge the other Members to support the motion for the sake of our elders within the jurisdiction. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion, as amended. Do we have any other Members that wish to speak to the motion, as amended? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief on this. As a Member of the Social committee, this is one of those

decisions that I believe at the time, we went over quite thoroughly. It's not that these prices, the value or the equalization has gone up so much that elders cannot afford to be in the facilities. It is guaranteed, as we've heard, that there's a certain amount of money for their own personal use. Remarks made earlier, I believe, can be taken in a way that would make it look like we're putting old people out the door. I take that to be untrue and I'm concerned that we've put that forward in such a way. We gave it some serious thought. We're not putting anybody out the door.

As we've heard earlier, we've gone through the process time and time again, through business plans right up until the department was on the floor of this House, and nothing has changed. I, too, have elders back home, relatives and family members. But I know

I'm not going to be making something that's going to be throwing them out the door. I think the young people of this generation better start taking a little more responsibility for their own lives instead of depending on elders, if that's the situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion, as amended. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to clear up some misconceptions surrounding this. On elders' facilities -- I can just speak about my own community and the people who are in our elders' facility -- we have people...

--- Interjection

MR. PICCO:

Am I allowed to speak to the motion?

MR. SPEAKER:

Can we have some order in the House please? Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, what I'm saying is that in our elders' facility, for example, it's not just for geriatric care of some patients who can't cook and everything else. In a lot of cases, when elders are living in social housing, as we know and we've found out in this House, they don't pay any rent. There is no rent paid. In a lot of cases, elders don't have housing to be able to go in so they had to go into elders' facilities. Because now they're in an elders' facility, they only get \$200 income a month. That's what Mr. Ningark has been saying, that's what I've been saying and I think that's what some of the other Members have been saying. It has nothing to do with the other things.

When an elder is in one of these facilities, Mr. Speaker, it's not just for handicapped or geriatric care of elders, it's also for elders who weren't able to get a social housing unit. Where, if they were in that social housing unit, there would be no rent paid and they would get the full amount and value of their pension. However, because, through no fault of their own in a lot of cases, they've had to go one of these elders' facilities in our region, like Mr. Ningark has said. In that case, the \$200 doesn't seem to be enough.

That's what we're saying. If that's a misconception on some Members' parts, that's fine. That's why I moved the amendment to actually put in, hopefully, a dollar amount. It's only a recommendation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion, as amended. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You've heard me make reference to the Joe Greenland Centre in Aklavik over the last couple of weeks. This is one of the big concerns that has come out with regard to the elders who occupy the facility; that, as of January 1st, there will be that increase. They feel that because a lot of them have a base minimum amount of \$900 a month, they only have about \$150 to play with to carry them through the remainder of the month. I will be supporting this motion.

Hopefully, we will practice what we preach about trying to think about those communities who may not have things like roads or regular flights every day; the cost of living in Aklavik is high and we do have to find a way to assist families. A lot of the families we're talking about are large families, especially in my riding. A lot of people still associate with the family unit and have to show respect to the elders. With elders, they're not the type of people to beg. They have pride that they carry with them all through life. I think we have to somehow respect that without jeopardizing their income they receive. With that, I will be supporting this motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion, as amended. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we can use all the smoke and mirrors we want, hide behind the process, the bureaucracy and so on, but the issue; it's real and it's real in my community and in my region. This new schedule of events is having a negative impact on the elders in my community, and I make no apologies for bringing this forth. I was called last week, and I was told that six of the seven members in the Arviat Elders' Centre were going to vacate the building and move back with their families because of the rent increase.

Again, the situation in the East is different than in the West. The elders have spent the majority of their life living on the land. They have no pension aside from the Canada pension and no savings, so the money they would get would be approximately \$800 a month. Then we're asking them to live on \$200 a month, as far as their extras for tobacco, bingo and whatever, clothes. I think that's unreasonable. I think we should be ashamed of ourselves.

If we look at the budget, the dollars that we're planning to expend over the next year, we're looking at a \$1 billion budget. I don't see why we can't take some of this money and move it toward the benefit of our elders.

Mr. Speaker, I take exception to comments made by my fellow MLAs that we're pushing elders out of their residence and so on. That's not what we're saying. They're making the choice to leave but it's because they feel the rates are too high. I realize that it was discussed in the Social Programs committee, and that's fine; it doesn't mean that it's cut in stone. That has been the process and what we've been hearing for the last few months here. We have to do it because it was put in the budget last year, it was put in the program or put in the business plans. I think we have to start dealing with real people here and stop hiding behind the processes and the bureaucracy. I think it's time we put our money where our mouth is and stop inferring that we're going to make these commitments and look after elders and the less fortunate and get down to business.

Mr. Speaker, I would also ask for a recorded vote on this motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. There is a request for a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

Recorded Vote

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Steen, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Evaloarjuk, Mr. Barnabas, Mr. Enuaraq, Mr. Picco.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. All those opposed to the motion as amended, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Roland, Mr. Miltenberger, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those abstaining from the motion, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Ng, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Morin, Mr. Todd, Mr. Arlooktoo, Mr. Dent.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. We have 11 for, three against and six abstentions. Motion 12-13(3) is carried, as amended.

--- Carried

--- Applause

Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Mr. Ng.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 17: Business Corporations Act

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 17, Business Corporations Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

--- Carried

Bill 17 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: Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act; Bill 6, An Act to

Amend the Education Act, S.N.W.T., 1995, c.28; Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act; Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act; Bill 11, Appropriation Act, 1996-97; Bill 12, Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2; Bill 13, Loan Authorization Act, 1996-97; Bill 14, Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 3; Bill 15, Statute Revision Act; Committee Report 1-13(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 1996-97 Main Estimates; Committee Report 2-13(3), Standing Committee on Infrastructure Report on the Review of the 1996-97 Main Estimates; Committee Report 3-13(3), Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development Report on the Review of the 1996-97 Main Estimates; Committee Report 4-13(3), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the 1996-97 Main Estimates; and, Tabled Document 1-13(3), Report of the Commission on MLA Compensation, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the Chair.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

I will call Committee of the Whole to order and ask what your wishes are with respect to the items before us. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would recommend that we carry on with Bill 11, Appropriation Act, 1996-97, and the deferred departments; starting with Finance, followed by Municipal and Community Affairs, Justice, Safety and Public Services, the Executive and Legislative Assembly.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Is the committee in agreement with that recommendation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

Bill 11: Appropriation Act, 1996-97

Department Of Finance

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Could the Members please turn to page 4-7 and we will go through the program summaries for the various departments that have been identified. Page 4-7, program summary, Finance, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$10.171 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total expenditures, \$10.171 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

-Agreed

Department Of Safety And Public Services

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Moving on to Safety and Public Services, page 5-9, program summary, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$6.879 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total expenditures, \$6.879 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

Department Of Justice

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Page 6-7, program summary, Justice, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$68.929 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Capital, total capital, \$3.012 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total expenditures, \$71.941 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

Department Of Municipal And Community

Affairs

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Page 10-13, program summary, Municipal and Community Affairs, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$70.591 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Could you slow down so we could get to the page as we're going through, if you don't mind?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Okay. On page 10-13, program summary, Municipal and Community Affairs, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$70.591 million.

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Capital, total capital, \$35.562 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total expenditures, \$106.153 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

Legislative Assembly

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Page 1-9, program summary, Legislative Assembly, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$9.369 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Page 1-9, capital, total capital, \$45,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total expenditures, \$9.414 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

Department Of Executive

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Moving on to page 2-9, program summary, executive offices, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$11.672 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total expenditures, \$11.672 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

Financial Management Board Secretariat

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Page 2-25, program summary, Financial Management Board Secretariat. Mr. Picco, do you need me to repeat the page number? Page 2-25. Operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$50.829 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total expenditures, \$50.829 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

Intergovernmental And Aboriginal Affairs

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Page 2-43, program summary, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$2.983 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total expenditures, \$2.983 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. That concludes the detail and we will now go clause by clause on Bill 11. Does the committee agree to go clause by clause now on Bill 11, which is in your green binder?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

Clause By Clause

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Bill 11, Appropriation Act, 1996-97. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Todd.

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Committee Motion 12-13(3): To Amend Clause 3(2) Of Bill 11, Carried

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to move a motion. I move that clause 3(2) of Bill 11 be amended by striking out "\$1.219,991 billion" and by substitution "\$1.224,991 billion." Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Erasmus, to the motion.

MR. ERASMUS:

(Microphone turned off) ... why this is being done.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. This change and the motion I will be making later on in the schedule is to accommodate the \$5 million for the MIC, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. This indicates that we'll be spending another \$5 million. Is this going to affect the projected deficit? Is it going to increase the deficit?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. To the motion, Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. No, this will be expenditure neutral because the funds will come from the sale of staff housing. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I didn't quite get that. Maybe the Minister could explain it a little better.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Sorry, Madam Chair. This expenditure will come from the sale of staff housing and it's not projected to increase the deficit. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

What is going to come from staff housing? Are we going to be getting some money from staff housing? His explanations are a little bit too brief. Maybe he can explain more, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Maybe I misunderstood. I thought everybody was aware of this, Madam Chair. Sorry. What we're asking for is the \$5 million amendment to the act to seed the Mortgage Investment Corporation. The \$5 million will come from the sale of the 560 staff houses that we intend to proceed to sell late in the fall of this year. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I cannot support the motion. After this past weekend in Iqaluit, when we met with the Chamber of Commerce and spoke to the bank manager who told me and Mr. Todd that, in actuality, they were being very aggressive in doing bank mortgages in level 11 and level III communities. Then, after the meeting, in speaking to the manager and he had talked to his counterparts of the Royal Bank in other regions, and they, too, were doing mortgages in level 11 and level III communities.

I would need more information and justification to approve the motion.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Would you like to respond, Mr. Todd?

HON. JOHN TODD:

Madam Chair, I've spoken to the committee and Mr. Picco is certainly welcome to vote against the motion. I would call question. Let's see if we can get support for it. As far as I'm concerned, I have said, until I'm blue in the face, contrary to what Mr. Picco might think, that I believe and still believe that level 11 and III communities have a requirement for this money. I thought I had reassured the committee on which I think he sits that there were some safeguards there, I believe I have a reasonable amount of support for this bill to move forward. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. To the motion. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

I wonder if the Minister could tell us, on the sale of housing, what kind of revenues we might get from this sale.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. As my colleague here tells me, be patient. Maybe it's because we are getting near the end of the day; but I've explained to my honourable colleague, I don't know how many times, but we are projecting \$15 million to \$20 million in the sale of staff housing and we're projecting that revenue to come in over a two-year period. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Ootes.

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MR. OOTES:

So will it be only \$5 million that will be devoted to the Mortgage Investment Corporation, and what will happen to the other \$15 million?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. As I said to the standing committee yesterday or the day before, and last week and the day before that, it's our intention to utilize \$5 million from the sale of staff housing, and the balance would be put against the deficit. I think that is the issue that Mr. Ootes wishes me to say, and, yes, it will be put against the deficit. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I have some problems with the motion, however, as a good-natured person, I think I will support it.

But before that, we have been trying for years to get a health centre in Gjoa Haven. There was money committed for that community. We have been trying to get a senior citizens' home in Gjoa Haven for many years now. It seems obvious that, in some cases, it's so easy to get money, to find money; in some cases, you try and try for years but you are not able to find funding, because you have to sacrifice in order to help other areas.

But, as I've indicated, as a good-natured person, I will support the motion. But I would like to send the message to Cabinet, to the Premier and to the Government House Leader that, when you try to get something for your community, you know the commitment is there already but are being told there is no money in the system because of reductions. When you find one area is needing some money, it seems to be so easy to find money in one area and yet so hard to find money for another area.

Anyway, Madam Chair, I will support the motion. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. I am sure everybody is very concerned about the issue of the health centre in your riding, however; can we please keep the comments more specific to this particular motion? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I will be supporting this motion. I believe that, especially for the level 11 and III communities, we have to find another avenue of accessing revenue, especially for the large number of houses that are needed, especially in the smaller communities.

I think that we have to find an alternative to the problem that we are seeing with the Housing Corporation being cut over the years; by six per cent this year, we got cut by \$10 million through that program out of Ottawa just recently.

In my riding, I have to go into communities where people have houses which are run down which do not have running water and do not have toilets -- they still have honey buckets

-- and that's the life of most of the people in my riding who have to live in these types of units because they do not have the availability to access resources through the ACCESS program. They are limited in most resources.

We have something like 3,000 houses needed because of the problem we have in housing in the North, and now we finally have a mechanism where the government is going to put in a five-to-one ratio, where, for every \$5 we get, we put \$1 in. I mean, you can't ask for a better deal than that, where we are not taking the complete risk, and we should seriously consider this opportunity for us to benefit those communities that do not have access to banking and those institutions.

Sure, Mr. Picco can say, well, these banks will go in, out and everywhere else. I've been talking to the banks myself. I have asked them if they could drive two hours from Inuvik to McPherson twice a month and have someone come in to help people with their pensions, help them out with their convenience cards and set up things like that. They can't do it and they won't do it. It's not economically viable for them to do

it and they are not going to do it. So, no offence to Mr. Picco's comments, but it doesn't work in my region.

I think we have to find a mechanism to do that, and I see these resources being used for that, so I will be supporting the motion.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I think some of this discussion is important because it's all been done, to this point, behind closed doors, and people haven't heard about the Mortgage Investment Corporation. I think we have to keep that in mind.

Personally, I think this is something I can support. We have precious little else on the horizon that I can see in terms of generating any kind of alternatives to the housing situation that we do have where there's a desperate shortage.

As my colleague for the Mackenzie Delta said about the ratio of five to one, I think that if the money can be found from the private sector and with the guarantees that all \$5 million won't be spent unless we find offsetting private money, at a ratio of five to one, I think it's a worthwhile investment; therefore, I will be supporting this motion.

But I think it's also very important that the people know about the fruits of our hard labour the last few months, behind the doors here, that this is an issue that has great potential.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I, too, will be supporting this motion. However, as the honourable Member for Thebacha indicated, there hasn't been much information going out on this issue. I will be supporting this motion if we can be assured that this is the only money that will be going into this venture. We need to be assured that, if people

default on their payments, our government is not going to have to pour in another \$5 million, \$10 million or \$15 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. ERASMUS:

So I would like to know what will happen if people default on their mortgage payments.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. There was a question there. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I think Mr. Miltenberger is probably right; there hasn't been a great deal of debate on this issue. This is probably healthy, and I apologize if I sounded somewhat flippant earlier, because it is an important issue and it is a large expenditure.

What will happen in the Mortgage Investment Corporation, assuming we can find the other stakeholder investors of \$15 million to start with, we will be a 20 to 25 per cent shareholder in this company on the initial basis. Our exposure will be to the tune of \$5 million, period, and there will be no additional fiscal exposure to this company. It will operate independent of government and, in a sense, we'll be just like a tenant, or bridge financing, if you want; another alternative to the banks.

I don't want to get into a long debate with my friend, Mr. Picco, but I am telling you I have talked to the vice-presidents of banks, not bank managers, and I am telling you that they are not extending the mortgages; or, if they are extending mortgages, then the conditions are simply impossible for people to get. Secondly, they've said to me on many occasions that they can't afford to service it, and I believe Mr. Krutko just spoke to that. So, it's fine, as Mr. Picco says, to sit in Iqaluit with two banks and say everything's hunky-dory. Well, if you're sitting in Grise Fiord, maybe it isn't, or in Clyde River, Chesterfield Inlet or Repulse Bay.

I've tried to assure the Members -- and I don't know how many times I've gone through this -- that there are some safeguards in place. It was asked by Mr. Miltenberger and Mr. Erasmus. It's there. There is no alternative at the present time. We've got some

responsibility out there to try to enhance opportunity for our people across the Territories and this is what this intends to do. If we're successful, and I've said, and I'll go public again, that this is a bold and somewhat risky venture but I've, hopefully, assured most of the MLAs that we won't spend the money without a clear commitment from external financial stakeholders.

I'm looking for support from ordinary Members. I understand I have it from some but, obviously, I haven't got it from others and they're certainly entitled to their opinion. I would suggest, Madam Chair, that we should proceed with the vote. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. I have a number of other people who would like to speak to the motion. Mr. Picco, I have your name on the list. Mr. Evaloarjuk and Mr. Steen have not spoken yet. Could we defer to them and then come back to the two Members who have already spoken to the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Evaloarjuk.

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Chair. Perhaps I'm misunderstanding a little bit on this motion. I am in support of the \$5 million that is being proposed in the motion. First of all, when the Baffin leaders were meeting, there was a resolution made stating that the government shouldn't be selling off government housing before Nunavut is in place. They wanted the government to consider that resolution that was being made at that meeting in the Baffin.

Being a Member of the Legislative Assembly, I can be involved in decision-making. However, we have to represent the people who are in our region; we have to listen to their concerns and problems. For that reason, I will not be supporting this motion at the moment. I know the motion might be carried but I will not be supporting this motion at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Evaloarjuk. To the motion. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a question for the Minister of Finance with regard to this \$5 million. I'm getting the impression here that the sale of the staff housing is roughly the same amount of money that's going to be in this investment corporation. I would like to ask the Minister if the funding can only be used to buy staff housing and cannot be used for construction of new houses.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

The development of a mortgage and loan company was put in place over a year and a half ago and has no relationship to the sale of staff housing; although, the sale of staff housing will probably provide some momentum. The mortgage and loan company was put in place in an effort to provide alternative funding for level 11 and III communities in the mortgaging of new construction and new housing because we believed at the time, and I believe now, that the banks are not as aggressive as they should be in providing our people, who we represent, with the loan money that they need to build these houses or we're setting conditions beyond their ability to do the same.

The selling of the staff housing is an issue that came up during the budget deficit elimination strategy as an overall policy of this government but has no bearing on the Mortgage Investment Corporation which we started to develop over a year and a half ago. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I wish to support the government all right but, at the same time, I hear

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concern from the Nunavut area that they don't want these houses sold. However, Mr. Todd says the sale of the houses has nothing to do with the \$5 million. I will support the government.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to say that I appreciate the Member for Thebacha saying that finally we're getting some good, open, public debate here today. I don't like the idea of trying to rush it. It is a commitment of \$5 million by this government. There are a couple of things.

I did talk to the bank managers, that's correct. I didn't talk to the vice-president of the Royal Bank. Maybe I should have given him a call and I would have found out something. I didn't have that opportunity. However, I did have the opportunity to talk to the different bank managers and phone the bank managers. By the way, when I was living in a community outside of Iqaluit, it's how I arranged my mortgage because they were in there doing mortgages. Maybe that's something we should think about also.

I think that's a major concern. If the Minister could confirm to me that the sale of X number of houses or the revenue generated would go back into the coffers of the GNWT to attack the accumulated deficit to help out the needy and the poor, then maybe I could support the motion. However, at this juncture, I don't think that the Government of the Northwest Territories should be entering the private marketplace when we have commercial lenders. If Mr. Todd can speak to the vice-presidents of the banks, maybe he could say, Mr. Vice-President, can you help us do more mortgages in our communities. Maybe that's all it will take. I don't know. In these fiscal times, we can't afford this, that and the other thing, and I don't know if we can afford \$5 million.

The other thing, of course, is we've spent how much money on the MIC so far, as Mr. Todd said. We've had it in the planning stages, we've spent X number of dollars on it already. That's my feeling. It's been my feeling since the beginning and it's nothing new. Unless the Minister can prove it to me, then I can't support it. Or, if he can give me some conditions where I know that the revenue generated from the income, the net profit, would go toward the betterment of the people of the Northwest Territories, I could support it. However, at this juncture, it doesn't seem that way.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Well, obviously the Member hasn't taken the time to read the proposal that's been put forward to the Government Operations committee, which I understand he sits on. If he had taken the time to look at the issue, he would see that all the answers are in there.

Secondly, banks don't determine the political strategy of this government; politicians do. I'm suggesting to you that this initiative is an alternative. There are some safeguards in place. If the honourable Member had taken the time to read the proposal that I brought forward that was in the Government Operations committee, if he had attended the session when I brought in Mr. Grossman and Mr. Kostenko he would then understand the issue and have the detailed information he requires. It is there and it has been there on a consistent basis. This issue has been on the table for over a year; a year and a half. I just don't understand where the honourable Member is coming from when he says he doesn't know what's going on. Read the documents. He tells us he works 12 hours a day; take some time to read the documents.

---interjection

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Picco, if you have a point of order, you have to be recognized to raise it. Do you have a point of order that you'd like to raise?

MR. PICCO:

Madam Chairperson, my point of order is that the Member is saying that if I attended the meeting -- he knows that I was at the meeting -- and if I had read the paper, and I have read the paper. Just because something is put in front of me doesn't mean I have to agree with it. I think I made some legitimate concerns and I'm very pleased that the Minister is getting this opportunity to explain why the MIC is so useful for ... (Microphone turned off).

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you for the clarification, Mr. Picco. However, technically, that's not a point of order. If you have a point of order, I'd appreciate it if you'd say it. If not, that would just be a clarification. Are you satisfied that you've clarified your position on the...

MR. PICCO:

(Microphone turned off)

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Just one second. Thank you. There is no point of order. Did you have anything further to the motion, Mr. Picco? We have several other people waiting. Go ahead.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I think I should be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation that I wasn't present at the meetings and that I don't read my paperwork. I did read the paperwork but I didn't agree with it. I was at the meeting and I didn't agree with what Mr. Grossman said. Mr. Grossman doesn't have to come up from wherever he came from to tell me about mortgages and doing loans; I did it for three and a half years. I did speak to

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the manager and so did he. Maybe we'll agree to disagree. I'm glad, again, for the record, that Mr. Todd is getting the opportunity to explain his MIC, although I don't agree with it. If it's a great thing, then I'll be the first one to go up and give him copies of anything he wants. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Ootes is next on the list.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I've heard, too, that banks are not prepared to go into the communities and I've heard from other Members that banks will look after the communities; there are conflicting reports. I guess I have to go with what the Members of this House are saying, in a number of cases; that the banks will not go into the communities.

I take that into consideration because the primary purpose, the primary concern that we seem to have, one of the big concerns in the Territories is the need for housing and it's a desperate need. I'm told, 3,000 units. I don't think we're fulfilling that need. I see this mechanism as an opportunity to do that. However, I have a lot of questions with this process.

One of the areas I'm concerned about and I raised at the Government Operations committee meeting -- Mr.

Picco referred to it also -- is that I'm not sure, quite frankly, that the business plan is a business plan. I was given some documents but, quite frankly, I'm not satisfied that that's a business plan that, if I was an investor, I would say, hey, I can go with that. It will be up to the investors eventually to say whether they wish to participate in this.

My comment is on the need here. We need houses. I want this restricted to at least 95 per cent housing usage. I do not want this used for commercial purposes for at least an eight-year period. If I can get that assurance from the Minister that this money will not be used for commercial purposes, then I can support the motion. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Just for clarification, before I ask Mr. Todd to respond, when you say commercial purposes, what are you referring to?

MR. OOTES:

If I may take a moment to explain, if a company wishes to erect an office building or build a subdivision, et cetera, I'm not in favour of that. This should be for individuals to get mortgages for houses.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Madam Chair, I've already assured my honourable colleague and I will assure him again in the House that the intent of this MIC was -- and, again, I'll remind everybody -- to provide mortgages for housing and that will be the primary focus of it. Both Mr. Ootes and Mr. Henry have asked me and it is not the intent of the Mortgage Investment Corporation to be active in commercial mortgages. I hope that assures him. He's asked me for an eight year ... I can't answer the eight years. I'd have to phone up Mr. Grossman or others who are working on it. I said in committee and I'm saying again, I believe the term was 95 per cent and I don't have a problem with that. I can't say today, categorically, that it's going to be eight years, six years or 10 years.

Not because we're going to get Mr. Ootes's support, which we appreciate, but I believe that's part of the arrangement of this Mortgage Investment Corporation -- I believe I explained that in committee -- yes, we will

ensure that its primary focus, up to 95 per cent, is in mortgages for housing. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I apologize for my question in that it may have been answered before, but I would appreciate it if I could get it answered again. I appreciate the Minister's comments that 95 per cent of this MIC will go towards a residential component. I do not need an eight-year term but I need the Minister to confirm that, yes, 95 per cent of it will be dedicated towards residential construction.

--- Interjection

MR. HENRY:

Thank you for that. Does the Minister have an amount that's being spent to date on the preparation of the MIC and also amounts he would envisage it will take to set up the program, office, staff and so on?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The original budget for the Mortgage Investment Corporation was \$1 million to put it together. That was all the legal and the legislation. I don't know, right off the top of my head, exactly how much of that money is spent, but I believe it's somewhere around \$750,000. It was \$1 million that was budgeted.

I said to the committee, and I'll say again today, that the intent of the mortgage and loan company is to be a very lean, mean and trim operation. I'll just try to get to the financial information here. Can I ask for clarification? I've got the profit and loss statement here and I'm just trying to quickly calculate what the O and M expenditures are going to be outside of interest payments and stuff like that. It's somewhere in the region of \$913,000 on an annual basis. That's for what I would call the operations and maintenance costs of running this operation.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Initially, this initiative was proposed as a housing initiative to spur construction and create jobs. As of recently, I believe it's fair to say that the sale of staff housing has crept into it. I would say initially, at least, what the committee was presented with was that the initiative was to spur construction and the creation of jobs. We have another player, CMHC, who I would suggest should be a large

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component of this. I would ask the Minister to what extent does he intend, percentage-wise, to use CMHC as a guarantor?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Let me qualify by saying that this will be an independent business partially seeded by government and subject to the other investors coming forward. My understanding is that, if not all, close to all of the mortgages will be CMHC guaranteed, as they are done with banks. I don't have the percentage here. However, it's certainly the intent to have this operation run no different in terms of the conventional banks and their conditions of lending. It may practice some different ways of doing it but CMHC would be intimately involved in this operation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

I'm very happy to hear that because I believe that, for the Mortgage Investment Corporation, it would be important that they would have some guarantees of a standard of construction. I believe CMHC would ensure that whatever construction does take place, it will be to a certain standard; and, in the event of default, there will be a product that will still be marketable.

Something else, and I believe the Minister has confirmed it a number of times, there is no money in

until the additional money is placed forth by investors?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I believe a number of Members in that committee spoke to this. A number of the people who we've talked to who may be interested in being our partners in this venture have indicated that they want to see some good faith on the part of the government, of its commitment on the fiscal side of this issue. By supporting this motion, that will clearly demonstrate to the other players that this government is committed to doing it. I believe that will be adequate for us to then try to secure the other stakeholders in developing this Mortgage Investment Corporation.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Madam Chair. We've heard it numerous times on this issue but here in Committee of the Whole, this will, if it goes ahead, start dealing with our housing shortages. You've heard Mr. Henry talk about the employment that would come from that. Isn't that what we're here to do; to create jobs and try to help the people get off of social assistance? What more do we need of this? If we can get housing for the people and put people to work, get our youth trained for it and into the job market, aren't we doing what we set about to do initially? Thank you.

--- Applause

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. To the motion. Mr. Enuaraq.

MR. ENUARAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Chair. During the Government Operations committee meeting, we discussed this item. I believe that it can be very beneficial to the smaller communities, to the people who don't have access to the banks and who want to obtain their own housing. I would like to see somebody from the bank. I've never seen anybody representing a bank that goes into the smaller

communities. I would like everyone to know that I will support the motion. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Enuaraq. To the motion. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Just one last question to the Minister. Was this initiative discussed with CMHC?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. This issue has been discussed for over a year. This initiative came forward under the previous government. Yes, CMHC has been intimately involved in our discussions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Madam Chair. If the MIC were to go ahead, what impact would this have on the banks? Presently, I know that we've had some difficulty in trying to encourage the banks to get out and lend to the residents in the smaller communities. Is it possible that they may back off now and just leave this up to the Mortgage Investment Corporation as far as what loans will take place and so on? Will they back away from what I consider their responsibility in the smaller communities, where they would offer a lower rate of, I believe it's 1.5 per cent? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I can't predict what the banks are going to do, Madam Chair. If the Mortgage Investment Corporation will, if nothing else, encourage them to become more active, then I would be very pleased with the end that we've tried to achieve. It's hard at this stage of the game for me to predict what the banks will do. I know that from my own experience -- and I don't want to be disrespectful to the banks -- we've seen a new

change in attitude, particularly with the Royal Bank lately that has opened offices in Cambridge, Rankin and Iqaluit. There are some encouraging signs out there but, in all honesty, I couldn't tell the honourable Member what position they might take at this time.

Assuming we can get this approved by enough Members, I'm prepared -- and I've said this to some of the bankers I've been talking to -- to sit down with them, talk to them and see where we all play in this mortgage game. Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

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

--- Carried

Clause 3, as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Schedule, part I. Mr. Todd.

Committee Motion 13-13(3): To Amend Schedule To Bill 11, Carried

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Another motion that supports the previous motion we had support for.

That the schedule to Bill 11 be amended by:

(a) increasing the amount set out opposite Vote 1, item 13, by \$5,000,000 from \$30,864,000 to \$35,864,000;

(b) increasing the amount set out as the TOTAL APPROPRIATION for Vote 1 by \$5,000,000 from \$1,025,678,000 to \$1,030,678,000; and

(c) increasing the amount set out as the TOTAL EXPENDITURES for Votes 1 and 2 by \$5,000,000 from \$1,219,991,000 to \$1,224,991,000.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I just got this motion 15 seconds ago. I'd like to be able to read it first, to be able to look at these schedules and to comprehend what it means. Can we just hang on to the question for a few minutes?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

We sure can. I'm responding to the committee. When the committee calls question, I ask for the question. Would you like to take a break so you'll have a chance to look at it? Would you suggest a short time out?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

--- SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

I trust the Members have had a chance to take a look at the motion. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Question is being called. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is carried.

--- Carried

Schedule, part I, vote 1, operations and maintenance, total appropriation, \$1.030,678 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Part II, vote 2, capital, total appropriation, \$194.313 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total expenditures, \$1.224,991 billion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

The clause by clause is completed. To the bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Does the committee agree that Bill 11 is ready for third reading, as amended?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Bill 11 is now ready for third reading, as amended. The budget portion of those items in Committee of the Whole have been completed. Does the committee agree that we have concluded Committee Reports 1-13(3), 2-13(3), 3-13(3) and 4-13(3)?

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Krutko.

--- Interjection

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Krutko is moving that we report progress. The motion is in order and is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is defeated.

--- Defeated

We've dealt with the items that Committee of the Whole identified. Could we have further direction as to which items you would like to go to next? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Madam Chair, I would recommend that we go to Bill 13, followed by bills 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 14, 15 and Tabled Document 1-13(3), in that order.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Does everyone agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Does everyone agree that we should take a break for supper?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

The House will recess until 6:30. Thank you.

--- DINNER RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

I'll call the House back to order. I would like to confirm with Mr. Ootes the order in which we'll be considering the bills. Can I just tell you what my understanding of the order is, and you could, perhaps, confirm it for me? Bills 13, 5, 8, 7, 12, 14.

MR. OOTES:

Yes. Thank you.

Bill 13: Loan Authorization Act, 1996-97

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Bill 13, Loan Authorization Act, 1996-97. Could I please ask the Minister responsible to make opening remarks?

Minister's Introductory

Remarks

HON. JOHN TODD:

Madam Chair, the purpose of the Loan Authorization Act is to authorize the government to make loans to municipalities. It is a requirement of the Northwest Territories Act that the lending of government funds be authorized by the Legislative Assembly.

This act is an annual act which, for the 1996-97 fiscal year, will provide the authority to lend up to a maximum of \$3.7 million to municipalities. This amount represents a decrease of \$5.4 million from the \$9.1 million authorized for the 1995-96 fiscal year.

The municipalities that have identified a requirement for loans are: Fort Simpson, in the amount of \$150,000; Hay River, \$600,000; Iqaluit, \$1 million; Norman Wells, \$350,000; and, Yellowknife, \$1.46 million.

The total of the identified requirements is \$3.56 million, which has been rounded to \$3.7 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. The chairman of the Government Operations committee ... I'm sorry. Mr. Picco, would you like to make comments on behalf of the committee which reviewed the bill?

Standing Committee On Infrastructure Comments

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The Standing Committee on Infrastructure reviewed Bill 13, Loan Authorization Act, 1996-97, on May 23, 1996. Members discussed the bill with the Minister of Finance and agreed that it should be reported to Committee of the Whole.

Members will take this opportunity in Committee of the Whole to raise any specific questions that they may have. I may add, Madam Chair, that there was good discussion on the bill and I was quite pleased, personally, with it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Picco, thank you for that very sincere rendition of your notes. At this time, I will ask if the Minister has any witnesses he would like to bring in.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Yes. Madam Chair.

I believe they're sitting waiting,

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. I'll ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses to the table.

Mr. Todd, for the record, could you please introduce your witnesses?

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. On my immediate left is Mr. Tony Dawson, and on my immediate right is Mr. Eric Nielsen.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Are there any general comments from the committee? A Member is calling for clause by clause. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

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Clause By Clause

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Bill 13, Loan Authorization Act, 1996-97, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

If the committee is agreed that we have approved the clause-by-clause, could we please have your response to the bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Does the committee agree that Bill 13 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Bill 13 is now ready for third reading. Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you, witnesses.

Bill 5: An Act To Amend The Motor Vehicles Act

Could I please direct the committee's attention to Bill 5, in your binders. Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act. Is this a private Member's bill?

--- Interjection

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Erasmus, could I please ask you to make your comments with respect to your bill? Is it the committee's wish that Mr. Erasmus take the stand?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Erasmus, you have the floor. Would you like to introduce your witness?

Mr. Erasmus's Introductory Remarks

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The Clerk has some statistics that I had tabled earlier. I will ask the Clerk if he would be kind enough to pass them out.

Madam Chair, I am pleased to bring forward Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act. This amendment proposes that all vehicles in the NWT will have to have headlights on when driving. I'm proposing this amendment because of my own experiences and because I'm concerned for the safety of elders and children.

I first thought of this while I was going to university. At that time, I had to drive back and forth to the South a couple of times every year. Sometimes I would be driving down the highway passing a vehicle, and a speck turned into a vehicle coming towards me. This can be very scary. If you are side by side with a vehicle that you're trying to pass, suddenly there's a large truck with no lights on right in front of you, you don't know whether to speed up or to try to pass the vehicle, or slow down so the guy you're trying to pass passes you and you can go behind.

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It's even worse for people with depth perception problems. Depth perception problems means you can't tell how far away things are.

Madam Chair, a recent Saskatchewan government insurance study indicated that children and elders have depth perception problems. This fall, just after I was elected, my nine-year-old son was waiting for the bus. The bus was coming with lights on. I saw him slowing down because he saw my son, and I told him to run across the street. The bus was obviously stopping and it was far enough away for him to get across safely, but he didn't go across. I asked him later why he didn't run across. He told me because he didn't know that the bus was stopping and he wasn't sure how far away it was, if he would have time to get across. He's just not experienced enough to realize this. He has never driven a car, he's not old enough to know how it happens, and he's nine years old. How about younger children? Their perception is even worse. I thought about what two to four tons of unrelenting steel can do to a child. That's when I knew I had to try to do something.

Madam Chair, many accidents happen because a driver does not notice another vehicle, or misjudges its speed. In this instance, the issue is not how well the driver can see; it's poor visual perception. It can be either by the driver or by the pedestrian. I will give

you an example. Those of you with glasses, take them off. How well can you see? You can't see too well, can you? But if you look up, you can see those lights pretty well.

At the MLA media hockey game, we all laughed because Mr. Picco could not see without his glasses. To this day, he still doesn't know that the big player who flattened him at centre ice was a woman.

--- Laughter

It's true, Ed.

--- Laughter

I'll give you another example. I took my glasses off while I was standing besides Winks. I looked down the street and I couldn't tell how far away the cars were when they had no lights on. Sometimes I didn't even know a vehicle was coming until it was close. Mandatory use of headlights would greatly reduce the number of accidents we have in the North. A study done in 1991 by the Insurance Institute on Highway Safety of Saskatchewan clearly indicated this. In that report, it talked about Scandinavian countries. The accident rates in Scandinavian countries decreased by 24 to 40 per cent when they made it mandatory for cars to have headlights. The study looked at urban areas and rural areas. Urban areas means towns like Yellowknife, Iqaluit or Rankin Inlet. In Sweden, there were 15 per cent fewer accidents in urban areas in the summertime.

Finland has had daytime running lights legislation since 1972. Sweden legislated it in 1977. In Canada, it's still not mandatory to have headlights on. This means that the NWT would be ahead of the rest of the country, for a change. The only thing we have in place is that late in 1989, the federal government passed a law. Today, new vehicles in Canada have to have lights that automatically come on when you start your car. These are called daytime running lights. As I said, this law was prompted by studies that showed daytime accidents were greatly reduced if vehicles have their headlights on. That same study showed that there were 24 per cent fewer accidents concerning pedestrians when daytime running lights were made mandatory. That means that one out of four pedestrians would not be hit by a vehicle. It would be similar circumstances here.

Under the current Motor Vehicles Act, we're supposed to use our headlights from half an hour after sunset to half an hour before sunrise, or any other time there's

poor visibility. Poor visibility is not defined in the act. Basically, this means that headlights must be used during dark hours.

Madam Chair, I don't know what's happening. At one time, truckers were the role models on our highways. They used their headlights, they were courteous. Today, lots of big trucks don't use lights. But it's not only truckers, it's a lot of other people. As I said, I noticed that when I went out and Game back from the South last summer. But it's getting worse now because of the new federal regulations, which means that new cars have to have lights that come on. Pretty soon there will be fewer and fewer cars that are going down the road without lights; the cars without lights will virtually become invisible because you will expect to see all cars with their lights on.

Even now if you see a speck on the highway, you don't know if the vehicle is going the other way, if it's coming towards you or if it's even actually a vehicle. The NWT has bad highway conditions and bad weather conditions. Many roads are windy, many have blind curves. Many roads are narrow. It's hard to pass on these roads without collisions, especially if you're going fast. Many of our roads are also dusty, with no pavement. We all know how difficult it is to drive on a dusty road or, even worse, trying to pass a car on a dusty road. But it's not only dust; we have fog, rain, snow and sleet. With these types of conditions and the lay-out of most of our highways, it's hard to see cars and pedestrians, even in our midnight sun conditions.

However, as I say, studies show that accidents during the day are significantly reduced when people use headlights. This bill could help that. This bill will simply require that the public changes their driving habits. Like seatbelt legislation, this amendment will require people to develop a new habit. Most people now buckle up for safety, out of habit. People didn't do that before our seatbelt legislation, but a recent study shows that close to 80 per cent of the people in the NWT use seatbelts.

Madam Chair, the public will learn lights on for safety. It has been said that people will wind up with dead batteries, people will get tickets for not turning on their lights. At a recent constituency meeting I had, one of my constituents indicated that she puts a clear piece of tape on her driver's side window. That piece of tape has a message on it to shut off her lights. She never forgets to shut off her lights. A person who can't read could easily draw a little light on a piece of clear tape and put it on their window. Dead batteries; what's a

dead battery if you can save a life? Besides, it will probably only happen once. Once you wind

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up with a dead battery, you will always remember to shut off your lights when you get out of your car.

People will get tickets, but how many times does that have to happen to learn? Probably just once. If it costs you \$25 to drive down the road without your lights on, the next time you'll remember to turn them on.

Madam Chair, we're talking about changing habits. We're talking about convenience versus lives. It doesn't matter how small your town is. You could be in Fort McPherson, you could be in Lutsel K'e, you could be in Yellowknife, you could be in Pelly Bay. A life is a life. The inconvenience of a dead battery or a traffic ticket should mean nothing compared to saving someone's life or saving them from being crippled. We, in the NWT, were last to make it mandatory to wear seatbelts in our vehicles. Let's be the first for a change. Let's save money by using headlights. We can reduce our insurance rates and our medical costs but, more importantly, it will reduce the loss of human lives. It will reduce the number of people who may be crippled. We can reduce the number of people who have to feel the pain and sorrow of lost loved ones. We can reduce the number of orphaned children there are. These are many things that we can't place a value on; but if we can save one life, we'll be doing good by passing this legislation.

Madam Chair, I could go on, I have more to say, but I believe I will save the rest for if there are any questions. There are some incidents of accidents that have occurred in our small communities, and I can talk about that if anybody wants to ask questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. The standing committee which reviewed the bill will now have an opportunity to make comments. Mr. Krutko.

Standing Committee On Resource Management And Development Comments

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development has reviewed Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles

Act. This bill will require that headlights or daytime running lights of a motor vehicle driven on a highway be on at all times.

In addition to this, Members raised concerns about the cost associated with upgrading an older vehicle so that lights would automatically come on and go off. Although this automatic feature is not required by the bill, committee Members were concerned that owners of older vehicles would feel it was necessary to upgrade their vehicles. That is the report from the committee. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Does the committee have any general comments? Go ahead, Mr. Miltenberger.

General Comments

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would just like to speak briefly in favour of amendments put forward by the Member for Yellowknife North. I think this is like seatbelts, as the Member indicated. People learn good habits. I have a daughter and a granddaughter. When you look at the statistics that were provided to us, it is very clear that the biggest victims are children. Most accidents are caused during the daylight hours and there are no lights on. If the majority of accidents occur in towns, villages and cities, I can't fathom not wanting to support something that is going to save us money as a society and, more importantly, as the Member for Yellowknife North indicated, save lives. It is a very straightforward amendment, You can't argue with the figures, in my mind. We are in a budget-cutting mode. Here is something that could possibly save our systems a lot of money, so I fully support this. Once we are through general comments, I have a question or two I would like to ask.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I also support the amendment and I also have a few questions. I also had a situation with my son who was about to run in front of a car and, because he saw the headlights coming in the daylight hours, he didn't. So I concur with Mr. Erasmus's amendment.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Any further general comments? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

During our committee meetings, we certainly asked a lot of questions of Mr. Erasmus. One of the concerns was whether this should be applied in communities. I, of course, had a concern about my community; Yellowknife. I think it is quite obvious that there is a need for this on highways. That is a certainty. My area of concern was what happens in the very small communities that have vehicles, but they don't have access to automatic features that need to be installed in order to turn it on automatically.

I feel that this is a good bill the way it stands and I will support it. The one thing I realize is that, as time goes by, this bill will likely be redundant because old cars, like the one I drive, eventually give out. As a matter of fact, I have a few old cars. I just have to get into the habit of pulling that switch on. Either that, or I get four or five of these automatic things installed. I understand that that is going to cost me about \$50 or \$100 to do. I don't have a problem now with it, but I still have a bit of concern for the communities because a fine is imposed and it is difficult for

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people there to get these automatic mechanisms. So, Madam Chair, I do support the bill the way it stands.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. General comments. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I speak to this from the perspective of my prior profession as a mechanic. It isn't difficult to put on the automatic systems to older vehicles. I, myself, will be required to put one on the suburban I have been building for a few years. The cost that the previous speaker spoke to would be if you had it installed by someone else. It can very well be installed on one's own. It isn't a very technical thing, in most cases.

I think it is time for this. We are doing a few things first in this territory and this would be a good one to add to the list. I don't think anyone can put a dollar figure on saving a life. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. General comments. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I also will be supporting Mr. Erasmus's motion. It is a good idea. I do have a question or a concern. For example, in Arviat, we have maybe 70 vehicles -- three of them are mine -- and about 300 4 x 4 Hondas. Will the 4 x 4 all-terrain Honda be expected to keep its lights on during the daytime hours? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Erasmus, in case you missed that question, Mr. O'Brien wanted to know, since there are more all-terrain vehicles than there are other vehicles in his community, would this legislation apply to all-terrain vehicles?

MR. ERASMUS:

Madam Chair, I believe if the all-terrain vehicle is on the highway, it would apply. But if it isn't on the highway, it wouldn't.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

(Microphone turned off) ... the amendment indicates that it is mandatory to have your lights on, on the highways. If the all-terrain vehicle is not on the highway, it would not apply there. As far as it being mandatory when it is on the highway, I am not exactly sure. I am getting an indication from the Minister of Transportation that it would.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. So the answer to the question is that it does apply to all-terrain vehicles as well and off-road all-terrain vehicles. Is that correct?

MR. ERASMUS:

If it is on the highway.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Okay. It applies to all-terrain vehicles on the highway. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

I just received a quick note that a motor vehicle does not include all-terrain vehicles, according to the definition within the act.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Any further general comments? Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Back to my original comment -- Mr. Erasmus was busy having a discussion with the other Members so he didn't hear my first comment -- I do support the bill. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Chair. Being a Member of the Standing Committee on Resource Management, the only concern I have regarding this bill is that we should be more concerned over people's lives. However, I thought that we were not on the highway system, being hamlets do have their own by-laws.

We, who are not on the highway system, being in hamlets, do have our own by-laws relating to vehicles in our own communities. I am still supporting the hamlets within their communities, particularly in the Baffin region. The hamlets are able to make their own by-laws within their own communities relating to motor vehicles. The hamlet by-laws state that as long as they have license plates, the by-laws have to be used accordingly and followed.

A concern that I had with this bill was that it might apply to every community that has their own by-laws. Some people cannot afford to buy parts for their vehicles. Another concern that I had related to this bill was that if people weren't able to buy expensive parts to install in their vehicles, then they won't be able to operate their vehicles in their communities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Evaloarjuk. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. It's very important that we have this legislation that includes making it mandatory for headlights to be on in the communities. Last year, there were approximately 800 accidents in the Northwest Territories, and about 550 of those were in towns or communities. There was only one pedestrian that was fatally injured in 1995, Madam Chair. That occurred in Pond Inlet when a nine-year-old male stepped in the path of a water truck. I don't know if that involved headlights or not, but it just goes to show that accidents happen everywhere. It's not only on the highways, in Yellowknife or in the larger centres. We need to give our youth and our elders more of an opportunity to get around safely on our streets and in our communities, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. General comments. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I wonder if the Minister of Transportation could supply us with the definition of "highway" in the act: also, the definition of "motor vehicle."

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CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. I believe that Ms. MacPherson can provide us with that. She has all the definitions right here in front of her. Thank you. Ms. MacPherson.

LAW CLERK (Ms. MacPherson):

Thank you, Madam Chair. "Highway" is defined -- and it's a long definition -- as a road, place, bridge or structure, whether publicly or privately owned, that the public is ordinarily entitled or permitted to use for the passage of vehicles and includes:

(a) a privately or publicly-owned area that is designed and primarily used for the parking of vehicles, other than the driveway of a private dwelling;

(b) where a plan of survey or other instrument establishes a highway, the area between the boundary lines of the highway, as shown on a plan of the survey or instrument;

(c) a sidewalk, pathway, ditch or shoulder adjacent to and on either side of the travelled portion of the road or _____ place, and the area between the sidewalk, pathway, ditch or shoulder and the travelled portion of the road or place; and,

(d) a road on a frozen body of water, or water course or a road that can only be used for a portion of the year.

A "motor vehicle" is defined as a vehicle propelled or driven by power other than muscular power and includes a trailer, but does not include an aircraft, marine vehicle or all-terrain vehicle, a device that runs or is designed to run exclusively on rails or a mechanically-propelled wheelchair. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you for those definitions. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Madam Chair, obviously, any road in a community would be considered a highway under the definition. Therefore, any four-wheel vehicle, all-terrain vehicle would be on a highway, anywhere in that community. The only thing that appears to be exempt at this point in time, but it's not exempt if you look at it from the other way, is the skidoo. Skidoos use roads as well. Because it is a motor vehicle, it's not powered by muscle, it, too, would be included as having to have headlights on all the time, as long as it's on that road. Therefore, any vehicle in the small communities would have to have headlights on if they are on the road.

In my communities, that question always comes up on skidoos. In discussion with the by-law about all-terrain vehicles and skidoos, that particular question always comes up because, in the springtime people take their skidoo covers right off and run around with no covers, to keep the motors cold. On that, they tend to be in conflict with the laws. In most of the small communities, the law is left to the discretion of the officer, I suppose, and that's how they get around it.

I just wanted to bring that up, Madam Chair, because this thing has been discussed many, many times in small communities. The benefit of headlights on highways is worth all the small arguments in the communities. I would favour any vehicle having a headlight if it's required, particularly in the small

communities. But I definitely favour headlights on at all times on highways. I will support the motion.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. General comments. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

I have a question, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I support the motion but I would like to know what the penalty is for being caught. Is there a fine schedule? Is there any way you regulate it? Is it \$50, \$100, \$25? How is that enacted and where does that come from when you pass this legislation?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. First of all, I'd like to comment on Mr. Steen's comments. In order to see if a vehicle is covered in this amendment, you have to look at the definition of motor vehicle. In this particular act, all-terrain vehicles are excluded. All-terrain vehicles are defined to include skidoos. Skidoos wouldn't necessarily have to have their lights on. However, it might not be a bad idea to make them have their lights on because a woman was killed in Fort Resolution this winter by a skidoo. I don't want to get into that.

As far as penalties, Mr. Picco, it depends who the person is.

--- Laughter

No. Right now, I think the act says something like the maximum penalty is \$1,000, but it would be \$500 under section 338 of the Motor Vehicles Act. The regulations could be instituted to have mandatory tickets, just like when you get a speeding ticket. I'm sure you can get a ticket for \$15 or \$25 or whatever. Is that possible, Sheila?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Erasmus, I think that Ms. MacPherson is going to send you clarification on that. She's writing you notes here. Ms. MacPherson.

LAW CLERK (Ms. MacPherson):

Thank you, Madam Chair. I think I might have mislead the Member through my written note. It's \$5,000 that is the maximum penalty for a breach of the act. I apologize, Roy, I didn't have my glasses on when I wrote that. It's \$5,000 that is the maximum penalty. There is no minimum penalty in the act for breach of the general provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. MacPherson. General comments. I have quite a list here. Mr. Barnabas.

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I have concern with this bill. I have a highway of 20 miles. When I learn of the fees that people will have to pay, I have serious concern when we have 24 hours of daylight for four months. I understand that we have three months of darkness, too.

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When people start forgetting to use their headlights back home, we're going to be pouring money into this government because we have 24 hours of daylight and we don't use headlights back home. If there is a fee or a penalty, a lot of my constituents will be paying a lot of money because of this bill. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. General comments. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. As I had indicated earlier, it's not a matter of whether it's bright enough to see a vehicle coming down the road, it's a matter of safety. People are often walking around, distracted, worrying about their problems: whether they have enough food at home; whether their motor boat is going to start if they're going hunting; worried about things at their job, and sometimes they're not looking where they're going, whether you're walking or whether you're driving. It's quite easy, if you're walking around, to not notice a vehicle that's coming. But if that vehicle has lights on, you notice it right away. And this is a proven fact. The study I had indicated earlier had done tests and they found that this is a proven fact.

Also, when you have 24 hours of daylight or long hours of daylight, once it starts getting dark again, people often forget to turn their lights on. I notice that around town here, that happens a lot. Once it starts getting dark ... You're used to it not getting dark, then it slowly starts getting dark earlier and earlier, but people don't turn their lights on. So I think it doesn't matter if we have 24 hours of daylight. It will increase the safety for pedestrians and particularly children and elderly people. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. General comments. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess the utmost responsibility of any public government, public institution, is for the well-being of the citizens of that institution. The safety of the public is the responsibility of any government in a democratic society. I think the intent of the legislation or the motion enhances that responsibility. Therefore, Madam Chair, I will support the motion. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. General comments. Mr. Enuaraq.

MR. ENUARAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to ask a question of Mr. Erasmus. Perhaps he can tell me how many vehicles have been involved in an accident within one year, or within two years. How many vehicles have there been involved in an accident due to not having their lights on? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Enuaraq. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Madam Chair, the statistics we got from the GNWT don't indicate that. At this present time, they don't indicate whether the people who were in accidents had their lights on. But they have told me that the new accident report forms will have space on there so they will indicate whether the cars have headlights on or not. I can indicate that there was a total of approximately 800 accidents last year; and of those

800, there were approximately 550 accidents in towns, villages and communities. Out of those, 87 accidents involved pedestrians; people walking around. So that's almost one out of every six accidents that involves someone who is walking around in a town.

As I indicated earlier, one pedestrian was killed last year. That pedestrian was a nine-year-old boy who walked into the path of a water truck in Pond Inlet.

I do have a lot of statistics. If you look at this page here -although these come from Saskatchewan -- where these little charts are on the top; the top chart says the total number of accidents was 26,543. The number of accidents that had no lights on was 15,494. The number of vehicles with lights on was only 665. So you can see that there's a vast, vast difference in the number of vehicles with their lights on that are involved in accidents.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. General comments. Mr. Krutko. Mr. Krutko is going to pass. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The response of Mr. Erasmus earlier, all-terrain vehicles include skidoos, four-wheelers, three-wheelers are not included as a motor vehicle on the highway. Is he then suggesting that these types of vehicles -- skidoos, four-wheelers and three-wheelers -- can then operate on the highway with no headlights?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. That's probably what it means because they are not included in the definition of motor vehicles, so they'll be able to drive wherever they want, whether they have lights on or not.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

In the communities that I was talking about, we did control these types of vehicles, but it only applies within the community. It only applies within the

boundaries of the hamlet, therefore, outside the boundaries of the hamlet, these types of all-terrain vehicles would be without control on the highway, so it would seem unfair that we're making this particular law apply to cars and not to other vehicles that use those same highways. In particular, I would be thinking of winter roads or ice roads where these types of skidoos or whatever can run down these roads with no headlights. People would be in the habit, like Mr. Erasmus said, of expecting headlights and, therefore, they may not see these types of vehicles. I don't wish to make an issue out of this, Madam Chair, but I would just like to point out that this is a weak spot in the legislation that Transportation would possibly have to consider closing that loophole somehow in the future.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. I would take that as a general comment that does not require response from the honourable Member.

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MR. STEEN:

Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

I would like to know if Mr. Erasmus agrees with that comment.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Okay. Mr. Steen would like a response to his comment. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Madam Chair, I agree with Mr. Steen, but I didn't want to put it into this amendment because I didn't think it would go through, or it could have made it much more difficult to get it passed. So we could always ask the Minister of Transportation to bring such an amendment forward later to close this loophole, as the honourable Member has indicated.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In the preamble to the motion, Mr. Erasmus talked about the individuals with depth perception problems. Madam Chair, there are people out there on the street who are legally impaired or blind who are able to walk across the street, and those individuals, Madam Chair, may not be sensitive to the sunlight. But, in most cases, according to my understanding, their sight may be sensitive to artificial light, and I think this amendment would also be a factor in the saving of those people who are otherwise blind but are sensitive to artificial light. I think that is a point that should be pointed out. Therefore, again, as I stated earlier, I am going to support the motion. Thank you.

Clause By Clause

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. If the committee is agreed that there are no further general comments we will proceed with detail. Okay, clause by clause, Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Does the committee agree that Bill 5 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Bill 5 is now ready for third reading. Thank you, Mr. Erasmus.

--- Applause

Bill 8: An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Moving on, could you please turn to Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act. I would like to ask Mr. Todd if he would like to introduce the bill. Could we please have order? Would the committee please come to order? Mr. Todd.

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. JOHN TODD:

Bravo, Madam Chair

--- Laughter

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. The Infrastructure committee, I believe, did the review of this bill. Mr. Picco.

Standing Committee On Infrastructure Comments

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The Standing Committee on Infrastructure reviewed Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, on May 2 and 7, 1996. Members

discussed the bill and agreed that it should be moved into Committee of the Whole for further discussion and action.

The standing committee understood that the purpose of this amendment is to bring provisions relating to the NWT cost

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of living tax credit into line with the original intent of the program. Members will take this opportunity in Committee of the Whole to raise any specific questions they may have. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Does the committee then agree that the Minister should be allowed to call witnesses in at this time?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Does the Minister wish to call in witnesses?

HON. JOHN TODD:

Yes, I will bring my witnesses in.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Could I please ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses to the table with the Minister?

Mr. Todd, for the record, would you please introduce your witnesses?

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. On my immediate left is Diane Buckland, legislative counsel for the legislative division of the Department of Justice of the Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife; and, on my immediate right, Mr. Nielsen, the deputy minister of Finance.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Does the committee wish to make any general comments on the bill? If there are

no general comments, we will proceed with the clause-by-clause review.

Clause By Clause

Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Does the committee agree that Bill 8 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Bill 8 is now ready for third reading. Thank you, Mr. Todd. Thank you, witnesses.

Bill 7: An Act To Amend The Workers' Compensation Act

Will the committee Members please turn to Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act? I will ask the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board to make his opening remarks.

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The year's maximum insurable remuneration, known as YMIR, is a fundamental element of workers' compensation. It is used to determine benefits payable to an injured worker, as well as the amount of payroll for which an employer will be assessed in any given year.

The YMIR is intended to balance the interest of workers and employers. It ensures that injured workers are adequately compensated and that undue burdens are not placed on the employers. The YMIR is currently set at \$47,500.

When a worker becomes entitled to compensation in the NWT, he or she is paid 90 per cent of net earnings for as long as the disability continues. If a worker's net earnings exceed the YMIR, these calculations are based on \$47,500.

Employers, meanwhile, are assessed according to their payroll. When a worker receives a salary greater than the YMIR, the employer is only assessed on payroll up to \$47,500. Section 52 of the Workers' Compensation Act states that the board must review the YMIR each year. This review is completed according to board policy and a recommendation forwarded to my office.

The YMIR was last amended by the House in 1992. With this proposed increase, the NWT will have the fourth highest YMIR in Canada. Customarily, changes to the YMIR would become effective January 1st. However, with the consent of this House, we intend to increase the benefits to injured workers effective July 1, 1996. An increase to accessible payroll will be delayed until January 1, 1997. The

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proposed increase will have negligible financial impact on the 1997 assessment rates. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. I believe that the Government Operations committee reviewed this bill and Mr. Erasmus will be making the comments. Mr. Erasmus.

Standing Committee On Government Operations
Comments

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The Standing Committee on Government Operations has reviewed Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act. This bill increases the year's maximum insurable remuneration.

The standing committee has considered the bill and agrees that the bill is ready to be moved into Committee of the Whole for further discussion.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Would the Minister like to bring in witnesses?

HON. JOHN TODD:

I would, Madam Chair, if I may.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Please proceed, Mr. Todd. Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you please escort in the witnesses? Does the committee agree that the Minister bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Todd, for the record, could you please introduce your witnesses?

HON. JOHN TODD:

On my immediate right is Mr. Flynn, legal council with the legislative division of the GNWT; on my immediate left is Mr. Gilmour, chairperson of the Workers' Compensation Board. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Are there any general comments on the bill from the Members? General

comments. Do the Members agree that we proceed clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

Clause By Clause

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Does the committee agree that Bill 7 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--- Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Bill 7 is now ready for third reading. Thank you, Mr. Todd, Mr. Gilmour and Mr. Flynn.

Bill 12: Legislative Assembly And Executive Council Act, No. 2

That's four down and two to go. Could the Members please turn to Bill 12 in your binders? Bill 12, Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2. Mr. Ng, would you like to make comments on the bill?

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, on behalf of the Management and Services Board, I would like to present Bill 12 which amends the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act.

The amendments require a Member of the Legislative Assembly to file a supplemental disclosure statement where there is a change in his or her financial circumstances as reported in the annual disclosure statement. The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly will then prepare a supplemental public disclosure statement for public reference.

Madam Chair, the need for a provision in the act to address public disclosure of a material change to a Member's circumstances came about as a result of the conflict inquiry that was held in March of 1995. The Commission of Inquiry noted that there may not have been the need to hold an

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expensive public inquiry had there been a provision for supplemental filings by Members. Madam Chair, this recommendation was endorsed in the annual report of the Conflict of Interest Commission, dated

May 12, 1995. Bill 12, Madam Chair, also makes a number of minor housekeeping amendments to the act. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. The committee which reviewed this bill was Government Operations. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Can we report progress at this time?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Are you making that as a motion?

MR. KRUTKO:

You got it.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Okay. The Member is making a motion to report progress. The motion is in order and is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is carried.

--- Carried

MR. SPEAKER:

Good evening. The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of Committee of the Whole. Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering bills 11, 13, 5, 8, 7 and 12, and would like to report progress with two motions being adopted, that Committee Reports 1-13(3), 2-13(3), 3-13(3), and 4-13(3) are concluded, and that Bills 13, 5, 8 and 7 are ready for third reading, and that Bill 11 is ready for third reading, as amended. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

--- Carried

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

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, meetings for tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development; of the Standing Committee on Government Operations at 10:00 a.m.; and, of the Ordinary Members' Caucus at 11:00 a.m. tomorrow. Also at 12:00 noon tomorrow of the Nunavut Caucus.

Orders of the day for Wednesday, May 29, 1996:

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
- Motion 13-13(3), Extended Adjournment
 - Motion 14-13(3), Tabling of Draft Western Constitution

17. First Reading of Bills
- Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act

18. Second Reading of Bills
- Bill 17, Business Corporations Act

19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and
- Other Matters
- Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Education Act, S.N.W.T., 1995, c.28
 - Bill 12, Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2
 - Bill 14, Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 3
 - Bill 15, Statute Revision Act
 - Tabled Document 1-13(3), Report of the Commission on MLA Compensation

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20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
- Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act
 - Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act
 - Bill 11, Appropriation Act, 1996-97
 - Bill 12, Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2
 - Bill 13, Loan Authorization Act, 1996-97
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, May 29, 1996, at 1:30 p.m.

--- ADJOURNMENT

MR. SPEAKER: