



# NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

1<sup>st</sup> Session

Day 1 +

1<sup>st</sup> Assembly

## HANSARD

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The Honourable Michael Ballantyne, Speaker

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1996**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Hon. James Antoine, Hon. Goo Arlooktoo, 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. O'Brien, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Picco, Mr. Roland, Mr. Steen, Hon. John Todd., Mr. Ningark, Mr. Rabesca

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

-- Prayer

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Yes, Mr. Ng.

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Mr. Speaker, I find the Honourable Member for Iqaluit is not wearing a necktie and I find that it would be inappropriate that it is not traditional dress that he is wearing and I ask that he correct that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Under the rules of decorum, the rule states that (12.9): "When in the Assembly every Member shall be attired in native dress or in a manner appropriate to the dignity of the Assembly". If you have a collar, then you wear a tie, but he has a military collar, so, how do you wear a tie on a military collar? I ask for the Member's explanation on that because there is a difference, one a tie is appropriate, and one it is not appropriate. Perhaps, you may want to clarify that, Mr. Ng.

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not recognize the types of collar that the Honourable Member has on, so I would think, Mr. Speaker, I would think that he would be able to wear a tie with that, but if it is deemed that that is suitable, then obviously that is your ruling, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Is there any other Member that wishes to comment on that? The point of order, Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been...(laughter). Thank you, I am Canadian and very proud of it...(laughter), and a Canadian's fan I might add. Mr. Speaker I have shirts similar to those worn by the Member of Iqaluit and in order to try to meet the code of the House, or what I thought was the code of the House I have been wearing string ties with those, as a sign of respect to the House; however, that just was my option. I was not aware that we had the latitude. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As anyone who accepts and respects the decorum of this House, it would be me. When I reviewed the rule book this morning I did note the section, as you did, that as long as the shirt that I am wearing today, Mr. Speaker, which was a gift from my poor, dear old mom...(laughter)...does not have a tie, but it is, as it is, it is called a polo shirt and, ah, if a priest can wear it with decorum, then I am very proud to...(laughter)...the problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ootes, point of order.

**MR. OOTES:**

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if, since Mr. Picco has referred to the clergy, if he could tell us if he may be a lay minister in some sort of capacity, and then perhaps we could recognize his shirt.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The rules do make any reference to the kind of dress he used, but it does make reference to the way you dress would be appropriate for the Chamber itself and I understand that the Member did feel offended by it and, it is a difficult situation, and I do not mind saying that now. Maybe I will ask the Clerk's advice on this one. (Laughter). David?

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**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, we will continue to, we are not clear, I am not clear which direction the Members' are asking

for...I am sure, like, there are a number of times when Members' feel offended by the kind of ties you are used to, so, Mr. Kakfwi, a point of order.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the issue on the point of order. It is my view that the guidelines that we have now are not gender-neutral. That is there are primarily focused on the dress that ourselves, the men, are subject to a different standard than the women in the legislature, for instance, there is no mention that there is a requirement to wear ties for the women and what is acceptable and unacceptable dress, so, I believe that the shirt that Mr. Picco has on is acceptable, in my view, because it is neat, it is a shirt that is worn by different nationalities and occupations. People who are in Canada and are shirts worn by people in different occupations. I think he mentioned the clergy. I find that the more flexibility we are given in the dress we wear would allow for still those of us who do not look so tidy with ties on, may find ourselves looking even tidier with the type of shirt that Mr. Picco has occasioned to find himself in this morning.

We find there is no mention on the type of facial expression we should be wearing in this House, and that would seem to be more in need of attention than the type of shirt we put on. Thank you.

--- Laughter.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

I will say to the Members' now that this rule has been there since before my time and it has not changed with the times, either. I also realize that military style collars of shirts is one of the new styles that are now in the marketplace and so, perhaps maybe the rules are inappropriate for the times that we are in now and, if Mr. Ng would accept it, perhaps we can allow that type of shirt to be appropriate for the House, but if he feels offended, yet, then I will ask maybe Mr. Picco to put an appropriate string tie or bow tie or a neck tie. So, Mr. Ng, would you wish to maybe accept the way things are now or do you still feel offended? The debate is closed on this now, Okay? Mr. Ng.

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did not realize that I had caused this much of a debate on this issue, Mr. Speaker. I certainly do not have any offense to the

honourable Member wearing the shirt since his Mother gave it to him. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Mr. Ng, it is very much appreciated. Perhaps in the future, I would like to ask Members, if they feel discomfort about the way they enter the chamber, that they ask for advice on whether or not it is appropriate. We do not have to run into this type of situation every time. A Member comes into the House, and I also realize that all the Members on this side are new Members and perhaps they are in the learning process too, so I appreciate your cooperation Mr. Ng.

Orders of the day. Ministers' statement. Mr. Morin.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**

Minister's Statement 124-13(3): Minister Absent From the House

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Manito Thompson will be absent from the House today to attend to a personal matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Ministers' statement, Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 125-13(3): Power Corporation Scholarships

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT Power Corporation is proud of its record of encouraging the development of a Northern workforce through apprenticeship and operator training programs. Not only do they benefit the employees, they benefit the customers through better efficiency, safety and reliability.

Three years ago, in addition to its own training, the Corporation started a scholarship program, to open up opportunities for further education for other

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NWT residents.

This year, Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in announcing the award of the scholarships, each worth \$1,000, to

two young women in the medical and geological sciences.

The first is awarded in consultation with the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education. It goes to Ms. Brenda Beaulieu of Rae Edzo, who has started a four year program of nursing studies at Red Deer College.

The other scholarship is awarded by the Corporation to the NWT high school graduate with the highest average standing in grade 12 examinations. This year, the award goes to Ms. Allison Marshall of Yellowknife, who is pursuing an Honours degree in geology, along with a philosophy degree, at the University of Calgary.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Members of this Assembly who helped promote these scholarships among their constituencies and extend the best wishes of this Assembly to Ms. Marshall and Ms. Beaulieu. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ministers' statement. Ministers' statement, Mr. Todd.

Minister's Statement 126-13(3): Digital Communications Network Announcement

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to announce today that the government has selected its partner for the development of the digital communications network that was first announced to this Assembly during the Budget Address in May.

This decision is an important step in a long process to improve and modernize the communications network in the NWT as we prepare to enter the twenty first century.

To ensure that northerners have access to the opportunities presented by a modern communications network, the GNWT has taken the step of acting as the anchor tenant to get this network off the ground.

Equally as important, Mr. Speaker, was the requirement to make this increases service available on a fee for service basis to other levels of government, businesses, non-profit organizations, and individual citizens across the Territories. The implementation of the publicly accessible high speed data communications network holds tremendous

potential to provide new spin off opportunities for northern companies and residents.

Mr. Speaker, three companies responded to the request for proposals. Over the past two and a half months, we have analyzed the proposals and met with two of the proponents to review their proposals and ask further detailed questions. Based on this detailed analysis, I am pleased to announce that the successful proponent is Ardicom Digital Communications Inc., a northern owned and operated company. The equal owners of Ardicom are: Arctic Co-operatives, NASCO, the Northern Aboriginal Services Corporation, and NorthwesTel.

Arctic Co-operatives Ltd. is the co-operative federation for 41 community based co-operatives across the Territories. In addition to numerous other services, Arctic Co-ops run cable TV distribution systems in a number of NWT communities.

NASCO is owned by four aboriginal development corporations; Denendeh Development Corporation, Yukon First Nations, Nunasi Corporation, and the Inuvialuit Corporation. NASCO is experienced in providing services and operating facilities throughout the North.

I want to emphasize that this network will be available to every community across the Territories. Through services such as distance education, tele-medicine

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and electronic delivery of government services, we will be able to improve services while avoiding spiral costs.

Members will be aware that the major user departments have already identified funding in their business plans for the cost of this service. We expect other departments and organizations to utilize this service as opportunities for service improves and cost reductions become available to them.

The request for proposal requires that the network be completed by March 31, 1999. We remain committed to this deadline in order to ensure that the network is completely in place by the time this Territory divides and in time for the new Territory of Nunavut to take full use of its capacity to support a decentralized structure and operations. However, we are also hopeful that this time frame can be shortened to make the entire network operational prior to that date.

Once negotiations with Ardicom Digital Communications have been concluded, I will provide Members of this House and the residents of the NWT, with the further details of the plans to implement this exciting project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Ministers' statement, Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 127-13(3): New High School Course: Fox Trapping in Nunavut

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Quyannimik Ohakte. I am pleased to inform the Assembly of an initiative that will strengthen the importance of aboriginal culture and traditional skills in Eastern Arctic schools.

The Keewatin Divisional Education Council has just published "Fox Trapping in Nunavut". This course is offered through the career and technology studies curriculum. It takes its direction from the Inuuqatigiit curriculum and the cultural programs developed by the Keewatin Divisional Education Council and, in earlier days, by the Inuit Cultural Institute in Arviat.

The "Fox Trapping in Nunavut" module promotes traditional and contemporary Inuit knowledge and skills. By awarding students high school credit for successfully completing the course, the education system is recognising the importance of traditional knowledge and skills in an academic setting.

The successful development of this module is the result of the cooperation of elders, trappers, community organizations, and schools, as well as the Departments of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, and Education, Culture and Employment.

I would like to thank the people who participated in developing this new course of study, and would particularly like to recognise the Keewatin Divisional Education Council for its central role.

It further emphasizes our commitment to developing an educational system which is founded on the cultures of the Northwest Territories.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Ministers' statement. Members' statement. Members' statement, Mr. Evaloarjuk.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

Member's Statement 345-13(3): The Need to Improve Flight Services in the Baffin Region

**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

(Translator) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I acknowledge the transportation benefits we can access with First Air and I am very proud that this is an Inuit owned airline serving the Baffin region, however, this company has become too corporate minded as it is the only airline serving the particular region - the area in the road between the communities of Hall Beach, Pond Inlet and Igloolik. Perhaps if there was much needed competition in the airline industry at this time, services could be improved.

The rates have also become too high.

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Perhaps a service that involves passengers only could be introduced in our region. Too often passengers are getting bumped off because of lack of seats for these three communities of Amittuq. Currently this airline has direct route between the traditionally close communities of Igloolik, Hall Beach and Pond Inlet. As a further inconvenience to get back and forth between these two communities, each trip includes a stop over Iqaluit both ways.

As I mentioned, these communities are traditionally linked and relatives are spread out in each settlement. In the event of death, families have to put together their own money, which is costly enough without the exuberation of Iqaluit stop over being included in the high rates of air travel. It is important that families have easier access to transportation that enables them to visit one another. I would encourage some healthy competition and services from Air Baffin and First Air in the Baffin to try new, direct flights from my region.

I would like to state between the routes of Hall Beach and Igloolik, there is a one hour stop over, and if I were to go to Pond Inlet returning to Igloolik, I would have to sleep over night in Iqaluit and travel to Pond Inlet the next day. This is what I wanted to indicate to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Members' statement, Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement 346-13(3): Infrastructure for NWT Mine Training Program

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just before I start my statement, I would just like to commend some of the Members for the efforts they are making in increasing the quality of ties in this Assembly, bringing some colour and a little bit of life into this sombre place where men are relegated to funeral colours of brown, grey and blue. I recognize Mr. O'Brien, for instance, very, very good effort. Mr. Todd as well. ? and paisley. If he just had his bell bottoms on he would be right at home.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Yellowknife North has spoken often and ...

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Just to remind the Members that Members' statement is very clear on the type of statements that you make in the House, and under the item Members' statement, a Member may make a statement on any matter. The speaker may order a Member, who makes improper use of his Members' statement, to take his or her seat. Statements made under the rules shall not exceed two and a half minutes, shall be confined to one matter, and one matter only; shall be limited to one statement per day by any member. Have you concluded your statement on the quorum in this matter?

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Ms. Speaker, I believe I can tie my comments in to the point I want to make, and it is a very serious one, and it is the ties that are necessary as we move into the 21st century on the issue of mine training. And that kind of ties ...

**MR. SPEAKER:**

I would like to remind the members that when you make your statement you keep it to one item and one matter only. I will allow you to make your statement Mr. Miltenberger because I do not know if you know like make short comments before your statement ... you cannot make two comments because it is going to be looked, viewed as two statements. Mr. Miltenberger, to your Members' statement.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you for your indulgence and flexibility. Twice today with shirts and now with this, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Yellowknife North has spoken in this House about the need for NWT residents to be able to take advantage of the many opportunities in the mining industry. Just yesterday he talked about the need for a mining institute.

Mr. Speaker, I agree whole heartedly. We do need a way to train northerners for the jobs mining can provide. I also think we should be providing the training for a full range of opportunities in the natural resources sector. Not just mining, but also oil and

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gas. Is there a need for brand new buildings to provide this training? No. As the government of a territory, we do not need to build new infrastructure for natural resource training. Industry representatives have said what is important is not a fancy facility. What is important is to develop a centre of knowledge and learning here in the North.

We have the administrative organization in place to provide this training already through Aurora College. Thebacha campus with the support of existing government infrastructure in Fort Smith could easily accommodate a mine training program. Aurora Campus in Inuvik is similarly ready to provide part of the program directed to oil and gas exploration. Training can be delivered in other communities from these two bases of operation.

Mr. Speaker, on November 7, we are doing something concrete in order to try to establish programs northerners need. On that day, I will be co-hosting along with Aurora College a mine training symposium in Fort Smith. Representatives from our colleges, the mining industry and other interested people will be meeting to lay the plans to make the natural resources department of Aurora College a reality.

Mr. Speaker, I hope as a result of this symposium to which a number of MLAs and ministers have been invited, that I hope the result of this symposium, the Minister of Culture, Education and Employment will be in this House early in the new year, announcing the establishment of the Aurora College Natural Resources Program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Members' statement, Mr. Henry. Mr. Henry?

Member's Statement 347-13(3): Principles and Meaning of Democracy

**MR. HENRY:**

Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not think there is anyone here who would disagree that Canada is the best place in the world to live. People in the United Nations think so. The fact that Canada is a democracy is probably the single most important factor in Canada being such a wonderful nation, but it is a factor that we often take for granted. I think it would be worthwhile to review exactly what being a democracy means.

Democracy is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as: "Government by the people, a form of government in which the powers reside in the people and is exercised by them either directly or by means as elected representatives. A form of society which favours equal rights, the ignoring of hereditary class distinctions, the tolerance of minority views".

While the concept of democracy originated in Greece it's feel expression in the modern era arose from the American revolution, 220 years ago. The principles adopted by the new American nation are, with minor variations, those which have been democracies around the world, including Canada.

The Declaration of Independence summarizes beautifully what democracy really means. We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal. That they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Democracy, in short, is a system of government where people exercise power. As part of Canada we in the Northwest Territories also govern ourselves according to democratic principles. Important decisions about the governing of the Northwest Territories are made by the people. Most often these decisions are made by elected representatives, especially the Members of this House.

The decisions of great importance are best left to people themselves to decide without intermediaries. This is why we have referendums and plebiscites. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Member for Yellowknife South is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement.

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Do we have any nays. There are no nays, Mr. Henry, you have unanimous consent.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all recognize that the division of the Northwest Territories in 1999 is a fundamental change to the makeup of our country. For the first time in fifty years the map of Canada will change. While the views and opinions of elected representatives have been important in the road to division...two very crucial decisions where northerners entrusted only to the people of the Northwest Territories. The decision about whether to divide at all and end the decision about where to divide were both too important and too far-reaching to leave to elected representatives, alone.

These decisions could be made through the free equal and democratic vote of all northerners. We now come to another such critical decisions. The constitution that will be established for the new western territory will be of critical importance to the democratic development of the government of this part of Canada, and therefore, as with the division and boundary issues it is too important to be left solely to the elected representatives of the people. While our views and opinions will be very important, the final decision must be left to the people.

That is why I appreciate the reassurance of the Honourable Premier, yesterday, in responding to concerns that my Honourable colleague from Nunakput, the Premier outlined the principles that will guide the ratification of a new constitution and his response, the democratic process, to bring in legislation on the ratification of the constitution and the principle of one person, one vote, which is a direct consequence of the principle that all people are created equal. These are critical principles of democracy that we must abide by in order to retain the confidence of the people of the Northwest Territories.

The next few months will be crucial in this process. The famous British author, Huxley, once said, the survival of democracy depends on the ability of large numbers of people to make realistic choices in the

light of adequate information. While I have the faith in the ability of all residents of the western territory to be able to make a realistic choice in the matter of a new constitution.

Over the next few months beginning with the release of the proposed draft of the constitution last Wednesday, we will ensure that all residents of the new western territory will indeed have that adequate information to permit them to make a choice which will guide their government for decades to come.

I look forward to the day when all adult residents of the western territory will vote to decide how they will be governed. I thank the Premier for reassuring my colleagues, that all northerners, that the principle of democracy are now, and always in will remain, the foundation of our structure of government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Members' Statement, Mr. Rabesca.

Members Statement 348-13(3): First Anniversary of the Election of the 13th Assembly

**MR. RABESCA:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker today is the last day of the Third Session of the 13th Assembly. There is also two days past the anniversary of our election. In the time since our election we have grown and become more confident in our positions. This has certainly been evident during these last sessions, with all Members becoming more active during the discussions and committee meetings, as well, here in the Chamber.

I think we have done a good job representing our constituents, as well as, our (inaudible) government responsibilities (inaudible), to the concerns, our recommendations. Over the next few months we will continue to provide constituents with our voice here in the Chamber as well as working on the many issues that we face. The western Territory now has a draft constitution that needs to be discussed and ratified.

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We also have the deficit that must be brought under control and the organizations of the departments, to name a few. These are difficult times we are in but we must be diligent to take care of the people that we represent. It is our job to ensure that constituency

issues are heard and responded to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Rabesca. Members' Statement, Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 349-13(3): Future Reductions and Difficulties Facing the 13th Assembly

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the large debt of the past will have to be paid for over the life of the 13th Assembly. The MLA's of the 13th Assembly have inherited an unlucky number and task. When I review some of the potential \$100,000,000 in cuts that we have announced that will have to be done over the next 12 months, I get sick to my stomach.

I was not elected to inflict pain on my constituents, my friends, my neighbours, my family, but I do realize that we have to take the pain now so that our children will not pay in the future for said large debt.

My Speaker, I have only been home four days since September 16th. I will not get home to my family before November 1st. It is very difficult to concentrate at the job at hand, when you worry about your wife, and family. While, I was elected to do this job and I have done the best that I could have, even though some hon. colleagues prefer that I would not ask any questions, or wear funny shirts. Well, it also comes with this territory.

Over the next two weeks as we review the business plans of this government and reflect on what we will be doing, I want to assure my constituents and the people of the Northwest Territories that this work is not taken lightly by any Member, and for the two people who came to see me last night at my apartment I understand your frustration, and concern, as I said before, when Mike Harris lays off 30,000 people in Ontario he does not know them, he does not see them everyday like this Assembly does. When I shop at The Bay and buy my groceries I see the affected people. We as MLA's see these people, they are our friends, relatives, and neighbours.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to seeing my family and relatives when I return home finally on the 1st of November. The soul searching will continue, Mr. Speaker, but we cannot micro-manage the budget or cuts, but we can, at least, reflect and adjust our plans



to take into account the logistic and administrative realities of the day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Members' Statement, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement 350-13(3): Dress and Decorum in the Chamber

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is Friday today and do not usually take the opportunity to take a lighter note, but, today I would like to comment on my view from my assigned seat in this House. I am certain that election results in no way pertain or have any bearing on one's looks; however, like Mr. Miltenberger, I would like to commend my colleagues on the other side of the House for their attention to grooming and apparel decorum. When I become bored with their words, which is hardly ever, of course, I can admire their choice of presentation which is second to none, and I would particularly like to comment on the efforts and measures recently taken by my Honourable colleague from Iqaluit, who, tie or no tie, is looking very dapper, of late.

He returned to this House very proud of a new wardrobe, new contact lenses, and the dawning of a new lapel pin, which verifies his recent induction into the Order of Knights of Templar of Balderdash Chapter One. I hope all Members of this House will agree that Mr. Picco is a candidate for the cover of the GQ Magazine. (Laughter). I appreciate, as I know,

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does the media, obviously, that Mr. Picco's efforts to enhance my view in this House are greatly appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Members' statement, Mr. Kakfwi.

Member's Statement 351-13(3): Acceptance of Differences and New Ideas

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying yesterday I wanted to speak about not being afraid of new ideas, not being afraid of confronting our fears when we deal with new

ideas and when we have to come face-to-face with people we do not know. As I was saying yesterday in 1977 my daughter who was around six at that time, after spending a week long hunting trip with me down the Mackenzie River between Providence and Fort Good Hope, then flew down to southwestern Ontario, with her mother. For the first time in her young life she had an occasion to meet a number of her cousins and at that time I believe, she was still quite oblivious to the fact of being different from the rest of her cousins, at least, visually, and her young cousins having never seen what you would call a life, real Indian, except on T.V., or movies and comics, were quite worried when they heard that their young cousin's father was due to arrive there in a couple of days, and that he was, in fact, an Indian.

There was some apprehension and I think, I recall anyway, being told that my daughter sensing all this...the following day, finally announced quite loudly to everyone as if sensing that they needed some assurance said, "Don't worry, my dad doesn't shoot people, he just shoots ducks." Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Member's statement. Mr. Ningark.

Member's Statement 352-13(3): Sale of GNWT Staff Houses in Pelly Bay

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a letter here from the Koomiut Co-op in Pelly Bay, signed by the Co-op manager, regarding the sale of GNWT staff houses. Mr. Speaker, you will remember, about two weeks ago I made a statement regarding the Gjoa Haven Development Council Corporation wanting to acquire the GNWT houses, thereby leasing them to the GNWT employees. We have met with the Minister of Finance during the summer. A representative from the Hamlet of Pelly Bay has met with the Minister of Finance, wanting to acquire the government staff houses, and lease them to the current government employees in the community of Pelly Bay.

Since that time, a new development has come out in Pelly Bay. Now the Co-op is interested in acquiring the staff houses. Mr. Minister has indicated because of the legislation, regardless of the regulation, the hamlet may not be qualified or eligible to acquire the GNWT houses, and lease them to the employees. Mr. Speaker, later on, at the appropriate time, I will be

posing a question to the appropriate Minister. If the hamlet is eligible, given that the rules apply, if the development corporation in the communities are eligible to purchase government houses, can the co-op in the community apply? Does the same rule apply to the co-ops in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Member's statement. Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement 353-13(3): New User Pay/User Say Mail System

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am trying to get used to our new user say/user pay system, Mr. Speaker. It is with regards to our new mail system. I am trying to sort out in my mind how this works. We used to have a very simple system. You either put a stamp on, or you do not put a stamp on, and you take it to the central system. What is happening, it seems, is that if I write my name on the left hand side, and I take it to our central system, then I understand that it will be processed. I understand that a company will pick it up, they will put a stamp on it, and then they will bill me for the stamp. I understand, too, if I put a stamp on it, it seems we have done that, and the envelope

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comes back to me. I understand I am not allowed to do that. So my EA has been kind of sneaking the envelopes in his jacket pocket, and walking it down to the post office. I guess my concern, Mr. Speaker, is, could we not just put a post office box outside the building here, and also clarify the system that we have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Member's statement. Mr. Antoine.

Members Statement 354-13(3): Recognition of Elders in the North

**HON. JAMES ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we sit in this Chamber and debate the issues of the day here, in areas where it affects the lives of people every day, life goes on in the communities for the people that we

represent. Children are born, and people are passing away.

Yesterday, I attended the funeral of one of my great grand-uncles. He was 92 years old. His name was Julian Antoine. In our language we call him Eechea. This man lived many years on this land, and he was born out on the land, east of Fort Simpson, of the Willow River, north of the Horn Plateau, in a village that no longer exists, where many Dene used to live many years ago. He grew up out there on the land. They say that he was a very able man out on the land. He used to hunt and trap and fish. He was very capable as a Dene, to survive in that kind of environment. Over the years, I was fortunate enough to know him and take direction from him, as one of the advisors to me. I remember that many times he used to call me and tell me a story of somebody that was not doing something right. It was always somebody else. All along in the story, he was talking about me. In this way, he gave me advice and direction, and to this day, I am very thankful for that type of advice that comes from our elders in the community.

I just wanted to also say that this man worked, not only on the land, but in developing the north. He says that he worked on the Distributor. This is a paddle-wheel, the first boats that went down the Mackenzie River. He has seen this whole country, right from Great Slave Lake down to the Delta. He has also worked for the RCMP, with dogs and dog-teams, and getting fish for the winter, and hunting for them in the wintertime.

People like that have to be recognized as helping development here in the north, and keeping our culture going. With that, I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

---Applause.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Member's statement. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 355-13(3): Concerns with Changes to the Senior's Fossil Fuel Subsidy

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Everyone here in the House has a warm feeling for their grandparents. None of us can imagine them living in hardship, because of our government decision to start saving money at their

expense. But this is exactly what is happening to the elders in my constituency, and the rest of the Northwest Territories. This government has made changes to the Seniors' Fossil Fuel Subsidy, in order to save. A single elder has to earn less than \$13,000 a year, and a couple has to earn less than \$31,000 a year. This means in order to qualify for the subsidy, it has to be made, that you are virtually on poverty.

Senior homeowners have also been hit in another way. This government recently axed the homeownership property tax rebate program. This takes away another small benefit from our seniors who have made an investment in their own homes. Our government has stated that our income support program is designed to make sure people are not left with the cost, and are not going hungry. This year, winter has arrived early. Ferry systems are shut down in the Mackenzie Delta. Grise Fiord were not able to get their supplies for the winter, because of the early winter season.

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Weather will cause the prices in these communities to go up.

I hope the government is right, and is prepared to help people. We need to get our priorities straight. While this government cuts programs to seniors, and keeps programs which provide temporary finances for furnishings for Ministers, while they stay in Yellowknife. As we look at the business plans for next year, we need to take a good look at the big picture. Who is it going to hurt, where are the cuts going to come from. When we look at the priorities in regards to focusing on things close to home, and put faces and people to those cuts...Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent, to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Member for Mackenzie Delta is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I look at the priorities, I am also trying to focus on things close to home, I see the needs, not just to the seniors but also the youth. Last year, Fort McPherson had the unfortunate luck of having its school burn to the ground. Today construction of the new school has been scheduled.

The children in the community have no place to go for recreation, except the skating rink. They also have no recreation equipment, which has been lost in the loss of the school. Recreation is a great way to encourage children to live a healthy lifestyle. Even as we cut programs, we need to encourage wellness among the youth. I would like to ask individuals, Members of this House, communities across the Northwest Territories, to consider donating any recreation equipment you can afford to keep the children in Fort McPherson busy and healthy this winter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Member's statement. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement 356-13(3): Recognition of Constitutional Working Group Members

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement is concerning the constitutional package that was released very recently, and which has been put forward for the public to look at, and to comment upon.

---Laughter.

...except for when they are snoring. I would also like to thank Bill Erasmus for taking the heat off me. He was the only person who was consistently arriving later than I was.

---Laughter.

I would also like to thank Jane Groenewegen for being there. She was also very quiet. Jane, it is hard to be heard from the hallways or your office.

---Laughter.

I would also like to thank the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, for contributing greatly to the unity of the working group by not coming to the meetings.

---Laughter.

I would also like to thank Bob Simpson. People

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wonder why a non-aboriginal person represented the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Inuvialuit. All I know is they call him Gwich'in Bob.

---Laughter.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Member for Yellowknife North is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent, Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would also like to thank Richard Nerysoo who sat with us a few times. You will recall Mr. Nerysoo sat in this very House, with the last Assembly. He suddenly became an expert on aboriginal and treaty rights. He contributed greatly.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the staff, seriously, they worked long and hard hours, sometimes they had to come back for revisions and information on very short notice. They had to come back the next day after we had met late a night and they worked through their summer and weekends as well. I would like to thank them for all their work.

I would also like to thank the public who waited patiently for us to come up with something for them to discuss. I also just wanted to point out that the public, I hope, does not make up their mind about the package before they have had a chance to look at it and find out what is in the package. It is now the public's job to review the package, evaluate it, and to give us feedback, and then, of course, it is our job to then listen to the public and to revise the package and bring it back to the public for them to vote upon. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Members' statement, Mr. O'Brien.

Member's Statement 357-13(3): Flowers in the Chamber

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have heard the comments about Mr. Picco's priest from the east shirt, Mr. Todd's bellbottoms, but the real question that Members are asking this side of the House is...the flowers and the roses that Mr. Todd and Mr.

Morin have before them...what are they for...there was a remark that they look like they are both newlyweds. Thank you.

---Laughter

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Members' statements. Are there any further Members' statements?

**ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS**

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Returns to oral questions, Mr. Todd.

Return to Oral Question 377-13(3): Changes to the Ultimate Removal Process

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to an Oral Question asked by Mr. Picco on October 3rd with respect to changes to the ultimate removal process.

With the ratification of the new collective agreement between the Union of Northern Workers and the Government of the NWT, changes were made to the ultimate removal provisions. I can confirm that employees will now arrange for their own moves, submit receipts to their department and then will be reimbursed for all eligible expenses for the lesser of the actual cost of the move or the cap that was agreed to for each community. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Returns to oral questions.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Recognition of visitors in the gallery, Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you know I rarely do this, but if I do not do it today I will be in deep trouble. I would like to recognize, if I may, Keith Sharpe, who is the mayor of Rankin Inlet. I am kind of impressed today, he wears a shirt and a tie. I have not seen that in the past twenty years. He must have a special meeting today. Keith is a strong supporter of community empowerment and I certainly appreciate

that. With him today is Harry Towtongie, who is the chief organizer for the Keewatin Dog Mushers and also a councillor, and last, but not least, is Antonio Masone, who is a well-qualified administrative arm of the municipality, ready and capable of taking more community empowerment. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery, Mr. Arlooktoo.

**HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:**

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. Andrew Johnson. Mr. Johnson was the Co-op manager of the Kimik Cooperative in Lake Harbour while I was growing up and I understand he works somewhere else now.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Yes, I would like to recognize Russell Look, from the Commissioner's Office, and also, Pat Thomas.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery, Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. MacDonald who is here faithfully to keep an eye on John Todd.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery.

**ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS**

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Question 527-13(3): Igloodik Request for Transfer of Social Services

**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services. Yesterday, I believe we received some correspondence from the Hamlet of Igloodik. First of all, perhaps if I explain through my preamble, that these people are interested in obtained community empowerment and I believe that there were, in Igloodik, the Hamlet, for many months now has been working together with the social workers and now they are just waiting to have their results of these talks. Can the Minister use his abilities to encourage that those people receive a social worker in their requests? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 527-13(3): Igloodik Request for Transfer of Social Services

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the community of Igloodik to looking at taking over the social services program and other aspects, possibly health, I am certain if those negotiation are underway, if there is problems I will try to rectify them. From my understanding things are progressing, but I will make sure that, because the honourable Member brought up the issue, that things move along in a speedy fashion, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Supplementary To Question 527-13(3): Igloodik Request for Transfer of Social Services

**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps in his response you can give me something in writing so that I can take it with me before I leave for my constituency. Hopefully he can give me this correspondence in writing by November 1st. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 527-13(3): Igloodik Request for Transfer of Social Services

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, like I said to the honourable Member, I will find out what the status

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is on it, certainly I am not adverse or opposed to putting it in writing on the status and if there are any problems, identify them and work with them and try to resolve any that may be outstanding, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. Ningark.

Question 528-13(3): Pelly Bay Co-op's Interest in Staff Houses

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as indicated in my Member's statement earlier that the Co-op in Pelly Bay is interested in acquiring or purchasing the current GNWT staff houses in Pelly Bay. First of all I would like to find the Honourable Minister of Finance a meeting with the delegation, probably be over the summer and his willingness to do business with Gjoa Haven Development Corporation. Mr. Speaker, if the rules apply the Minister is willing to do business with the Development Corporation in Gjoa Haven and perhaps the Municipality at Pelly Bay, does the same rule apply to the Co-op. The Co-op in Pelly Bay now wants to do business with the Minister of Finance to acquire the building. Does the same rule apply to the Co-ops across the Territory, namely Pelly Bay? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 528-13(3): Pelly Bay Co-op's Interest in Staff Houses

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me start by saying what are we trying to accomplish here? We are trying to ensure that we have adequate housing for, in seems anyway, for teachers, and that is the first objective. Cost-affordable, cost-effective housing. That is what

we are trying to do. We are going to give the teachers in Pelly Bay and as we have given them everywhere else, including McPherson, who were on the radio again this morning, an equal opportunity to purchase these houses at a significant discounted rate.

Should the tenants not be prepared to purchase their houses, which I have said on a number of occasions, I do not quite understand why, but assuming they do not, we will then work out a mechanism, community by community, to provide an opportunity for co-operatives, development corporations, individuals, or whoever to purchase those houses, as long as we have made an arrangement with them to ensure that those houses will be available at the affordable rate for our employees, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral question, Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 528-13(3): Pelly Bay Co-op's Interest in Staff Houses

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same, Honourable Minister. My supplementary is, now who comes first, the Hamlet in the communities, the co-op, or the development corporation? How does the Minister do business with the community where there are a number of organizations wanting to purchase the government stock houses? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Return to Question 528-13(3): Pelly Bay Co-op's Interest in Staff Houses

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I think we have more than one group in the community I think it would be only fair to call for community proposals, set some conditions to those proposals to ensure, again, as Ms. Thomas is in the House, to ensure that there is adequate, affordable housing for teachers and employees of this government.

So I think probably the fairest way, Mr. Speaker, would be that we would call for proposals by community. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral question supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Further Supplementary to Question 528-13(3): Pelly Bay Co-op's Interest in Staff Houses

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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Supplementary, I hope the Honourable Minister is not trying to avoid dealing with the Co-op in Pelly Bay, or across the board. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Todd.

Further Return to Question 528-13(3): Pelly Bay Co-op's Interest in Staff Houses

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I understand, Mr. Ningark's concerns as a strong advocate of co-op involvement for 20 to 30 years. I want to assure him as I want to assure others that everybody would have, at the community level, equal access to providing us with proposals. It is important, however, to stress, do not know how many times, that we may have to ensure that the housing is available and it is affordable and that will be the principle that will guide us as we bring forward the proposals, community-by-community. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. Krutko.

Question 529-13(3): Cultural Events at 1997 Canada Games in Brandon

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier. It is less than a year from now there will be a very important event happening in one of the major cities across the country. The 1997 Canada Summer Games will be held in Brandon, Manitoba, from August 9th to the 23rd. Brandon being Indian country, are there going to be any cultural events for the athletes and are there going to be different types of cultural exchanges happening at that time?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Premier.

Return to Question 529-13(3): Cultural Events at 1997 Canada Games in Brandon

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have to take that question as notice. I will check with the Minister responsible and get back to the Member. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. Henry.

Question 530-13(3): Changes to Projected 1996-97 Deficit

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance. My question is, is there any changes to your projected budget deficit given that the staff housing sales are not going as well as maybe you had anticipated first off.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return to Question 530-13(3): Changes to Projected 1996-97 Deficit

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let me, first of all, assure my honourable colleague the staff housing will be sold, it will be sold on the new revised schedule by the end of the year. I am optimistic that we will meet our targets in terms of the revenue that is required in that particular area. With respect to the overall fiscal position of the government, I think, as I said, we are going to meet our targets, if not exceed them. It is my understanding tomorrow that I will be meeting with caucus at 2:00. We will give a full fiscal update at that time and hopefully demonstrate and reassure my colleague that we are on track and in fact maybe in slightly better shape than we had projected at this time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral Question, Supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary to Question 530-13(3): Changes to Projected 1996-97 Deficit

**MR. HENRY:**

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Finance Minister's optimism. I sincerely hope it comes true. My question is, how much was anticipated for the sale of staff housing, and as well get the second question in, which year are you talking about, is it the end of this calendar year, or the government's fiscal year, when you anticipate having the houses sold. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Two questions, Mr. Todd.

Return to Supplementary Question 530-13(3):

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Changes to Projected 1996-97 Deficit

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

In this job you have to be optimistic, otherwise it would wear you down. I am sure that other Finance Ministers feel the same way. Let me say that our projected revenues were in the range of \$28 to \$30 million, in terms of what we anticipate from the sale of staff housing. That the sale of staff housing was a two process, that we were looking for \$13 million this year, and \$17 million, next year. I believe we are on target. I am optimistic, as I said, that we will sell the staff housing, one way or the other, so I think the long and the short of it is, Mr. Speaker, is that yes, it is \$30 million that we were anticipating. It was expected that we would get the revenues over a two year period. We are confident that we can get it and we are also confident that we meet the targets that we collectively set in the Deficit Administration Strategy. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Evaloarjuk:

Question 531-13(3): Ensuring Housing for Northern Teachers

**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Non-Aboriginal teachers who are working up North will probably continue to come up here to teach. Usually, teachers come up to the communities for 2 or 3 year terms, not long enough to make it financially sound to purchase the house many of them are currently living in. With the government housing sales currently going on, and

teachers are not interested in buying the housing they live in, how does the government plan to ensure they continue to have professional teachers in the communities, when housing is no longer available? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Return to Question 531-13(3): Ensuring Housing for Northern Teachers

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am confident that the sales program we have got is the best sales program in Canada, never mind North America. What other jurisdiction says to its employees--buy this house, at a significant discount. The mortgage payments will be less than your rent, and at the same time, it says, if you cannot sell it, we will buy it back when you leave. So I am fairly confident, Mr. Speaker, that we will be able to, with some reassuring, and with the co-operation of the teachers and some of its Executive and its Association, that we will be able to convince the majority of teachers that this is a good deal for them, as it has been for other employees. And that, at the end of the day, we will have a strategy, and do have a strategy in place, to ensure that adequate housing will be available. If some teachers and others choose to leave, then we will just have to take the appropriate measures to recruit new ones that like the new conditions that exist in the recruitment policies.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 532-13(3): Changes to the Capital Plan Regarding Furnishings

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Honourable John Todd. It is in regards to recent changes to the capital plan. In regards to the priority that the Ministers...in the capital plan changes, there was \$52,000 worth of new household furnishings. In the era of cutbacks, is this the ... (inaudible) ... of this government?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return to Question 532-13(3): Changes to the Capital Plan Regarding Furnishings

**HON. JOHN TODD:**



The issue that my honourable colleague is alluding to is the furnishing fiscal allocation that is, under policy of this government, provided to Ministers who are asked to move to Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 532-13(3): Changes to the Capital Plan Regarding Furnishings

**MR. KRUTKO:**

If this type of funding for furniture is deemed necessary, can the Minister of Finance invest more funds towards the Fossil Fuel Subsidy for the Department of Health and Social Services so that basically they can increase the eligibility criteria that other people could take advantage of that subsidy?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Again, I must remind the Members that when you ask a question, you do a preamble, and then you ask the question. In this case, you did ask the first question, but all this relates to the second question. I cannot allow it, because there is no connection. It is a new question. Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 533-13(3): Canada Infrastructure Program

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the media over the last few weeks, and in the news, we have heard about the Canada Cost-Shared Infrastructure Program between the federal government and the provinces and the territories. Can the Premier update this House on the Infrastructure Program as it relates to the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Premier.

Return to Question 533-13(3): Canada Infrastructure Program

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the July, I think, or August meeting in Jasper, the Premiers of this country all supported a new Infrastructure Program. What we

have done, we have instructed our Ministers of Finance to meet. They have had one meeting already, and they discussed...I believe they are going to meet again fairly soon...to discuss that new Infrastructure Program. But our government fully supports the new Infrastructure initiative, if there will be one, by the federal government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary to Question 533-13(3): Canada Infrastructure Program

**MR. PICCO:**

That is indeed good news, Mr. Speaker, because the Infrastructure Program does provide much-needed jobs for our communities. Can the Minister let me know, and the House, what the cost-shared relationship on the Infrastructure Program has been in the past, and what the feeling is, out of their meetings in Jasper, Alberta, what it would be in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Return to Question 533-13(3): Canada Infrastructure Program

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the past, the Infrastructure Program was 30 percent from the municipalities, 30 from the territorial government and the provincial governments, 30 percent approximately from the federal government. But we managed, because of the uniqueness of the Northwest Territories and our municipalities unable to come up with their percentage, we got a 50/50 cost-shared from the federal government. The federal government paid 50 percent, and we as a government paid 50 percent. So if there is going to be a new Infrastructure Program, then we would be looking for that same type of recognition of our uniqueness in the Northwest Territories. So we would still have to have the Minister of Finance try to find that money within the existing dollars that we have, because there is no new money to put our portion up, as well. So that would have to happen. And there is also talk about the private sector being able to be involved this time around. Before, they were not. So that the private sector could put

some money into that, as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Further Supplementary to Question 533-13(3):  
Canada Infrastructure Program

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**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my concern here would be that this worthwhile and very good program may conflict with the infrastructure dollars already announced by the federal government for the Nunavut Settlement Area, as attached to the Nunavut land claim. Can the Premier maybe inform this House if indeed, the \$30 million announced by the federal government for the Nunavut infrastructure, for the Nunavut Settlement Area, would be taken in conjunction, or as a separate item, with the Infrastructure Program, that the Ministers discussed in Jasper. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Further Return to Question 533-13(3): Canada  
Infrastructure Program

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That \$30 million that was announced for the Nunavut infrastructure is not related at all to the Infrastructure Program. That was money provided by DIAND for infrastructure in the Nunavut communities because of April 1, 1999 we will have a new Nunavut Territory. So there is no relation at all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 534-13(3): Meeting of the Cabinet  
Committee on Division

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister in charge of the Division Secretariat. I was wondering if the Minister could indicate, given the agreed urgency of this issue, when his committee, the

joint committee with MLAs and Cabinet, will be meeting, and what type of agenda they will have before them? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Financial Management Board, Mr. Todd.

Return to Question 534-13(3): Meeting of the Cabinet  
Committee on Division

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We did meet earlier last week with the 2 new additional Members, Mr. Henry and Mr. Enuaraq from Clyde River. We tried to bring them quickly up to date on each of the 10 or 12 points that we are working on. There is an aggressive strategy, I think, now in place to try to, as they say in politics, crank up the development and the strategy for moving quickly and efficiently on determining an appropriate course for this government to meet the requirements of Nunavut on April 1, 1999. There will be, it was agreed, additional meetings on a regular basis from now on, and I have not had an opportunity to discuss with my Cabinet colleagues the 2 additional members that the Member requested earlier last month. I am not anticipating a problem there, but it does require some discussion of my colleagues in Cabinet. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary to Question 534-13(3): Meeting of the  
Cabinet Committee on Division

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like clarification from the Minister if regular means, as well, closer together and more often, as opposed to regular in the past? So that there is a...

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return to Question 534-13(3): Meeting of the  
Cabinet Committee on Division

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it would be fair to say that we did not have as clear a plan as we should have earlier in the year. I think with the acquisition of Mr. Isaacs looking after the Secretariat, that we have been able to move quickly to formulate a strategy in conjunction with our partners in this process, the federal government and NTI. Clearly there is a requirement for more means rather than less, and I want to assure my honourable colleague that we will meet as and when necessary, and I am optimistic

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that the committee members and any additional ones, if that does happen, will co-operate and meet on a regular basis, so we can move forward in making decisions in a timely manner with respect to the division of the Territories as it marches forward, to April 1, 1999. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Supplementary to Question 534-13(3): Meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Division

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister also indicate what type of mechanism there will be to keep all other Members of this House informed that our committee is working on our behalf, and there are a number of critical issues that we all have to provide input on. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return to Question 534-13(3): Meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Division

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Of course, the intention is to inform, on a regular basis, not only this House, but the constituency at large. I would think the appropriate reporting relationship, and I have not had an opportunity to speak to the chairman of Government Ops, but I would be prepared at this time to commit to meeting on a regular basis with the Government Ops Committee. And of course, I want to remind my honourable colleague, as he well knows, because it was his recommendation, if we do add two more

Ordinary Members, we would then be sitting with four Ordinary Members. So between the four Ordinary Members, and perhaps a formal relationship between the Government Ops Committee and ourselves, I think, hopefully that should provide an adequate flow of information, and a connection in the decision-making that is required in the coming months. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 535-13(3): Environmental Protection and Restoration

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are all quite concerned to ensure that our environment remains pristine, as some people call it, but I guess to remain clean and friendly for our future generations. Of course, we are also concerned that the people that are developing our resources here pay their fair share to ensure that the environment remains in good health, and that it returns to the way it did before mining development occurs, once they are finished. So my question is for the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development. I would like to know if we have legislation, regulations, or a policy in place which ensures that all new mines will set aside adequate resources to reclaim the areas they are developing.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 535-13(3): Environmental Protection and Restoration

**MR. KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, I would take the question as notice. I am not fully aware of all the legislation, policy and guidelines that we have, that are in place at this time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The question is taken as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 536-13(3): Jurisdiction Over Aboriginal Inmates in Southern Institutions

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a report that has been distributed to a number of people, including the Honourable Jack Anawak, MP, and it is from a group of Inuit inmates at the Bowden Institution, just outside of Calgary. The inmates have expressed concern about the lack of attention to their grievances. I also believe there are some Dene inmates there as well. My question, for the Minister of Justice, would be, does the GNWT have input into representing the interests of the Inuit and Dene inmates at the

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Bowden Institute?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Justice, Mr. Ng.

Return To 536-13(3): Jurisdiction Over Aboriginal Inmates in Southern Institutions

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding, no, because of the fact that they are federal inmates. If they are in that institution, they have sentences of two years or more, and that is part of the reason that they are there. Also part of the reason that they are there, is the fact that some of the programming is not available in the Northwest Territories. Any of the federal inmates that we may have in the Territories are held by us, only as a result of an exchange agreement that we have with the federal officials, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary. Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 536-13(3): Jurisdiction Over Aboriginal Inmates in Southern

**MR. OOTES:**

Yes. What the Minister is stating, and I am making an assumption here, that the federal government is paying for the incarceration of these inmates. I am wondering if the Minister has given thought to approaching the federal government about the possibility, since there are about 80 inmates, and the cost to the federal government must be substantial, if the federal government would consider creating an institution here in the Northwest Territories for those

inmates, so they could be closer to home, Mr. Speaker?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Supplementary Question 536-13(3): Jurisdiction Over Aboriginal Inmates in Southern

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is certainly something that I am aware of. I know that in the past, past Ministers of Justice and department officials have discussed that possibility with federal officials. However, to date, there has been no decision reached to establish such a facility in the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary. Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary to Question 536-13(3): Jurisdiction Over Aboriginal Inmates in Southern

**MR. OOTES:**

I wonder if the department has looked into the possibility of having a case worker look into the problems that the inmates seem to be experiencing at the Bowden Institute?

Further Return To Supplementary Question 536-13(3): Jurisdiction Over Aboriginal Inmates in Southern

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, they do have case workers assigned to individual inmates at the Bowden Institute, of course. As I indicated earlier, those are federal inmates, that are not the responsibility of our government, although the fact remains that, we recognize they come from the north, and we would certainly if there were significant problems or concerns raised by them, if we could, we would check into it, and see if there was any way to address some of those issues, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Final supplementary. Mr. Ootes.

Final Supplementary To Question 536-13(3):  
Jurisdiction Over Aboriginal Inmates in Southern

**MR. OOTES:**

Yes, I just missed the last part of Minister Ng's statement. I wonder if the Minister could look into the possibility of having his department look into the grievances that the inmates are making?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ng.

Final Return to Supplementary Question 536-13(3):  
Jurisdiction Over Aboriginal Inmates in Southern

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I indicated that they were

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federal inmates, and not within our jurisdiction. However, if there are serious concerns that are raised as a result of maybe, the concerns that the inmates may have. I will check to see what kind of protocol we have in respect to how we handle inmates not within our jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 537-13(3): Confidentiality of Health  
Records

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all Members are aware that health records are maintained by various nursing stations and medical facilities in the NWT. I wonder if the Minister can advise this House, as to what procedures are in place to protect the confidentiality of these records?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 537-13(3): Confidentiality of  
Health Records

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know the specifics at this time, so I will take the question as notice, and advise the Member, in writing. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The question is taken as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 538-13(3): Lack of Background on  
Northwestel

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd, on today's digital communications network announcement. I noted within the Minister's comments, he informed the House, that Ardicom Digital Communications Incorporated was the successful proponent. He went on to give us a brief description of the groups that make up this company, Arctic Co-operatives, he gave us some background on that, NASCO, he gave us some background on that one, and the third one being Northwestel, and I noted that there was no background on that particular company. I am just wondering if that is a reflection of the criticism that has been fostered against Northwestel in this House in the last couple of weeks? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 538-13(3): Lack of Background  
on Northwestel

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Let me see, Mr. Speaker. No, I do not think it is a criticism, although I know a number of Members, and certainly a number of my constituents are certainly concerned about the quality of service that Northwestel provides across the framework. It would be fair to say, that, talking on a personal level, I am concerned about the costs they charge on my bill. However, it certainly was not an intention to avoid, I just thought it was important to...you know Frank Boren used to say in the bureaucrat's handbook, when in doubt, mumble. I thought it was just important to illustrate to this House, and the community at large, that these two large locally-owned organizations were part of the partnership with this telephone company called Northwestel. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary. Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 538-13(3): Lack of Background on NorthwTel

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the three companies that were mentioned here, could I assume that each of these companies are registered under the present government's Business Incentive Policy? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Supplementary Question 538-13(3): Lack of Background on NorthwTel

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

The decision to award them the contract did not require any adaptation of the BIP, due to the fact that there was a large disparity on the fiscal side of the proponents that put forward the proposals. I would not want to assume anything, Mr. Speaker, on whether

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Ardicom, or Arctic Co-ops are covered under the BIP, but I do want to assure my colleague that the decision to award it to this company, was based on clear, and concise price and service only. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 539-13(3): GNWT Ultimate Removal Provisions

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in response to my oral question on ultimate removal, Mr. Todd came back with a response, I would like to follow up with another question on ultimate removal. Is an employee allowed to spend the appropriate percentage of the dollar cap, or is it only reimbursed on a percentage of what is actually spent, even if less than the dollar cap, on ultimate removal? Is that clear?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 539-13(3): GNWT Ultimate Removal Provisions

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Mr. Speaker, my understanding of the issue is that if the cap, hypothetically, is \$6,000, and an employee spends up to \$6,000, and has receipts, we will reimburse him. But if the cap is \$6,000, and the employee spends \$5,000, and has the receipts, we would reimburse him for \$5,000. That is my understanding of it, but I stand to be corrected, because this is a technical question, and if I am incorrect, I will write to my honourable colleague in Iqaluit, later on next week. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary. Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 539-13(3): GNWT Ultimate Removal Provisions

**MR. PICCO:**

Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that it is a technical question, and as Mr. Todd knows, I have quite a few constituents right now moving out of town, back to the south. They are interested in the ultimate removal entitlement. Maybe if I can phrase it in an example way, and then he can tell me if I am right or wrong, and inform the House.

In Iqaluit, the cap is \$10,284, and if the employee is only entitled to 50 percent of the benefit, and arranges to move for half of that amount, which would be \$5,142, is this all that is reimbursed, fifty percent of the actual cost of removal, or is it only fifty percent of what is actually spent by the employee?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Return To Supplementary 539-13(3): GNWT Ultimate Removal Provisions

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

My name is Todd, not Albert Schweitzer. First of all, let me say that if there are people leaving Iqaluit, that is unfortunate. However, it will provide an opportunity for northerners to apply on those jobs. I think, on the ultimate removal process, I will say it again, like I said in my return to oral question. Employees will now arrange for their own moves, submit receipts to the

department, and be reimbursed for all eligible expenses, for the lesser of the actual cost of the move, or the cap, that was agreed to by each community. I think that was fairly clear, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Further Supplementary To Question 539-13(3):  
GNWT Ultimate Removal Provisions

**MR. PICCO:**

Mr. Speaker, that is as clear as mud. I guess maybe the way I was phrasing my question was as clear as mud, too. Can the Minister let me know in this House, or in writing to me, in actuality, the procedure that is in place here. I have concerns with several of my constituents who have now written me, explaining that they have taken on the move, and they have followed the direction of the cost. In one case, a single mother with three children. Mr. Todd said, well, northerners will be able to apply on these jobs. In this case, a single mother who has been living in Iqaluit for thirty-two years, I would consider a northerner. I take offence to that statement. Maybe Mr. Todd could

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tell me, if the 50 percent benefit is actually based on the cap, or the percentage that is lost, because I still have not got that clear, as mud?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Supplementary 539-13(3): GNWT  
Ultimate Removal Provisions

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Just so we make it clearer for my honourable colleague, we will respond to him, in writing, so he understands fully, so he can advise his employees who are now moving south, what the appropriate procedure is, and that this government will reimburse them, in accordance with the new policy, that was negotiated under the collective agreement. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Final supplementary. Mr. Picco.

Final Supplementary to Question 539-13(3): GNWT  
Ultimate Removal Provisions

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, of course, quite a few of these employees are actually moving north, because they will move from their home community, which could be Clyde or Pond, or Hall Beach, so they are not actually all moving south. I should clarify that. Mr. Speaker, I had a written question to Mr. Todd, on this same matter. I would like to ask Mr. Todd, with that written question, which I asked for a written response from, which he is now giving me another written response on the same matter. Will Mr. Todd confirm that he will be able to give me that before the House prorogues in this session, or will I have to wait for it at the end of November. I think it is still on the order paper. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The House prorogues in about three hours. Mr. Todd.

Final Return to Supplementary Question 539-13(3):  
GNWT Ultimate Removal Provisions

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I want to assure my honourable colleague, as I always do, that I take his questions seriously, and we will have a response to his written question, in my hand here later on today, when it comes up in the appropriate agenda item. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 540-13(3): Impacts of Mining on Nearby  
Residents

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. There are two minds on the doorstep of Yellowknife, and a lot of citizens are concerned about their safety in regard to emissions tailings and the rest of that. My question for the Minister is what is this government doing to ensure that existing mines, like Giant and Con, be claimed the harvesting area in a sufficient manner to ensure the safety of the citizens in nearby communities.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister responsible for Resource, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 540-13(3): Impacts of Mining on Nearby Residents

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the concern about air emissions out of Royal Oak Mines, we do have drop regulations that were released in June which proposed controls over the emissions of sulphur dioxide from Giant Mines and proposing to do this through a stage process. There is some discussions with Giant Mine officials regarding some of the ways being proposed, we have received some comments about the draft regulations, we have still to continue further discussions. There are some comments, as I said that we have received, if we are going to make changes to the draft regulations, there are some parties such as the Dene Nation that are to be considered. So, we will be making a report of the comments received from the draft regulations and making it available to the public. There will be a report from myself that is being presently prepared for me

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to consider, and the final approval will be made by Cabinet following that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Oral questions supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 540-13(3): Impacts of Mining on Nearby Residents

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is very reassuring to know that something is being done about the emissions. My next question is, what is the government doing to ensure that stored arsenic in these mines and their tailing ponds are adequately stored or dealt with, so that we can ensure the safety of the citizens of Yellowknife.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Supplementary 540-13(3): Impacts of Mining on Nearby Residents

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, aside from what is done by the federal government, since most mines are located on federal lands, and most lands and waters are jurisdiction of the federal government. We also are looking under our environmental protection act to produce guidelines regarding hazardous wastes, we have adopted three waste management guidelines, and we are preparing seven more for public consultation. There is a guideline, for instance, on industrial waste discharges which establishes standards for solid and liquid industrial wastes which are disposed of in municipal land fill and sewage systems. This guideline was developed in conjunction with MACA, and set out the guideline which will assist, we think, in protecting municipal facilities, as well as the environment. There is a guideline on general management of hazardous waste which defines what hazardous waste is, and it outlines our requirements for storage containers, storage facilities as well as waste management facilities. The registration of generators, carriers and receivers. The third guideline we have is for site remediation, which establishes clean-up criteria for contaminated sites, the criteria are based on land-use and the type of contamination. We are preparing seven more which will help us assist in managing specific hazardous wastes in cleaning batteries, solvents, anti-freeze, oil base, and latex paint, asbestos, institutional chemicals and lead based paint wastes. So we are moving to give guidance to industry, to work with municipalities, as well as the public in setting in place guidelines. Hopefully, these will produce some results, if not, then we will look at ways to make these enforceable. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 540-13(3): Impacts of Mining on Nearby Residents

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am certainly glad to hear that we are moving in these areas. I would still like to know if this government is doing anything, I will rephrase that. Has this government met with the federal government to try to ensure that the arsenic that is being stored at Giant Mine is dealt with in a



manner to ensure the safety of citizens of Yellowknife, once the mine closes.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Supplementary 540-13(3): Impacts of Mining on Nearby Residents

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, I believe there were discussions with federal officials over the last few years about the state of the arsenic that is stored underneath Giant Mines, I believe there are literally thousand if not millions of tons stored underground and there is, I know, very cautious discussions between the federal government and ourselves because the question of liability and responsibility crops up in the cost once someone accept responsible it will become increasingly clear that the degree of liability financially would be enormous, so there has been some discussion, if there has been any since, the new Minister of Environment took office, I am not aware of it, so

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I have to follow-up, and I would have to follow-up by letter to the Member, to advise him of when the last time we had a discussion and the status of the discussions to date. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, final supplementary. Mr. Erasmus.

Final Supplementary To Question 540-13(3): Impacts of Mining on Nearby Residents

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can we assure the citizens of Yellowknife and the citizens of the Northwest Territories that it will not be the taxpayers who will have to pay to ensure that these arsenic deposits are dealt with in a manner that the citizens safety is not endangered.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Kakfwi.

Final Return To Supplementary 540-13(3): Impacts of Mining on Nearby Residents

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, should we apply the standards of today, Giant would be shut down this afternoon, it is true that their mode of operation is very antiquated, but they have been very long in operation, that is they started many decades ago. And they were operating to the standards that were set they were made operational. There is some concern that they are a major employer of Yellowknife and whatever we do has to take into account, they have simply set into operation under the guidelines set out by the federal government many years ago and that there an economic implication should we try to be very abrupt and dramatic in making them live up to some new conditions. So we have taken the approach in talking to them about the new regulations regarding sulphur dioxide emissions and they have worked with us to try to find a way to comply with it, without suffering financially, economically, which may have a rather dramatic impact on the economy of Yellowknife. This is the approach we are trying to take. We know that the environmental guidelines and standards that are set for new operations. New mines are dramatically different and we are very much in favour of making sure that all mines live up to very, very high standards environmentally. The companies themselves state that very clearly up front, they ask in turn, that the process that they are subjected to is made simple, is made clear so that they know. As they say, how many hoops they have to jump through, and new hoops are not and hurdles are not introduced in the middle of the process, so we have had some discussions with some mining companies about that and made it very clear that we are very much in favour of doing that but not to suffer the illusion that there will be no conditions, because very clearly, as we state in our mandate, in our vision statement, this department is very clear that the primary important for us is to make sure the land, the wildlife and the water is protected and will be there for future generations and if we can be assured of that then we are very comfortable in entertaining economic development initiatives, such as mining, oil and gas exploration. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, oral questions, Mr. Krutko.

Question 541-13(3): Means of Providing Adequate Fuel Subsidies for Seniors

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In opening statement, I marked on the fuel subsidy in regard to the seniors and also looking at cuts that we can do within this government, and I noted that there has been some expenditures in the capital plan, some \$53,000 in regard to purchasing of the furniture for Ministers who basically have to stay in Yellowknife. The question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, that in regard to the fuel subsidy, we are looking at ways to finding new revenues. Can we seriously start looking at those programs and other benefits, if you are going to cut the seniors, why don't you cut everybody else. There is a lot of excess funds out there, have you considered looking in those areas where these benefits arrive at such as furniture

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and also maybe we should revisit the thing on pensions at the same time.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 541-13(3): Means of Providing Adequate Fuel Subsidies for Seniors

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the only funds that my department can look at for expenditures are those within the target set by the FMB and agreed to by this legislature. The areas the Member is referring to are entirely outside those funds that are available to my department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, oral questions, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 541-13(3): Means of Providing Adequate Fuel Subsidies for Seniors

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell me exactly what efforts has he made to look at the areas where he can find other revenues to possibly find the \$200,000 for the fuel subsidy or even considered re-looking at the eligibility criteria?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 541-13(3): Means of Providing Adequate Fuel Subsidies for Seniors

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a result of a motion in this legislature, this issue has been referred back to committee and I have committed to dealing with this or with the committee on this issue next week. Mr. Speaker, there is, I cannot think of an area where my department, and remember, I can only speak for my department, could raise \$200,000 in new revenues. I do not think we could raise the tuition fees at the two public colleges enough to bring in the \$200,000 and not substantially impact on the number of people who could attend college. I do not think we could raise the fees for day cares or for other services that we provide, enough to bring in that \$200,000. And I think that it is important to remember that we have cut millions of dollars from our budget in other areas. So it is not that one area has been singled out, we have cut in our budget the amount of money that goes towards providing schooling for kids from K-12, we have cut the amount of money that we give to cultural organizations, we have cut the amount of money that we give to the colleges, we have cut millions of dollars from the amount of money that is provided for adult training in the Northwest Territories. The whole financial area for the department is squeezed, and I do not think that within the targets that have been set for me by the FMB and this Legislature, that there is room for much maneuvering. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Just to remind the member again that ... it was until the Minister made reference to a motion and that the fuel subsidy has been referred to a standing committee and has not been reported on yet, so any further discussions regarding fuel subsidy in this House will be ruled out of order, because it is being discussed already by a committee and once a report is submitted to this House, it will be discussed.

Oral questions, Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request an extension of question period for five minutes.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

You cannot ask for a time limit on it, you have to ask for unanimous consent to go back to the item once it

is concluded. It has not been concluded yet but if you wish to extend question period you could ask for unanimous consent to extend question period. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask unanimous consent to extend question period.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The Member for Inuvik is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Do

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we have any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent. We will then take a fifteen minute break.

--- SHORT RECESS

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The House will come back to order. We had unanimous consent to continue with question period. Mr. Roland. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 542-13(3): Policy on Health Related Travel

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is in reference to an inquiry that I have from a constituent regarding health related travel. Mr. Speaker, this individual informed me that when preparing to fly south for medical treatment, she booked her flight on excursion to fly have price. She was later advised by the board that she was not to book her own ticket, she was to book it through a specified travel agency and that the ticket had to be booked at full fair.

My question to the Minister of Health and Social Services is, is this the policy of this government, to book tickets full fare? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 542-13(3): Policy on Health Related Travel

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the responsibility for medical travel rests now with the boards of health. They determine their own policies and try to meet the guidelines of their budgets to fly their patients to medical treatment, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral question supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 542-13(3): Policy on Health Related Travel

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker in view of our poor financial situation, will the Minister agree to verify if this is the case, I guess, and in view of the fact that the monies that are provided to fund these boards comes from this government and I think that we certainly should have a better handle on what is happening with the boards. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 542-13(3): Policy on Health Related Travel

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the boards do have the responsibility for medical travel for the constituents within their service area, that there are problems in meeting their financial commitments for medical travel or for any other programs that they deliver for that matter. I certainly would come to my attention and we would try to work things through with them to make sure that they had the means to carry out the programs and that they were doing it in the most effective cost efficient manner as possible, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral question supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 542-13(3): Policy on Health Related Travel

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that did not answer my question. My question was, will the

Minister verify whether this indeed is the policy of air boards to fly patients full fare when travelling south for medical treatment? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 542-13(3): Policy on Health Related Travel

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will commit to finding out what the policy of the Keewatin Health Board is in this particular instance to see what rules and regulations they have in place for medical travel for their constituents, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. Roland.

Question 543-13(3): Application of Affirmative Action Policy

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**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to the Minister Responsible for Personnel. Now that we have gone through almost a year with the changes we made to the personnel department, can the Minister advise me the effect of priority hiring on the affirmative action policy?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 543-13(3): Application of Affirmative Action Policy

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my understanding that the affirmative action policy is being applied on the government jobs that are being filled and it is still a high priority with this government. With the function of personnel and the exact hiring going to each department, now every department will be accountable to the Minister, to this legislative assembly as well. So, no longer can our managers say, well it is personnel's fault and personnel can say it is this departments fault or whatever the managers

are going to be held responsible now for that function. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. Roland. Supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 543-13(3): Application of Affirmative Action Policy

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, with the employees that have been laid off, now they are on a priority hiring list. Within that priority list, affirmative action would still apply?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 543-13(3): Application of Affirmative Action Policy

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. Henry.

Question 544-13(3): Mechanisms to Ensure Trained Managers

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. The Government of the Northwest Territories is to be commended for the hard work that has taken place over the past year. They have set difficult goals, many Ministers and staff have taken on new or additional roles and responsibilities. Whatever success or failures that MLAs or the public may perceive, there is no doubt that a lot of hard work has taken place.

My question to Premier is, what mechanisms are in place to ensure that pertinent employees, particularly managers, who have been or given new responsibilities have the background for those new positions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 544-13(3): Mechanisms to Ensure Trained Managers

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When a position comes up to be restaffed in this government, there is a staffing process that is being used so that those affected employees would be all applying on that one position for example, and the one that is the most qualified under the ... if you take the other policies into consideration as well, affirmative action and the person that is qualified would get that position. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. Henry. Mr. Henry, no? Oral questions, Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Question 545-13(3): Inquest Into Hall Beach Fatality

**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

(Translator) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Health. During the spring, someone passed away in Hall Beach while under the care of a dentist. The Minister indicated that there would be an inquest into this death of a young boy and he indicated to me at the time that he would report back to the house. As of today I still have not

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received any answers from that inquest. Perhaps the Minister can answer my question or in the written form. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 545-13(3): Inquest Into Hall Beach Fatality

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the autopsy report has been received by the coroners office and the chief medical health officer in this unfortunate incident. The Childhood Fatality Review Committee is reviewing the case and the findings from the autopsy and as well, the Dental Review Officer has also commenced his investigation under the terms of the Act. A report from this Dental Review Officer is

expected to be received by October 31, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. O'Brien

Question 546-13(3): Property Management Contract

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister Responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation. It is reference to my question yesterday in this House regarding details of the property management contract that was awarded. Mr. Speaker, my question is, as to when can I expect the details from general briefing status report on this information. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister Responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 546-13(3): Property Management Contract

**HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:**

Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that the information will be available next week and it will depend on when I get the information from the Housing Corporation and from FMBS. I would clarify, if it was not clear yesterday, that the contract was issued by the Financial Management Board Secretariat with some input by the Housing Corporation. So, what I will do is to coordinate the information flow from those two agencies and then I will give it to the Member.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral question supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 546-13(3): Property Management Contract

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister agree to present this information to the House when it is available? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 546-13(3): Property Management Contract

**HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:**

Mr. Speaker, I do not know about the specific contract information would be suitable or proper to be tabled in this House, and I would give as much information as possible to the Member as per his request and leave it up to him whether he wants to table it in the House or not.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral question supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 546-13(3): Property Management Contract

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would then ask if the Minister would provide whatever information he feels is appropriate to this House regarding the details of this contract. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 546-13(3): Property Management Contract

**HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:**

Mr. Speaker, what I will do, is when I send information to the Member, I will be able to send a copy to all MLAs and in fact, all members of the House will have that same information.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 547-13(3): Report on Affirmative Action

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**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier, we have been waiting patiently for the document on affirmative action, and I asked several times last fall, when we could expect this report to be tabled. I wonder if the Premier could tell us when we may expect this report to be introduced into this House.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 547-13(3): Report on Affirmative Action

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is the responsibility of the financial management board chairman, and I will speak to him fairly shortly and I will reply back to the Member in writing, and I will take this question as notice, thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, the question is taken as notice. Oral questions, Mr. Henry.

Question 548-13(3): NWT Liquor Commission Annual Report

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for the NWT Liquor Commission, recently the 42 Annual Report of the Liquor Commission was tabled in the House and I noted that there was a reduction in the amount of revenue generated by the Commission this year. Does the Minister have any comments on that reduction as to how, or why that might have occurred. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, the Minister responsible for Safety and Public Services, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 548-13(3): NWT Liquor Commission Annual Report

**HON. JAMES ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NWT Liquor Commission, 42 Annual Report indicates that there is a decrease of 4.5% in the volume of the liquor sold and Mr. Speaker according to the Commission, if the continuation of a trend that for the past many years people are buying less from the Liquor Commission, I think that is hard to say the reasons why, could be many reasons, I think people are becoming aware of the harmful effects of alcohol and for consumption and damages because of the society here in the north. This also unfortunately, may not mean that

people are consuming less as well, because there are many people in the North who are making their own beer and wine in their homes. Just looking at the many different beer and wine making kits that are sold in local stores here in Yellowknife, is an indication, this shows that there are other ways of acquiring liquor other than through the Commission, to make your own, so there are many reasons for it, it has been a trend for the last few years that there are less purchases of liquor from the liquor commission. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, Mr. Miltenberger.

Question: 549-13(3): Installation of Digital Communications Network

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of FMBS who is responsible for this digital communications, coordinating. I was wondering if coordinating this laudable initiative that has him excited, I understand which is good to see. Could the Minister indicate what the plan is in terms of how this will be installed across the land and when will we begin to see the benefits of this space-age technology. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question: 549-13(3): Installation of Digital Communications Network

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it will be across the land, from coast to coast to coast. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my earlier address, it is the intention of the coordinating committee which is headed by the FMBS, to sit down with the chosen contractor and develop a schedule as to when

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this digital state of the arc 21 century communication system will be in place across the whole framework of the Territories, and when that has been concluded, I would be only too happy to share with the members that it will bring us, as the member says, into the 21st century, provide an opportunity, particularly in our

smaller communities, for distance help and distance education which will impact on our professional employees, and hopefully make life easier for the constituents that we all represent. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question: 549-13(3): Installation of Digital Communications Network

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given the Minister's comments about the very short time frames on this project, in the hope that, in fact, we can shorten the move even before the 1999 deadline, would the Minister indicate when he anticipates this process will start and when he would see that kind of schedule coming out.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd

Return To Question: 549-13(3): Installation of Digital Communications Network

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

My honourable colleague is correct. We would like to move quickly on this initiative, and the original proposal calling the intent was to phase it in over a three year period, so we would meet the April 1, 1999 schedule. You know, I have instructed the staff to see if we can fast-track some of this, so discussions will be underway very quickly. I would imagine even next week, I would have to check Mr. Voytilla, but once the schedule has been determined, because I know it is an important initiative, one of the good news stories, I think, that this government can deliver to the constituents at large, I would be prepared to share that with all my colleagues in the House. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, Mr. Picco.

Question: 550-13(3): Sale of GNWT Staff Housing

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the cornerstones of this governments staff housing policy is to be able to buy-back staff housing from the

affected employee in case they leave. My question to the Minister of the Financial Management Board Secretariat, is the government prepared to commit to not revising or rescinding that policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question: 550-13(3): Sale of GNWT Staff Housing

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I said clearly in this House, to the point of almost being repetitious that the GNWT will purchase the housing units back, if the employee who is in it and wishes to leave is unable to sell it through the normal means of offering it up to the community or the region at large, so I think it is important to say, to my colleague who has almost obsessive about staff housing, that we will provide an opportunity for the government to buy back the housing, should the tenant, who is our employee, not be able to sell it under the normal sale/purchase of the house in the community.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions supplementary. Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question: 550-13(3): Sale of GNWT Staff Housing

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have been called a lot of things in my time, obsessive has not been one of them, and I am obsessive on this matter, Mr. Speaker because it does concern a very great many people in my constituency and across Nunavut, across the Northwest Territories, so my supplemental question to the Minister, Mr. Speaker, is - Is the Government of the Northwest Territories prepared to

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buy back these homes for the life of this assembly and afterwards, will that be grandfathered, for example, if I buy a house in 1996, and most of the houses are based on a five year mortgage and the year comes up 2001, then I move, does the Government of the Northwest Territories, the present day government have the fiduciary responsibility, the

ability to guarantee a buy back when they are not actually sitting any more after April 1, 1999. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

I would like to ask the Member to rephrase, although, perhaps the Minister realised what the question is, whether or not this government has the authority beyond 1999. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Does this government have the authority beyond 1999 to guarantee the said purchase of the said staff houses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Return To Question: 550-13(3): Sale of GNWT Staff Housing

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If my honourable colleague is trying to wear me down, in his line of questioning on housing, I want to assure him he is actually beginning to succeed. The way I would answer that question, is, I can't commit any future government at this time to any future expenditures, all I can do is commit this one, which I have, over and over and over again.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question: 550-13(3): Sale of GNWT Staff Housing

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess that would give console to some of those people who would be buying staff houses and it would cause some problems for the other people. My supplemental question to the Minister concerning this area that is wearing him down is, the buy-back policy guarantees, I believe, a 90% value of the house, not the full value, for example, if I spent \$160,000 for the house, the government would do an appraised value of the house and then give me the money on that. Can the Minister confirm the actual policy of the 90% value of



the house, not actually the 100% value. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Return To Question: 550-13(3): Sale of GNWT Staff Housing

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Mr. Speaker, I want to assure my colleague it's not the policy that is wearing me down, it is him. My understanding is that this government would commit to purchasing the house for the appraised value of the house at the time of the original purchase. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, oral questions supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Final Supplementary To Question: 550-13(3): Sale of GNWT Staff Housing

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this house, we have heard over the past few months that there is no new money available to this government, can the Minister inform me where this money is coming from that we buy back these houses with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Final Return To Question: 550-13(3): Sale of GNWT Staff Housing

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well to date, Mr. Speaker, I believe we have only bought, if my memory serves me correctly, one back, maybe two max, so if there was a requirement to buy it back, we would take it out of general revenue, thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, final supplementary, Mr. Picco, no, sorry, you have already had your final supplementary on your last question. Oral question, Mr. Miltenberger.

Question: 551-13(3): Contractual Arrangements Beyond 1999

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The questions posed by the

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Member from Iqaluit begs the question, that I would like to ask the Minister from FMBS, will the contractual arrangements entered into in good faith by this government that will extend past April 1, 1999 be honoured by the new governments of the Western Territory and Nunavut, I think is the question at issue here, I think it is very fundamental. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question: 551-13(3): Contractual Arrangements Beyond 1999

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Good question, Mr. Speaker, an important one. I will take that question as notice to ensure that I give an accurate response to the Member and to the Constituency at large, thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The question is taken as notice. Oral questions, Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question: 552-13(3): Guaranteed Buy-Back Housing Policy

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a point of clarification, in reference to Mr. Picco's question on the buy back of staff housing. Did the Minister confirm that this policy of buy back was guaranteed until 1999.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question: 552-13(3): Guaranteed Buy-Back Housing Policy

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to do inspirational videos by the Minister of Finance on this housing issue and make sure that every community in

the Arctic has got one. Yes, Mr. Speaker, for the umteenth time, the buy-back policy for housing for those individuals who wish to sell it will be in place until 31st of March, 1999. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. Picco.

Question 553-13(3): Number of Houses Bought Back to March 31, 1996

**MR. PICCO:**

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to flog a dead horse, this is a very important matter and the last day before this session. So my final question today, for Mr. Todd, Minister for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, concerns a new issue. It's staff housing, Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister is, in response to an earlier question asked by the Honourable Member from Iqaluit, the Minister said that there's been only two houses been bought back together, Mr. Speaker, I am aware of at least four, I wonder if the Minister can actually confirm to me, in writing, the number of houses bought back by this government over the past fiscal year.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Picco, Can I maybe ask Members of both Houses...I guess there is a bit of impatience and even statements that are very discomfoting to other Members on the other side, either way. Also, to warn the Members that you cannot be imputing motives when you are asking questions to the Minister. Just to caution the Members, that when you put the questions across, that you do not impute motives. Mr. Picco, your question.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, that was not my intention, to demonstrate any type of motive. My question is to the Minister of Financial Management Board Secretariat. Could he provide in writing and to this Member exactly how many houses have bought back by this government for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1996, as requested?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 553-13(3): Number of Houses Bought Back to March 31, 1996

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, I always try to qualify my comments when I am talking about numbers because I have so many of them in my head. So I am sure that those who have,

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Mr. Picco may be correct, but I would be only too happy to provide in writing to him the number of houses that we have sold due to the purchase buy back from employees in the fiscal or calendar year, this previous calendar year. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Are there any further Oral questions?

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Written Questions.

ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Return to Written Question 7-13(3): New Ultimate Removal Assistance Guidelines

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad this gives me an opportunity to return to this written question, asked by Mr. Picco, who else, on October 3 regarding the ultimate removal assistance guidelines. I hope you are listening.

The Honourable Member from Iqaluit asked 3 questions relating to the new ultimate removal assistance provisions.

1. Yes, employees now arrange their own moves, submit receipts to their department and then are reimbursed for all eligible expenses for the lesser of the actual cost of the move or the cap that was negotiated with the Union of Northern Workers for each community.

2. The introduction of the cap has substantially reduced the government's future liability for this benefit. The government also expects to realize savings due to the reduced administration requirements.

The original mandate for the government's negotiating committee was to eliminate this benefit. The contract that was ratified by the members of the Union of Northern Workers represented a substantial concession to this original position. Staff are interpreting this provision as it was intended. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Returns to Written questions.

ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Replies to opening address

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Petitions

ITEM 11: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to provide the Report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on Looking to the Future: the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada on the Election of the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly of the NWT 1995.

The Report of the Chief Electoral Officer was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in May 1996. In October 1996, the Standing Committee on Government Operations reviewed the report with public hearings.

The Committee would like to thank Jean-Pierre Kingsley, the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, and David Hamilton, Clerk of the Assembly, for appearing before us to discuss the recommendations in the report.

The Chief Electoral Officer made a number of recommendations for change to the current elections system. In many cases, similar recommendations were also made in his previous report in 1991, for instance, but were not acted on by the previous Assembly. As a result of recent history, members of the Standing Committee see a clear need to implement these recommendations to avoid some of the significant difficulties which have arisen out of the 1995 election, particularly in the areas of complaints and enforcement and proxy voting.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes my introductory

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comments on this Report. The Report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on Looking to the Future: the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada on the Election of the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly of the NWT 1995, and I would therefore move that it be received and moved into Committee of the Whole for discussion.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Seconded by the Member for Thebacha. The Motion is in order. To the Motion. The Question has been called. All those in favour. All those opposed. The Motion is carried. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also seek unanimous consent to waive rule 93 (4) and have this Report considered in Committee of the Whole today.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 93 (4). Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Erasmus, you have got unanimous consent.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Mr. Enuaraq.

**MR. ENUARAQ:**

(In translation--Thank you, Mr. Speaker). In October 1996, The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment announced changes to the Seniors Fossil Fuel Subsidy. These changes, which set a threshold for eligibility, have a dramatic effect on some seniors living in the Northwest Territories.

During the business plan/ budget reviews for 1996/97, Members were aware that there might be potential changes to the subsidy. Members were in favour of reducing the subsidy for those who could truly afford to pay. However, the program changes announced by the Minister were not what was expected. As Members argued in the House, there were many factors which needed to be considered in setting the thresholds for the Subsidy, not the least of which was the differences in the cost of living across the Northwest Territories.

As a result of considerable discussion in the House on the impact of recent changes to the wood/fuel subsidy, the concerns were referred to the Standing Committee on Social Programs by way of motion.

The Standing Committee was aware of the short time available to address the issue for 1996/97. We reviewed this matter as quickly as possible.

In order to address this issue in a timely way, we wrote to the Minister proposing a two part solution. We also indicated to the Minister we hoped he would provide an answer on this proposal by today.

During the discussions in the House, the Minister indicated he did not have the funds to modify the program. We offered two suggestions for finding this money. First, we suggested that the Minister look within the income support program. The Minister had indicated that those seniors who need additional support for fuel costs could go to the income support program for assistance. If the dollars are available to these seniors within the current allocation for income support, it should be a simple matter of moving these income support dollars over to the fuel subsidy program where seniors could access them without the stigma of using income support. If the Minister is not able to find the full amount this way, we suggested he also consider approaching Cabinet to obtain funding from lapsed capital.

For the long term, the Standing Committee believes it is clear there is considerable support for finding a way to keep the program. In our letter to the Minister we

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asked him to bring a proposal for a revised fuel subsidy to the Committee as part of the review of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment's Business Plan next week. This proposal should address the concerns raised by Members and the public over the past few weeks including:

-the relative subsidy necessary for single occupants versus households with 2 or more residents;

-the issue of homeowners needs versus those who rent;

- encouraging the independence of seniors;

- ensuring the subsidy goes to those who need it; and

-ensuring seniors are living above the poverty line.

We also requested that the Minister ensure the program proposal is discussed with the NWT Seniors' Society.

We have not yet had a definite answer from the Minister but we hope he will respond shortly on our proposals. The Standing Committee on Social Programs will be following up further on this issue during the review of the 1997/98 business plans next week.

Mr. Speaker, I move that this Report of the Standing Committee on Social Programs be received and adopted.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Seconded by...

Question is being called. All those in favour. All those opposed. Motion is carried.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees.

ITEM 12 : REPORTS ON THE COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Reports on the committee on the review of bills

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Tabling of Documents. Mr. Erasmus.

Tabled Document 116-13(3): Treaty Number 8 Made June 21, 1899 and Adhesions, Reports, etc.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a copy of Treaty No. 8, Tabled Document No. 116-13(3), which was made on June 21st, 1899. The document

includes all the adhesions and reports made in support of the original treaty. Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw Members' attention to page six of the document, and the assurances given by the Crown that the treaty "would not lead to any forced interference with their mode of life, and that it did not open the way to the imposition of any tax". Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Tabling of documents. Mr. Ootes.

Tabled Document 117-13(3): Report of the Situation of Inuit Inmates in the Bowden Institution

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a document, Tabled Document No. 117-13(3), which is a report of a situation of Inuit inmates at the Bowden Institution, and it has accompanying documentation.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Mr. Henry.

Tabled Document 118-13(3): Article Produced by "Mandate West" - Canadian Federation of Independent Business Regarding Private Sector Subsidies

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table an article produced by Mandate West, The Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses, Tabled Document 118-13(3).

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Recently the Alberta government introduced the Business Financial Assistance Limitations Act, which supports the elimination of all subsidies and financial support to the private sector. The ultimate purpose of this Act is to eliminate taxpayers funding for private sector programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Tabling of documents. Mr. Erasmus.

Tabled Document 119-13(3): Letter and Resolution Regarding Tourism From the NWT Treaty 8 Tribal Council

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a letter and a resolution regarding tourism, which I received from the NWT Treaty 8 Tribal Council, Tabled Document No. 119-13(3). The resolution was passed at Treaty 8's Annual General Assembly this summer, and resolves in part, that the rights of first refusal be given to First Nations within the Treaty 8 territory, to existing lodges or other operations within our traditional territory.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Mr. Krutko.

Tabled Document 120-13(3): Letter from the Dene Nation to the Hon. Ron Irwin regarding Tl'oondih Healing Camp

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a letter from the Dene Nation to the Hon. Ron Irwin, in regards to Tl'oondih Healing Camp.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Tabling of documents.

**HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:**

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege. In yesterday's unedited Hansard, Thursday, October 17th, there is a series of questions asked to Ms. Thompson regarding recognition of band councils. If I recall correctly, these questions were asked by Mr. Krutko and not by myself, however, in the Hansard, they are attributed to myself. I realize that the normal process, is that we would in writing inform the Hansard office of these changes, but since we are going on to the end of the session, and these documents are received through electronic mail, and looked through by staff, media, and other individuals, that I wanted to make note.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The Chair appreciates your comments on it. The Chair is responsible for the Hansard. I will do follow-up on it. Also, just to remind the Members to that, you do receive copies of the unedited Hansards of the previous day's session, and it would not hurt for the Members to just go over your questions, make the corrections necessary, that same day that you receive the Hansard, so that the Hansard department knows about it. If they do not, they will print it in final copy.

We are still in tabling of documents.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Notices of motion

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTIONS FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Notice of motions for first reading of bills. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with Motion 23-13(3) today. It is support for community empowerment.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The Member for Yellowknife Centre is seeking unanimous consent to deal with Motion 23-13(3). Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent. Mr. Ootes.

MOTION 23-13(3): Support for Community Empowerment

**MR. OOTES:**

WHEREAS this government has developed a community empowerment initiative;

AND WHEREAS this initiative was developed in response to people's desire in communities for control over their affairs;

AND WHEREAS the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs initial consultation indicates that a number of community leaders are interested in

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more control over their affairs;

AND WHEREAS this government has committed to providing support and training to those communities that undertake community empowerment;

AND WHEREAS an independent review has been requested as to how the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs assesses and determines the financial health of communities, through their municipal reporting processes.

AND WHEREAS several communities have already taken over certain areas of control from the government of the Northwest Territories;

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Yellowknife North, that this Legislative Assembly expresses its support for peoples and communities, to have control over their own affairs;

AND FURTHER that transfer of responsibility occur to a community only when that community has clearly demonstrated the desire to take over greater responsibilities;

AND FURTHERMORE that the Executive Council ensure that the time frames identified for a community to assume greater control are realistic;

AND FURTHERMORE that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs ensure that communities are provided with support and training necessary to enable them to take on additional governance responsibilities.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Your motion is in order. To your motion. Mr. Ootes, do you wish to speak to your motion? Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Yes. It is felt that this motion will give a direction to the government. I think the items are self-explanatory, and it is intended so that we can revisit this in the future, so that the comments of the Members made during the last several days can be revisited, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Secunder of the motion. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to follow up on what Mr. Ootes has indicated. All the Members, basically have spoken in support of community empowerment. However, we want to ensure that the communities are not set up for failure, that they do receive training and support, and that they actually do want to take on community empowerment, and it is not being forced upon them. With that in mind, we are making this motion, and we support it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour. All those opposed. All those abstaining. The motion is carried. Thank you.

---Applause.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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: Tabled Document 1-13(3), Tabled Document 83-13(3), Committee Report 10-13(3), and, do we have another motion? And Committee Report 11-13(3).

Again, on March 28th, a motion was passed by which authority was given to the Speaker 3-13(3), I will order you into Committee of the Whole to sit beyond the regular adjournment, or until such time as the committee is prepared to report. Mrs. Groenewegen is in the chair.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:**

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

I would like to call committee of the whole to order. There are a number of items before the committee today. What is the wish of the Members? Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you Madam Chair. I would recommend that we take Committee Report 10-13(3), Report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations,

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followed by Committee Report 11, Government Operations on Chief Electoral Office Report.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Is the committee agreed? Alright, we will begin then to deal with the Report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations, Report on the 1996/97 Mid-Year Review. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you Madam Chair.

Under the Legislative Assembly, the various reports provided to the committee included a projected shortfall of \$350,000, in the Legislative Assembly's budget, 1996/97. Much of the extra cost is related to committees meeting more often than was originally expected in the budget.

On the other hand, committee members noted that most of the reductions in contractual costs recommended during the business plan review process earlier this year, are being achieved, and that cuts to Members' compensation and pensions were also achieved, as planned. Final calculations of the actual savings and reductions to Members' pensions will be forthcoming from the administrators of the pension plan.

Committee Members also noted a concern regarding affirmative action levels among employees of the Legislative Assembly. Under the Affirmative Action Policy Review, in 1989, the government implemented the Affirmative Action Policy, which included a provision for the policy to be reviewed in 1994. A comprehensive review was undertaken in 1994/95. In June, the chairman of the Financial Management Board presented a draft report on the review of the Affirmative Action Policy to the standing committee. Committee members have previously expressed concerns about the policy. All noted that the policy did not work. That is, it did not raise levels of employment within the GNWT for affected groups significantly. Members noted that the problem was especially serious for professional and management positions.

The standing committee agreed that a broader approach is needed. Members suggested that a broad northern employment policy be developed. Such a policy would recognize that hiring practices are only one part of achieving a goal of a public service representative of the population that it serves. Education and career training are equally important issues that must be addressed in order to attain that goal, and a broader employment policy would include measures to deal with those issues.

The committee also agreed that such a policy would be more effective if more of the implementation was handled at the regional or community levels. Members suggested that one reason the policy has not been effective to date, is its top down nature.

The committee was disappointed that the draft report, rather than providing options and suggested courses of actions, merely seemed to ask more questions. The chairman of the FMB asked for direction from the

committee, and following the June meeting, the standing committee presented its concerns to the chairman. Committee members expect to see a new draft of the policy review this fall.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Are there any general comments? If not, does the committee concur that the report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations is concluded?

--Agreed.

We will proceed now to the Government Operations Report on Review of Tabled Document 30-13(3), Chief Electoral Officers Report on 1995 Election. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. We would like to provide the details of the Report of the Standing Committee of Government Operations on the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer. During the 1995 election, the majority of the election administration was handled in the north by northern election officials; however, overall control of the process and many of the

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special approvals were still handled by the Chief Electoral Officer in Ottawa.

In his last two reports there have been recommendations that the N.W.T. should assume responsibility for its own elections. Elections Canada could provide support, and advice, only on request, as it does for other jurisdictions, both within Canada, and elsewhere.

The standing committee agrees completely that the administration of elections should be the responsibility of northerners. The Chief Electoral Officer has already made this recommendation to the federal government. It is now time for the territorial government to follow up on this recommendation.

Negotiations should begin immediately to ensure the responsibility is transferred prior to the 1999 elections. Funding for Territorial elections are currently fully covered by the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. There is no specific budget for these elections which could be transferred. Instead the elections are funded by the federal government with statutory authority money.

The Chief Electoral Officer suggested during his appearance before the standing committee that these funds could be rechanneled through the Government of the Northwest Territories. He further suggested the amount in question is probably about \$1 million, for the two territories combined.

Madam Chair, I move that this Committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories immediately begin negotiations with the Federal government for the transfer of full responsibility and the financial resources for the administration of territorial elections and further, that the Legislative Assembly appoint a Chief Electoral Officer, well in advance of the next election.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

The motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour of the motion? Those opposed? The motion is carried. Thank you, Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Madam Chair, I will now turn the report over to the Member from Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. Complaints of enforcement, the area of complaints and enforcement was a major concern to the committee. Recent history has demonstrated that there is a lack of clarity in who has jurisdiction in dealing with serious allegations, or complaints. As one Member stated, "it is apparent that our current system is extremely vulnerable when it is brought into question it quickly hits gridlock. A disgruntled individual can have two arms of the Federal government, the Chief Electoral Office, and the RCMP, stumbling in confusion with no clear lines of authority.

Members raised concerns about how easily the system can be brought into question, particularly, when many of the ridings are won by a very small margin. As a Chief Electoral Officer stated to the committee the enforcement provisions in our current NWT Elections Act provide very limited authority for him to prosecute electoral offenses.



He acknowledged that there is a division of the authorities to prosecute and as a result the criteria for deciding whether to prosecute may be inconsistent. The Chief Electoral Officer said it needs to be clear who has the responsibility to investigate. Now, some complaints go to him, others to the RCMP, and still others are just left in the air. He said the area of enforcement is lacking and carries a price. The Members' agreed.

At the national level there is a Commissioner of Elections who is responsible for dealing with complaints and investigating, as necessary. This position would be independent from the government and would be appointed by the Chief Electoral Officer.

This type of position may provide an expeditious

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avenue for dealing with complaints that should be one of the options considered.

In his last two reports the Chief Electoral Officer has raised concerns about complaints and enforcement. Members' believe strongly that it is time to go forward with solutions in this area. Further to the concerns about complaints and enforcement there is a need for clear procedures for resolving complaints. In the last election there were a number of grey areas which may require clarification.

It is important that there be consistency in dealing with complaints and that those with concerns can understand the process for raising those complaints. It is also important that procedures protect the rights of the innocent, by providing mechanisms for dealing with complaints in a timely and conclusive way. This would reduce the possibility for an individual or group to cast suspicion on a candidate which could have an impact on the outcome of the election, or if the complaint is founded, or not.

Madam Chair, I move that this Committee recommends that the NWT Elections Act be amended to create a mechanism dealing with complaints and enforcement and further that procedures for resolving complaints be developed prior to the next elections.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour? Those opposed? The motion is carried. Thank you, we will move on now with Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I am Chairman on Public Education. The Chief Electoral Officer stressed to the Committee the need for public education. Under his office there are a number of initiatives designed to increase the awareness of the elections process among both current and future voters. For example, the NWT elections officials are preparing an educational package for children aged five to seven which will familiarize them of the process of running for office.

As a result of this report's recommendation to change the NWT Elections Act and changes arising from division there will be an increased need for public education.

Madam Chairman, I move that this Committee recommends that the public education effort on the election process should continue.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Henry. The motion is in order to the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed, if any? The motion is carried. Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. Election expenses, with consensus government system the NWT is unique in how elections are called. In other jurisdictions while there may be rumours about a pending election, elections begin as soon as the dates are formally announced. In the NWT the date for the election is often the subject of the discussion within the Assembly. Dates are set often well in advance of the signing of the writs. For example, in the last election the dates were set in May, although the election day was in October. The current system of accounting for election expenses does not take this extended time into account. In some cases candidates had set up offices and were actively spending campaign funds prior to the official election period.

In order to provide a level playing field for all candidates the Chief Electoral Officer suggests extending the spending limitation period, the Committee agrees.

Madam Chair, I move that this Committee recommends that the spending limitation period be extended to include the entire period from the date an

election is announced by the Legislative Assembly until polling day.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Henry. The motion is in order to the motion. Question is being called. All those in

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favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Please continue, Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. Although it was not raised specifically in the Chief Electoral Officer's Report, Members of the Committee also raised concerns about the current level allowed for campaign expenses. The maximum amounts allowable were set in the late 1980's. The Committee believe it is time to review the limits.

Madam Chair, I move that this Committee recommends that the current provisions in the NWT Elections Act regarding election expense amounts be revisited and appropriate revisions brought forward.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Henry. The motion is in order to the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Thank you, Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

I will ask Mr. Enuaraq to continue with the report.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Mr. Enuaraq.

**MR. ENUARAQ:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. Review of time frames, the electoral system in the NWT was originally based on the southern Canada model; however, we have a small population spread over a very large area. Difficulties in reaching all residents are compounded by transportation, communication, and even weather complications. As a result some of the deadlines and time periods used during the election have been modified over the years.

During this last election there were more time frames identified which could be revised to better support the

NWT elections process. Some of these will require legislative changes while others are of an administrative nature.

Recommendation 6: I move that this committee recommends that the time frames set out in the NWT Elections Act be reviewed and a lot of operational realities and revised accordingly.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, the motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried, Mr. Enuaraq.

**MR. ENUARAQ:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. Residency requirements, in order to better accommodate the lifestyles of residents of the NWT the enumeration procedures was modified for the last election. It was held well in advance at a time when the most people would be in their communities, rather than on the land, or away on their holidays.

While this change was very effective developing more comprehensive electors list, the first time around there was some complications. There were some problems for those who moved between enumeration, and polling day, and who failed to register during the revision. While can people can register to vote on polling day, they can only do so in the riding where they lived during enumeration. This left some people unable to vote. This was an unintentional side effect of another change and one which needs to be rectified.

The Chief Electoral Officer had proposed an amendment to address this situation. However, the Committee had strong concerns about the implications of the proposed amendment. While the amendment would solve one problem, Members saw it creating others. There is the potential for it to become another way to circumvent the enumeration process and be open to abuse in the same way which proxies have been in the past.

Members were also concerned about enumeration and subsequent voting rights of the students attending college in another part of the territory. During the last election, some students were enumerated while at school. They were unable to vote in their home riding in the fall. The committee believes these students should be able to vote in their home

riding. With the recommendations regarding special ballot voting, it will be possible for students who

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are away to vote at home. Accommodation for these students would have to be found in the enumeration process.

While the committee understands the issue raised by the Chief Electoral Officer, Members are not willing to close one loophole only to open others. Members would like to consider an amendment which would address all the issues relating to the extended period of time between enumeration and the polling day.

Recommendation 7

I move that this committee recommends that the amendments of the NWT Elections Act be developed to ... arising from the extended period of time between enumeration and polling day.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you Mr. Enuaraq. For the record, could you please repeat the motion, because I think we lost audio on you there part way.

**MR. ENUARAQ:**

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Recommendation 7

I move that this committee recommends that amendments to the NWT Elections Act be developed to address the problems arising from the extended period of time between enumeration and polling day.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Enuaraq. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Enuaraq.

**MR. ENUARAQ:**

Thank you Madam Chair. The Member for Iqaluit will continue our report.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Good afternoon, Madam Chair.

The Eligibility of Land Claims Officials to Run as Candidates.

Currently, the government can provide leave without pay to allow people to run for office. According to the Chief Electoral Officer, the NWT Elections Act currently does not have a provision allowing an organization to give the same consideration to its staff.

During the last election, some individuals had decided to either resign from seats on land claim boards or not run. The electoral system should not knowingly deny opportunities to 1 potential candidate over another.

Recommendation 8

I move that this Committee recommends that sections 51(3) and (4) of the NWT Elections Act be amended to ensure consistency with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Madam Chairman. Madam Chairman, Special Ballot and Experimental Voting Techniques.

The unique circumstances of the NWT require some innovation in how people register their ballot. We are dealing with individuals in isolated areas, extreme weather conditions, and very high transportation and communication costs. Anything which could correct a situation where it can cost over \$1000 for an individual in an isolated situation to cast a ballot, would be a positive step. The Chief Electoral Officer believes that a mail-in special ballot system, used elsewhere in the world, could help overcome some of the barriers faced by voters in the Northwest Territories. He would also like other options such as tele-voting to be considered.

As well, there have been many problems with the current system of proxy voting, which is supposed to allow those who cannot get to the polls to vote. Recent developments in the NWT highlight the abuse possible with the current proxy system. Across the NWT, returning officers have indicated a general lack of understanding of the true purpose of

a proxy vote. Issues such as what defines solicitation of a proxy vote are unclear and cause difficulties for both candidates and election officials. Many seats are won with narrow margins. The use of proxy votes and the potential for misuse under these circumstances heightens the need for a better way to deal with those who cannot get to the polls personally.

Recommendation 9

I move that this Committee recommends that special ballot voting be introduced, together with the testing of other voting procedures.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

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

**HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:**

Madam Chairman, I would like to ask the Committee Members whether the effect of this recommendation, if it is implemented, would do away with the present proxy system that we have?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Could I direct your attention to recommendation 10, and ask if that might answer your question?

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Recommendation 9

The Chief Electoral Officer indicated that the use of special ballot voting should eliminate the need for proxy voting. The Committee strongly encourages development of special ballot voting which would ensure proxy votes were no longer required in any circumstances. However, if there will still be any need for the use of proxy votes, Members of the Committee believe strongly that the procedures for proxy votes should be clarified and made much more restrictive.

Recommendation 10

I move that this Committee recommends that procedures for proxy voting should be revised to minimize the potential for misuse.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Your motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Madam Chairman. Madam Chairman, during the initial public meeting and review, Mr. Kingsley, under direct questioning by this Member, admitted he was not a member or an employee of CSIS, MI5, the CIA or FBI, and I would appreciate, and did appreciate, hearing and knowing this. I will now ask Mr. Krutko to continue with the report.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you very much, Mr. Picco. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Duties of the Returning Officers.

There were some concerns raised during the 1995 election about the availability of returning officers. In order to provide more consistent service to the public, the Chief Electoral Officer has suggested that there is a need to set operating hours for local offices of returning officers.

Recommendation 11

I move that this Committee recommends that the NWT Elections Act should be amended to allow the Chief Electoral Officer to prescribe opening hours for the offices of the returning officers.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

A List of Electors.

During the 1995 election, a new system of electronic voters lists was used. This system proved very successful. With electronic lists and revision available for the first day of the election period, it is possible to provide the revised list with candidates and at the polls. However, the legislation needs to be amended to reflect this new, more effective form of voters' lists.

The creation of the electronic list was very effective for elections officers and candidates. However, the

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information was gathered for a specific purpose and there is a need for rules to limit the use of that information.

Recommendation 12

I move that this Committee recommends that the provisions of the new NWT Act defining the official lists of electors be amended to address the use of electronic voters lists as well as to restrict the use of those lists for political and electoral purposes only.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. On the second line of the recommendation, where it says, "NWT Elections Act", there was just a little bit of confusion there on that. Do you think that, just for the record, you could perhaps read the Motion again. I think the words, "new NWT Act" were used instead of "NWT Elections Act". So just for clarification for the record. Everyone has a copy, and I think they know what the recommendation is, but for the record.

Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

I move that the Committee recommends the revision of the NWT Elections Act, defining the official lists of electors by amending to address the use of electronic voters lists as well as to restrict the use of those lists for political or electoral purposes only.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The motion is in order. To the motion. The Question is being called. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. At this time, I would like to turn the presentation over to Mr. O'Brien to continue the Report.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

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

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair.

In Preparing for the 1999 Elections.

To vote as the elections in 1999 are still far in the distance. However, there is still significant work to be done to prepare for the elections for the election administration. This is made more complicated by the need for not one, but two separate election offices to support the elections in each of the two new Territories.

Some steps have to be taken to prepare for the first elections in the new Territories. The Legislative Assembly has considered legislation establishing Electoral Boundaries Commissions in both Territories. There is also ongoing work under the authority of the Chief Electoral Officer to prepare public education material for elections.

However, in order to ensure the smooth operation of the 1999 elections, there is a need to set up the election administration in 1997. While negotiations to transfer responsibility for elections to the NWT may not be complete at this time, the offices will still need to be established.

Recommendation 13

I move that this Committee recommends that the two electoral offices for the new Territories be in operation by April, 1997, with the appropriate interim funding in place by April 1, 1999.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Your motion is in order. To the motion. The question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. I would just like to tell the Members that I have slowed down a little bit and I would like to apologize to Mr. Evaloarjuk; we were going a little too quickly. Translation was not keeping up before, and in fact he had voted in favour of a motion, which I asked if he wanted to be noted as opposed. So we are going to

have to slow down a little bit so the translators can keep up with us. Thank you, Mr. O'Brien.

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. Timing of the legislative amendments.

In some cases, the recommendations of the standing committee may require legislative changes to the NWT Elections Act. The committee would like to see those changes made well in advance of the next elections.

Recommendation 14

I move that this committee recommends that any legislative changes necessary to implement

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these recommendations be introduced during the fourth sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. I believe you made a motion and your motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. O'Brien.

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. The recommendations in this Report will produce changes to the process for elections in the two new Territories in 1999. There may be areas for change where different rules would be appropriate for each Territory, such as time frames. In developing the amendments, there should be thought given to the potential sections dealing strictly with one Territory or the other.

Recommendation 15

I move that this Committee recommends that, in addressing these recommendations, to the possibility of separate sections of the NWT Elections Act be considered for Nunavut and the new western Territory.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. O'Brien.

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. This concludes the Report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on the Chief Electoral Officer's Report for the 1995 Territorial Election. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Now, are there any general comments on the Committee's Report? If not, does the Committee concur that Committee Report 11-13(3), Government Operations Report on the Review of Tabled Document 300-13(3) Chief Electoral Officers Report in the 1995 Election is concluded?

That concludes that item, and there are a few other items on the agenda. What is the wish of the Committee? Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

I would like to make a motion to report progress.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

The motion is in order and not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. All those in favour, do you want to go back? There is a motion on the floor to report progress. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is carried. Thank you. I will rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The House will come back to order

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Ms Groenewegen

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Committee Reports 10-13(3) and 11-13(3) and would like to report progress with 15 motions being adopted and that Committee Reports 10 and 11 have been concluded, and Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Seconded by Mr. Antoine. The motion is in order. All those in favour of the motion please signify. Thank you. The motion is carried.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Third reading of Bills. Third reading of Bills. Thank you. It is my understanding that commissioner of the Northwest Territories is prepared to assent to Bills and prorogue this session of the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Clerk, would you please ascertain if Her Honour, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, is prepared to enter the Chambers and assent to Bills and prorogue this session. Thank you.

**COMMISSIONER MAKSAGAK:**

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories it gives me pleasure to assent to the following Bills: Bill 17, Business Corporations Act; Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Public Trustees Act; Bill 19, Electoral Boundaries

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Commissions Act; Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1996-97, and Bill 21, An Act to Amend Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Mr. Speaker, and Members of the Legislative Assembly. Preparation for division of the Northwest Territories in 1999, which will create two new territories, continues at a steady pace. I was pleased to be advised that the November sitting of the Fourth Session would be devoted primarily to the consideration of constitutional development matters for Nunavut and the new western Territory.

Prior to proroguing this session, I wish to announce that the Fourth Session of the 13th Legislative Assembly will convene on Tuesday, November 26, 1996, at 1:30 p.m.

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