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**HANSARD**

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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):**

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Good afternoon. Orders of the day. Ministers' statements. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 15-13(4): Workers' Compensation Board Corporate Plan 1997-99

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in accordance with subsection 91(1) of the Financial Administration Act, I will be tabling the Corporate Plan for the Workers' Compensation Board for the years 1997-99 later today.

Implementation of an early intervention approach to claims management, development of a communications strategy and a comprehensive policy review have continued to improve the WCB's service to stockholders. Safety education initiatives were introduced to reduce accidents through several new programs; Safety Incentive and Rate Reduction (SIRR); Claims Management for Employers; Safety Awareness for Artists and Carvers; Safety and the Young Worker.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT Workers' Compensation Board has come a long way since the presentation of its first corporate plan in 1993. As the WCB has evolved in recent years, so has its corporate plan. Unlike previous plans, this document focuses on only four strategic issues. This is a conscious effort by the WCB to limit its new initiatives while preparing for division in 1999.

In the next three years, the WCB will work to promote safe and healthy workplaces by balancing its responsibilities for education and enforcement; promoting partnership and commitment with employers and workers; and, targeting industries and sectors with the highest accident frequency.

The WCB will also work to sustain the progress it has already achieved by evaluating existing programs and service delivery to ensure their effectiveness; examining alternative program and services delivery models; providing on-going training and development for staff; and, ensuring the information systems adequately support the standards set for delivery and accountability of WCB initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, while the 1995 Annual Report reflected the WCB's continued financial health, it is the strategic initiatives defined in this corporate plan that will ensure its success for the future. I encourage all members to take the time to read this important document.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Ministers' statements. Ms. Thompson.

Minister's Statement 16-13(4): Dene and Arctic Sports Resources

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise members of two significant initiatives to document traditional cultural games. The first is the recently published Dene Games Resource Book, documenting the traditional cultural games of the Dene of the Western Arctic including Dogrib, Chipewyan, Gwich'in, Sahtu and Slavey.

Mr. Speaker, the second initiative is the development of a technical manual for arctic sports. This resource is being developed to promote the teaching and training of Inuit arctic sports. The project is sponsored by the Arctic Winter Games International Committee, the governments of the NWT, Yukon, Alberta and Canada, Sports North, the NWT Arctic Sports Association and the coaching associations of Canada. The technical manual will overview the important groups of Inuit traditional games, and provide the cultural background of these games. These games completed in the Arctic Winter Games will be described technically, culturally appropriate

training methods and values, as well as a process for competition will be described.

Mr. Speaker, resources like the Dene Games Resource book and technical manual for arctic sports preserve and promote traditional cultural values and behaviour of our peoples, and leads to greater understanding and appreciation of our Dene and Inuit cultures. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Ministers' statements. Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 17-13(4): Congratulations to the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the programming of the northern aboriginal broadcasters, carried on TVNC, has helped enhance aboriginal languages and culture, and continues to increase understanding among and between cultural groups. Northern programs are also gaining increased recognition at the national, and international levels, for being innovative, creative and effective.

Today, I would like to congratulate the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation for having won some prestigious awards for their productions. In June, the program Secret Stories was awarded the Unesco prize at the Prix Jeunesse International in Munich, Germany. Secret Stories was co-produced by IBC and is about Linda Tucktoo's experiences in the Philippines.

The same program was also awarded the jury prize at the Fourth World Video and Multi-Media Forum held by the International Catholic Organization for Cinema and Audio-visual in Cologne, Germany. In addition, the Alliance for Children and Television here in Canada has just awarded special recognition to the IBC series Takuginai.

The Inuit Broadcasting Corporation receives its funding from the territorial government through Education, Culture and Employment, and from the federal Department of Canadian Heritage. My department is proud to support IBC and its excellent programming. I congratulate IBC on receiving these

awards, and on its continuing work to promote understanding of Inuit culture and values. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Minister's Statement 18-13(4): Change of Procedure in Motor Vehicle Division

**HON. JAMES ANTOINE:**

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a short statement today to call the members' attention to a change of procedure in the Department of Transportation's Motor Vehicle Division, which I believe the members and most of their constituents should take note.

As of October 1996, the Motor Vehicles Division has stopped sending reminder letters to people advising them that their vehicle registration or driver's license is about to expire. The reminder letter was a small service the Department began in 1989 when it changed to the staggered renewal of vehicle registrations. The service was intended to give people a timely reminder, so they would not find themselves in the awkward position of having let their driver's license or vehicle registration expire.

The Motor Vehicles Division sent out about 50,000 letters annually at a cost of \$25,000. In any month, the post office returned a quarter to half of these letters as undeliverable, mainly because people move without notifying the Motor Vehicles Division of their change in address. The number of returned letters made the Department question how important the service actually was. In our tight financial circumstances, by cancelling the reminder letters, the Department of Transportation has achieved a small saving with little or no inconvenience to the public.

So, I would like to advise the members and their constituents, that there will be no letter in the mail this year when their vehicle registration is due for renewal. People should check the expiry dates on their motor vehicle documents and remind themselves to renew them before they lapse. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Morin.

Minister's Statement 19-13(4): 24th Annual Geoscience Forum

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will give this minister's statement on behalf of Mr. Kakfwi. On Wednesday, Mr. Kakfwi had the honour of speaking at the opening of the 24th annual Geoscience Forum now underway in Yellowknife. The forum is a major mining event, where the mineral industry can showcase its work, and raise issues of importance and concern.

The three day conference is organized by the NWT Chamber of Mines. Participants include over 300 members of the geological and mining fraternity, ranging from Baker Lake prospectors to presidents of major mining companies, all of whom are instrumental in mining and exploration activity in the Northwest Territories.

1996 has been a dramatic year for the northern mining industry and the excitement will continue to grow as the NWT's first diamond mine moves closer to production. The mineral industry, and the economic opportunities it provides, are crucial to the economic future of the Northwest Territories. There is potential for more activity as prospectors continue to search out new wealth. Mr. Kakfwi took note that some of the prospectors exploring the land, such as those from Baker Lake who are attending the Geoscience Forum, have been trained in the communities with the prospector training support offered by the department.

Geoscience work, like wildlife and habitat research, is an important part of the GNWT's research activities and an important ingredient in the development of resource

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management plans. Research that we do is also a key tool to encourage economic growth. As a result of work done in the late 1980's by a GNWT geologist in the Bathurst Inlet area, industry took a closer look at the region. Today BHP minerals is taking a bulk sample from the Boston Gold Property.

Issues of importance to the mineral industry are also presented and discussed at the Geoscience Forum. Departmental Staff will be speaking about the development of a protected areas strategy for the NWT, a process in which the mineral industry will be involved. The strategy, when completed, will enhance our ability to manage all resources, renewable and

non-renewable, and provide greater clarity on the availability of land and mineral development.

Mr. Kakfwi looks forward to seeing the proceedings from the Geoscience Forum, and he wishes the industry the best in the coming year. Thank you.

--- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. Mr. Enuaraq.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Season's Greetings

**MR. ENUARAQ:**

(Translator) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I could be given the opportunity to speak. This may be the last sitting of this session, during this year, 1996. I wish the members of this House a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year, and I encourage them to share their values with their families. Particularly, Mr. Speaker, I also wish Pangnirtung, Broughton Island, and Clyde River residents a very good Christmas. I also wish Yellowknife residents a very good year. I have enjoyed staying here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Enuaraq. Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement On Hiring Practices of Government for Aboriginal People

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My member's statement today is in regards to the hiring practices of this government. Specifically, how they treat Aboriginal people in the P1 and P2 positions, especially with the lay-offs that have occurred. I will speak about individuals that have made a career move to get into fields, such as a managerial and technical trades, such as nurses, social workers, doctors, and dentists.

These individuals have made a choice by moving to southern institutions to take the training, and returning home. But, once they got home, there was a real mistrust by managers in regards to their experience or

backgrounds because of the colour of their skin. I think we have made a decision to let managers manage. But we also have made a decision that there is an affirmative action policy, and this government has to implement that policy to its fullest, to ensure that people who are born and raised in the north will have the opportunities, so that we do keep those positions available to them. They will eventually be independent, and self-sufficient, by having the human resources from the north available to deliver those programs.

On one hand, we are telling the developer to hire north, maintain jobs for the north, but on the other hand, this government is not practising that. I believe that we have to make it clear to southern managers that we hire through this government, through our hiring practices, that there is affirmative action in place. We do have to educate them, about the opportunity available for those individuals who have gone to school for several years to come back either as dentists, nurses, social workers, or even teachers.

At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the minister for a statement on this.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Rabesca.

Member's Statement On Funding for Adult Education Programs

**MR. RABESCA:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to thank the honourable Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment, for his timely response to the members of my constituency, who raised concerns over the lack of funding for a second position at the adult education centre in Rae. This position is needed, considering the number of students who are currently in this important program, as well as possible training programs, that are soon to be initiated.

Over the previous months, most members of this House have commented on the need for more adult education in the communities. I would like to add my support for this very worthwhile and important program. Currently, in our region, we have a centre in Rae that offers full time adult education. Three communities of Rae Lakes, Wha Ti, and Snare Lakes, have lobbied this government to provide this program. However, due to cut backs, and lack of funding, these

communities have only been given short term solutions. This is not acceptable. We must find better solutions.

With the signing of agreements by this government, Treaty 11 councils, and BHP, we can realize some of our goals for training. I believe it is important for these parties to work together as partners to ensure our people receive the best possible training that we can provide. I also hope that we can start offering this in the very near future.

In closing today, maybe the final day this House will sit prior to Christmas, I would like to wish one and all a safe and Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Thanks to Wife and Family for Support

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as this is the last day of the sitting for 1996, I would like to take this opportunity to wish the people of Iqaluit, Apex, and the outpost camps a very Merry Christmas and New Year.

Mr. Speaker, to be able to come to Yellowknife for prolonged periods of time, when you have a young family, means you

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need support from your partner at home. Mr. Speaker, my wife Upa, is home with our three kids, ranging in age from 1 to 8 years old. My wife has been employed at the women's shelter known as Qimaavik in Iqaluit, since 1992. That job is stressful, Mr. Speaker. Having to maintain our home, and take care of the three children for weeks on end, while I serve here in public office, takes more than dedication.

It takes commitment and love. I could not be here today, I would not be able to do the job, to function in the stressful world of cutbacks and reductions, being in the public eye, without my wife's support.

Mr. Speaker, as we near the Christmas season and a new year, my wife has two more years of my

prolonged absences, and missed birthdays, to look forward to.

Is public life worth missing seeing your baby walk for the first time? Or missing out on an award presentation to your son? I do not know. But the public should sometimes look at these aspects of public life. I now know why so many of our territorial, provincial, and federal politicians have failed marriages and other problems. It is not an easy life, Mr. Speaker. I have nothing but respect for any man or woman who can survive and dedicate four, five, six years or more in public life.

Mr. Speaker, to my wife and family in Iqaluit, that I will not see for another two weeks, I miss you, I love you, and I apologize to my son Wally for missing his birthday again this year, and I will try to make it up to you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Members' statements. Mr. O'Brien.

Member's Statement On Season's Greetings

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to send out best wishes for the coming Christmas season to all northerners, especially to my constituents in Arviat and Baker Lake.

Mr. Speaker, just this week, I was informed that the Premier and his Cabinet were not God and the apostles. Mr. Speaker, given the season, this being the season of good will, I will refer to the Premier as Santa Morin, and the cabinet, as his elves. Last Christmas, my list to Santa Morin was to have a little more equity, with reference to capital budgets and allocations, to my riding.

Unfortunately, these stockings, that were hung by the chimney with glee, were found nearly empty. One stocking that was filled, with a health centre for Arviat, was robbed by one of Santa's little elves. So Mr. Speaker, my message to the wisemen from the east, is that, you better watch out, and you better not shout, because he is making his list, and he is checking it twice, and he is going to find out who is naughty or nice. In all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish the Premier and his family nothing but the best

for the Christmas season, and also, the godfather and his elves. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Season's Greetings

**MR. BARNABAS:**

(Translator) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also want to wish the members a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. All the best in the future. I would also like to wish Arctic Bay residents Grise Fiord residents, and Resolute Bay residents a very merry Christmas, and a happy New Year. I want to wish NWT residents all the best in the New Year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Season's Greetings

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to use my member's statement to wish people in the Northwest Territories, my fellow colleagues, people of Inuvik, and especially my wife and children, Merry Christmas. I am happy to say that, in another two weeks, I will be home to spend the majority of the Christmas season with my family.

I would like to say something about Christmas. It is not just a time of lights and presents, but it is a time of people getting together, sharing stories, and renewing old partnerships and friendships. A time to reflect back on all the accomplishments we have made. How few or how many. I think it is a time to truly reflect on the blessings we have received. Something my father told me, after we had the Christmas dinner prayer. As we sat down to eat, he would say, look at all we have, and how many out there, that do not have any. Mr. Speaker, colleagues, during this time of Christmas, I would hope that the spirit of sharing and caring would be with us during this Christmas season. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Members' statements. Mr. Henry.

Member's Statement On Season's Greetings

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As this the last session of this year 1996, I would also like to take this opportunity to wish all the peoples of the Northwest Territories, the residents of Yellowknife and the members of this House a very special and happy Christmas. I would also like to take the opportunity to reassure my wife and family that I will be spending a lot of time at home over the Christmas season.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, the festive season is a time for families to come together. It is also a time for friends to visit friends, and spend extra time with them, at this time of the year. I had some discussions with the finance minister, and he informed me that he has not really made a lot of friends this year. So, he may have a little extra time over the holiday season, that the rest of us will not have. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to wish yourself, and all the staff of this Legislative Assembly and the government of the Northwest Territories, who have put a phenomenal amount of work and dedication into the past year, I would like to, on behalf of the members of this House, ensure them that they are appreciated. We wish them, and their families, a very happy and holy Christmas. Amen.

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-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Members' statements. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement On Concerns with Amalgamation of Transportation, Public Works and Services, and the NWT Housing Corporation

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I feel like the Grinch, because my statement has nothing to do with Christmas. Today, I would like to make a statement regarding the proposed amalgamation of

Transportation, Public Works and Services, and the NWT Housing Corporation. I have serious concerns about this proposed amalgamation. But I have bigger concerns with how this initiative is, apparently, transforming into reality, right before our eyes.

A motion was passed in the last session clearly outlining the need for this initiative to be debated in and approved by, this House. However, yesterday in the House, we had difficulty and complications in achieving the simple first step of having the discussion document tabled in the House. The Premier sited the process which we all agreed to as members when we were elected, which would see the review of decisions in committee on such things as budgets, amalgamations of departments, et cetera. When you consider the time lines and target dates for implementation of this amalgamation, the significance of the input of committees and ordinary members must be brought into question.

Lay-off notices to employees, who are associated with the user say/user pay initiative, have already gone out. Some components, minor as they are, of the supplementary appropriation are also association with user say/ user pay, which is part of the bigger issue of amalgamation. Mr. Todd tells us that these lay-off notices are the responsible and compassionate way to treat our public service employees. I am being very careful not to use the word irresponsible today here - responsible and compassionate - because I would not want to offend anyone. He also tells us that these lay-off notices can be retracted if we do not proceed with this initiative. I think that they are serious risks associated with such actions.

In summary, I would ask the government to observe the committee structure in the decision making process and the direction and motions passed in this House. For the record, neither committee or this House, has sanctioned the amalgamation of Transportation, Public Works and Services, and the Housing Corporation. I look forward to raising specific concerns in Committee of the Whole today. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Members' statements. Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement On Far North Film Festival

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members will still be in Yellowknife, today, and for the next two weeks. I would like to make reference to the fact that, for the past two days and continuing on this evening in Yellowknife, at Northern Arts and Cultural Centre, is the first annual Far North Film Festival. For those of you who are interested in films on the north, and they are concentrating on films on the north. For instance there is the film, The Road to Rae, which was produced by a Yellowknife group. It might be of interest to the public and members here to go to that.

I want to pass on my Christmas greetings to my constituents, Mr. Speaker, as well as the staff of the Government of the Northwest Territories, and to members of this House. Also, to the staff, who are working for the government. We do appreciate the tremendous contribution, and we do hope they have a good Christmas, and a prosperous new year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Members' statements. Are there any further members' statements? Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement On Improving Adult Education In The Northwest Territories

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to make my statement on a more serious matter. It is in relation to what the honourable member from the Fort Rae area had talked about, which is education. Mr. Speaker, the Premier, in his speech the other day, indicated that we should focus on three core priorities. Two of those were to improve economic conditions and to address social conditions.

Those are, I believe, directly related to the education levels of Northerners. For years, the Legislative Assembly has stressed the need for education for all northern residents. We made several movements in that area, including adopting a small school secondary program, implementing a new education act, and dramatically expanding the roles of Aurora and Nunavut Arctic College.

In 1996, there was a snapshot done of the western NWT labour market, which showed having more education increases the chance of getting a job. It showed that 29 percent of those, with less than grade 9, have a job. Only 29 percent. At the same time, it

showed that if you have a university degree, you are almost guaranteed to have a job. Those were at a 91 percent level. Those numbers may have changed a little since then.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The member from Yellowknife North is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Erasmus, you have unanimous consent.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, as I said, those may have changed a little, because of the fact that we have amalgamated and soon. Because, in the previous study, it was shown that people with a university degree had a 95 percent opportunity of having a job.

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Another study, that was done recently, was by Aurora College. In their corporate plan from 1995 to the year 2000, it showed a clear link between education, employment opportunities and pay levels. Mr. Speaker, that report indicates that if you have grade 8 or less, you only have a 33 percent chance of getting a job. And you would be working for an average pay of less than \$14,000.00. If you had grade 9 to grade 11, you had a 50/50 chance of getting a job. And you would work for an average pay of \$21,000.00.

If you had a university degree, as I said earlier, you would have a 91 percent chance of getting a job. You would be working for an average pay of close to \$50,000.00. There is a huge disparity there, Mr. Speaker.

Now another source, that I looked at, is the Canadian Fact Book on Poverty. You would have to remember that your job, and your education, are directly related to the amount of money you make. So if you make more money, you have a good education. If you have a poor education, you make less money. Less money, of course, is related to poverty. This report showed that children who came from poor families, were more than twice as likely to drop out of high school, Mr. Speaker. It also showed that close to three-quarters of the children that were in care at foster homes came from low income families, Mr. Speaker.



It also showed that child mortality, deaths at child birth, and shortly thereafter, are related to income. If a child came from a low income family, then that child was twice as likely to die, than if that child had come from a higher income family. That same report showed that boys coming from low income families were more than three times as likely to die from drowning, than if they came from a higher income family. It also showed that children from low income families are almost twice as likely, than a child from a higher income family, to have a psychiatric disorder, to do poorly in school, and to develop conduct disorder - in other words, to behave destructively.

Mr. Speaker, we like to speak about improving economic conditions and improving social conditions. These reports, which I have cited, and intend to table a document on later, these documents all show that without improving the education levels of the adults in the Northwest Territories, we have a very poor chance of improving social conditions. If we do improve economic conditions, it certainly won't be for those people with poor educations.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by wishing a Merry Christmas to my family, to my constituents, to all the people of the NWT, and also to my fellow members here at the Legislative Assembly. And a very hardy thank you and Merry Christmas to the staff at the Legislative Assembly, and all of the GNWT staff. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Members' statements, members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Picco.

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

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have much opportunity to welcome people from Iqaluit, but at this time it gives me extreme pleasure to introduce Ann Hanson, who as a lot of people in the Assembly know, is the Chair of the Baffin Regional Health Board. Sitting next to Annis Pat Cremie, the CEO of the Baffin Regional Health Board, and one of the few women, or people for that matter, I have seen go toe to toe with Mr. Todd, and hold her own. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

**HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Celine Ningark, who is a member of the Nunavut Social Development Council, a councillor of the Hamlet of Pelly Bay, a member of the Kitikmeot Divisional Board of Education, and happens to be the better half of our chair of Nunavut, Mr. John Ningark.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a young lady from Japan in our gallery today. Kiomi Marata is a Rotary exchange student from Seiki, Japan which is near Osaka. She will be living in Yellowknife for one year. She is a grade 11 student at St. Patrick High School, and will manage to enjoy living with several families in Yellowknife, who are members of the Rotary Club, while she is here.

She is accompanied today with her acting mother, right now, Muriel Tolley, and her acting brother, James Tolley.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I can recognize my better half, after living with her for some 30 years. Celine, thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Recognition of visitors in the gallery, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like recognize Pat Thomas, John Todd's partner in crime.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 53-13(4): Hiring Practices And Managerial Attitudes Toward Aboriginal People

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for Minister for Social Services, Mr. Ng. It is regarding my opening statement about the hiring practices of hospital managers, and allowing them to manage. But I think there also has to be a mechanism there to ensure that individuals such as aboriginal people, who have become registered nurses, dentists, to allow then a fair and equitable way of getting in the work force, and also becoming active in communities, where a lot of them have come from. They have taken the time to go southern institutions, or northern institutions, to get their degree as registered nurses, or dentists, or other fields, in management positions.

My question to the minister is, what mechanism do you have to ensure that, yes, we have a lot of managers to manage, but

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there has to be, for the individuals themselves to be able to file their complaints without having to feel that they are going to be threatened by the managers, by either being put on part time work or taken off full time work, is there a mechanism that you do use so that, in case they cannot work out their grievances with their manager, there is another approach they can take to resolve these things?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 53-13(4): Hiring Practices And Managerial Attitudes Toward Aboriginal People

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I guess that would depend on the position that the honourable member is speaking about. There is a grievance procedure through the collective agreement, if it is a unionized position, and if not, individual boards have policies for personnel matters that would set out terms and conditions under which they work and, to my

understanding, terms and conditions under which they could file complaints to address their issues, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 53-13(4): Hiring Practices And Managerial Attitudes Toward Aboriginal People

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Other questions, in regards to the whole concept that we seem to have the idea that the affirmative action is the mechanism that is going to be used to ensure that we do have opportunities for aboriginal people in those P1, P2 positions, that they will be able to follow whatever career they are in, one of the trades or else in nursing, dentistry or in a managerial position. Has your department made an effort to educate managers that we do hire from southern institutions, or from southern provinces, is there a mechanism that you use to educate managers when they come up here, that there is a policy in place, in regards to hiring, and how obligated are they to fulfil that policy?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 53-13(4): Hiring Practices And Managerial Attitudes Toward Aboriginal People

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if it is respect to actual personnel within the Department of Health and Social Services, then, yes, we have an affirmative action policy that we abide by. I do not know if there is specific training in respect to that issue, but certainly, through the senior management, and through the ministers office, we are well aware of it and we abide by it to the utmost.

In respect to any managers that would be coming on to health boards throughout the territories, that would be incumbent upon them, and their boards of management, to adhere to the same policies that our government has, in respect to affirmative action, again, I do not know if there is specific training or education for these managers, but certainly, if it is an

issue out there, I would certainly be more than willing to reiterate our government's position on affirmative action and hiring.

What we are trying to do, of course, as we all know here, is to try to promote all kinds of professionals throughout the system. To try and develop a northern work force, particularly in the professional fields the honourable member mentioned. We are trying to develop that base, because in the long run, we know that will benefit the whole of the territories, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 53-13(4): Hiring Practices And Managerial Attitudes Toward Aboriginal People

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another question to the minister is, is there information available, to this House, to identify those individuals who are registered nurses or social workers, and exactly what level of the wage economy are they? Are they working part time, or full time, have they been shifted around? There were concerns raised about the lay-offs that have occurred in the past. Also, how fair is this policy and how is it being carried out? How do you evaluate what levels these individuals are at in regards to P1, P2 positions, versus individuals who are brought from, either, overseas or in southern institutions to come up here and fill these positions. How level is that playing field?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 53-13(4): Hiring Practices And Managerial Attitudes Toward Aboriginal People

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that we do support and encourage all northern aboriginal people to pursue careers in the health fields. If there is any particular problem that the honourable member refers to, I would certainly be willing to sit down with him and find out if there are any unfair happenings that are going on in respect to the individual case that he might be referring to. We

certainly could put together statistics for some of the questions that the honourable member is asking, it is just that I do not know the time frame of when we could do that to satisfy his immediate needs, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, Mr. O'Brien.

Question 54-13(4): Vacant Positions In Baker Lake Department Of Social Services Regional Office

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister of Health and Social Services. Could the minister update this House as to the status of the regional office of the Department of Social Services located in Baker Lake, what is the status, today, in reference to the number of positions that are vacant or not filled and the fact that the regional office no longer has a superintendent of social services located in Baker Lake?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 54-13(4): Vacant Positions In Baker Lake Department Of Social Services Regional Office

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have the specific details of what positions are, or are not, filled right now in the regional social services offices in the Keewatin. I can get this information and forward it to the

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honourable member. As you all know, the amalgamation of social services with the Keewatin Health Board is underway, similar to all other regions where we plan to have this finalized by the end of this fiscal year, in preparation for having a consolidated budget for those areas for the next fiscal year. We are including all the transfer positions and the operating dollars for those positions, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 54-13(4): Vacant Positions In Baker Lake Department Of Social Services Regional Office

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge, there are 4 vacant positions, or PYs, that have been either lost, or transferred, to Rankin Inlet. It is my understanding that the superintendent's position has been downgraded to a management position which was to be located in Baker Lake, but is now located in Rankin Inlet. My question is, is Baker Lake still considered, and will it still be considered, as the regional headquarters for social services for the Keewatin? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 54-13(4): Vacant Positions In Baker Lake Department Of Social Services Regional Office

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that would be the responsibility of the Keewatin Health Board to finalize that amalgamation. It is true that all superintendent positions of social services in the regions will be downgraded, as you do not need 2 superintendents, and that is part of the reason for the amalgamation, to obtain some efficiencies, to minimize some of the overlap and provide more integrated services within the regions, to try and improve the service.

I cannot speak for the Keewatin Health Board in how they will finalize their operational structure. I can foresee that there will be one headquarters and the social services regional office function will, more than likely, not be based in Baker Lake, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 54-13(4): Vacant Positions In Baker Lake Department Of Social Services Regional Office

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is unfortunate that we do not have the Keewatin Health Board and others here to answer some of these questions. The issue to me is that, if this is what community empowerment is about, it is in a sorry state. We have a situation where, once again, a small community is losing positions to a regional centre. Positions that we cannot afford to lose. I believe this flies in the face of what Footprints 2 is proposing, and, furthermore, I think the minister should give further consideration to ensuring these positions return to Baker Lake, where they belong. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 54-13(4): Vacant Positions In Baker Lake Department Of Social Services Regional Office

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if I can use an example, in my own constituency where the same type of thing happened, social services positions in Kugluktuk, the senior management position and the finance and administration position were deleted because of the anticipated amalgamation with the Kitikmeot Health Board. What they chose to do in my region was to offset those two PY reductions in Kugluktuk by reassigning staff functions from the headquarters location in Cambridge Bay to provide additional Pys in Kugluktuk to offset that.

So, as I said, it is a regional prerogative that they will work out at the regional level. I am sure that, in recognizing some of the losses in the honourable members riding in Baker Lake, that they will more than fairly offset it, whether it is through a move of administrative positions to offset the loss of management positions, or whether it is providing some additional programs to the community, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, Mr. Erasmus.

Question 55-13(4): Improvement In Mining Accidents With Arrival Of Mining Inspector

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see the minister for Renewable Resources is gone... I would like to ask a

question of the Finance Minister who is responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board. A couple of weeks ago I read in the paper about the chief mining inspector who had resigned and he had indicated in that article, which, I am not sure if it is true, of course, but I want to get clarification here, the mining inspector indicated that when he took on this job, mining accidents were quite bad and that they had improved quite a bit to the same level of the south.

I would like to ask the minister in charge of Workers' Compensation Board, if he could verify if this is true or not?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

I would like to remind the members that the minister does not have to confirm or deny any articles that are done through the media, through newspapers, so perhaps, you might want to rephrase your question, Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the minister in charge of the Workers' Compensation Board whether the accident levels in the mines in the NWT have improved since the previous mining inspector took his position?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 55-13(4): Improvement In Mining Accidents With Arrival Of Mining Inspector

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will answer the question this way. I think there has been a significant improvement in accident awareness and some of the preventative stuff with the WCB over the last year. I do not have the actual statistical information in front of me, but I am reasonably confident the comments made by Mr. Turner, who is the mine safety inspector, probably reflect on an improvement on the accidents in, I think he was talking specifically about, the mining industry.

I think that is due in part, if I may say, to more vigilance on the part of the government and, certainly, on the part of that division, when it was under Safety and Public Services, with a

powerful education and awareness program on the need for safety with the WCB. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral question, supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 55-13(4): Improvement In Mining Accidents With Arrival Of Mining Inspector

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that there are many people who feel that the accident levels are still too high. I would like to know if we are introducing anything new to further reduce the accident rates?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 55-13(4): Improvement In Mining Accidents With Arrival Of Mining Inspector

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct, we are moving with a mine safety committee that will be reviewing legislation and the regulations that lead to legislation. The mine safety committee is made up of people active in the industry both on the workers' side and on the employers' side. It is part and parcel of an overall program that has been underway for some time now with respect to improving mine safety, improving awareness about the need to limit accidents, et cetera.

So, there is a committee which, I believe, myself, the chairman and the minister responsible for WCB, appoints based on the recommendations of industry and the unions. It is my understanding, if my memory serves me correctly, that they are meeting sometime in early December to move progressively on reviewing the regulations that will surround the Act. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, Mr. Henry.

Question 56-13(4): Committee Approval Prior To Proceeding With Amalgamation

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier regarding the amalgamation of Public

Works and Services, Transportation and the Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, the Premier, yesterday in the House, stated that the amalgamation of those three departments would be completed in April 1999. In a letter, which was tabled as document 13-13(4), tabled on the 29th day of November, 1996 from the Premier regarding the subject of amalgamation he stated and confirmed a motion that was passed in this House and the end of the motion states further that the executive council not proceed with the amalgamation until a sessional discussion paper on the proposed amalgamation is tabled and approved in the Legislative Assembly. I also look at documents that are attached to that tabled document and it talks about a time table. I just want a confirmation from the Premier that in fact no continuation of amalgamation will proceed until the committees have the opportunity to review this document, report back to and approve it in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Henry, I must rule your question out of order since the rule states that a member may not ask questions on matters that are listed on the order paper for consideration at that sitting. We do have the discussion paper on amalgamation on the orders in Committee of the Whole. You could ask your question at that time. Oral questions, Mr. Roland.

Question 57-13(4): 20 Percent Recovery From Employees' Pay Cheques

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question at this time will be directed to the minister responsible for Finance. I would like the minister to tell me and the House what makes up the 20 percent recoveries that is taken off employees' cheques. What is included in that, when there are recoveries made on employees' cheques? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 57-13(4): 20 Percent Recovery From Employees' Pay Cheques

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to make sure I get this accurate because I know it is a sensitive issue understandably so. It is my understanding because I

would like to qualify it that way just in case I am incorrect which of course you all know really I am. My understanding is that the 20 percent that we deducted which is to recover vacation travel assistance taken by roughly about 40 percent of our employees is 20 percent of the net pay.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral question supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary To Question 57-13(4): 20 Percent Recovery From Employees' Pay Cheques

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister inform me what areas do they recover the 20 percent on. Understandably there would be vacation travel allowance. The retroactive of the agreement and there is some other things there. So, what makes up the 20 percent?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 57-13(4): 20 Percent Recovery From Employees' Pay Cheques

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I believe it was the VTA that was applied for under the collective agreement. Those that applied for the VTA prior to the union signing off the collective agreement. I believe that is what it was, the VTA. Now there are circumstances and maybe the member wishes to ask me this question, there are circumstances where there are hardship cases which we are prepared to respond to.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary To Question 57-13(4): 20 Percent Recovery From Employees' Pay Cheques

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the area of recoveries made on employees' pay cheques. Knowing that another policy that was probably developed with not much consultation with the lower people in the regions and communities that don't make \$60,000 to \$ 70,000 per year, and have families to provide for.

But will this government look at those individual cases where there is hardship in families. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

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Further Return To Question 57-13(4): 20 Percent Recovery From Employees' Pay Cheques

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to assure my honourable colleague in fact that is what we are doing now. If there are some particular instances in his constituency, I would be happy to address those. We recognize that particularly in the small communities there is a high cost of living and that when you take that kind of level of funding off it may cause a hardship. It was actually pointed out by other members like Mr. Picco and others.

So, if there are situations where there is a hardship factor, we will address these on one-to-one basis and try to ensure there is adequate disposable income available in that particular house so that they can continue to pay the bills and feed their children. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, Mr. Picco.

Question 58-13(4): Sole-Sourced Contracts

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seeing as it is the last sitting day for 1996, I want to return to the motion of May 13 on disclosure. I have a copy of the contract report for the quarter ending for 1996. Mr. Morin has a copy of the same book. And this question concerns sole-source contracts. Mr. Morin, tell me, on page 47 of the contract report that is in his hands now, if the amount for \$22,524.23 is a sole-source contract. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Premier, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 58-13(4): Sole-Sourced Contracts

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, on page 47 of the contract, the \$22,524.23 was for fuel tank construction, Colville Lake was to Ferguson, Simek, Clarke out of Yellowknife. That would be a design contract and as far as my understanding is, Mr. Speaker, that would not be a sole-source contract. All design contracts are let by DPW and are let to architectural firms throughout the north. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 58-13(4): Sole-Sourced Contracts

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Premier was the former Minister of the Department of Public Works and Services. So, he would know of course. On page 67, the amount for \$6,918.00. Can the Minister tell me is that a negotiated contract?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 58-13(4): Sole-Sourced Contracts

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you. Mr. Picco, on page 67 of this contract report for the third quarter fiscal year March 31, 1996, the amount is \$6,918.90. In the settlement of Rae Edzo, it is lab equipment. It is a purchase order, number 443769 out of Borite Chemicals Corporation. My understanding reading this document, that would not have been a public tender, it would have been a call for lab equipment and they would have made a local purchase through purchase order because the P.O. is in front of it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 58-13(4): Sole-Sourced Contracts

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it demonstrates that what Mr. Morin had earlier said in the House in public record that this book available for

\$9.00 anyone could find out if it was a negotiated or a sole-source contract. It took four ministers to figure that question out.

My supplementary question then to the Minister is and the Premier, is when will they publish....

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Picco. We have a point of order. Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The honourable member, I noticed he put his glasses on, that is good because he is asking me the questions. I am answering the questions. So the point of order, Mr. Speaker, is he leads the House to believe that it took four ministers to answer the question. It is only myself standing here to answer the question.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Again, to remind the members not to make trivial vague frivolous statements. The minister does not have a point of order. I would ask the member to use a better choice of words in his questions. Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 58-13(4): Sole-Sourced Contracts

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, just for a point of clarification, did you want me to ask the question again? Yes okay. Mr. Speaker, my question for the Premier of the Northwest Territories is this book that he has a copy of, how can the general public tell what is a sole-source and negotiated contract out of this book?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 58-13(4): Sole-Sourced Contracts

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This information is available to the general public for the price of \$9.00. The member raised this issue in the House I had committed to him at that time to take a look at it and I said at that time all the contracts are in here. All the general public have to do is purchase this book and

they will have a list of all the contracts and if they have any concern on any given contract they can contact the contracting department and find out. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 58-13(4): Sole-Sourced Contracts

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not standing up here again for vendettas or witch hunts and I do not want to try to get one person or another, I am asking for a disclosure. I am asking that this book, that the minister kept telling me could tell me what was negotiated or sole-sourced,

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so people would pay 9 bucks. I think we just demonstrated that you cannot tell by looking at it, so the people have to phone the department of this and the department of that. I will add, Mr. Speaker, if you just bear with me, because I think I should be given the opportunity here to bring this point forward, how many times do I have to ask these questions for public money spent for the public good? So, I will not go any further than to ask the Premier my supplementary question, which is, when will that book specifically identify what are negotiated, what are sole sourced and what are publicly tendered in the contract report of the first quarter of the fiscal year for 1996/97. I just cannot take it any more Mr. Speaker... when, when, when.

-- Laughter

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 58-13(4): Sole-Sourced Contracts

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, thank you, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the excellent question. A very clear question, and, as I said previously in this House, this book is available to the general public for \$9. The Member raised a very good concern saying that the general public could not go through this book and say,



this contract here has been negotiated, this one has been sole-sourced.

I raised the issue in the House previously, Mr. Speaker, that there was an issue with the Department of Justice on us doing that, I have requested the Department of Justice to find a way that we can do that so we can respond to the motion that was made in this Legislative Assembly by Mr. Ootes and Mr. Picco. The motion was very clear, that we are looking at a way that we can list sole-source contracts and negotiated contracts, as well, as list, for public information, the wages of all our employees.

We are going to do those two things because that is the wish of the House. So, we can make all of the employees who work for the Government of the Northwest Territories, we have committed that anybody making over \$60,000, their wage will be public. Mr. Todd is going to deal with the union on that issue and that may take some time. I am dealing with Justice to try to get this stuff done, and, hopefully, we will get it done before the next book comes out. We will try it, I made a commitment to members of this House and we are trying to get it done.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, is this your final supplementary? I will check with the Clerk here. When you have a supplementary, part of that is also part of the supplementary. If a member asks a question clearly and has not got a response clearly and he asks for clarification, that is still a supplementary. Oral questions, Mr. Steen.

Question 59-13(4): Staff Units For Sale In The Communities

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Todd and it is in relation to staff housing. Mr Speaker, for many months now we have heard the minister responsible for the Financial Management Board state that this government has certain staff units for sale in the communities. However, my constituents advise me that it is almost impossible to find out who is selling these units. Mr. Speaker, the last constituent who spoke to me on this told me that they have been advised that the government is taking a new approach now and, possibly, having a sector sell these units. Could the

Finance Minister clarify this for me? Who is selling the units?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 59-13(4): Staff Units For Sale In The Communities

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, first of all, thank you, Mr. Speaker, let me apologize to Mr. Steen and to his constituents. I concur with him that there has been a great deal of confusion as it relates to who is selling the staff housing and, if I may say publicly, I am very appreciative of the president of the NWTTA who has assisted us in the process.

The staff housing, we did, if I can step back a little bit, we did make a provision to extend the deadline for staff housing to, I believe, the end of December. There was some confusion as to who or how or what should sell the houses. We have sold, my understanding is somewhere around 70 percent of the housing units, particularly the individual ones, and we are fairly confident, despite a few of the glitches that you may have heard about over the last umpteen months, we are fairly confident that most employees will take advantage of this one-time excellent opportunity to purchase a home, particularly when mortgages are at an all time low since 1955, I believe.

The process we now have in place is, we have asked those who do it best, and it appears that we have not, and that is we have asked the private sector and real estate companies to move quickly to pick up the phone, talk to the individuals on an individual basis, get an offer, sign the deal, get it sold. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. Steen.

Supplementary To Question 59-13(4): Staff Units For Sale In The Communities

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe the units that are being talked about at this point in time, nobody is living in them. They are not units that staff are living in. I am referring to units that have nobody in them but I do not know, and my constituents do not

know, whether the cause of the deadlines that are extensions for units that people live in, does it also apply to all units? Are they all taken off the sale list at this point in time?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 59-13(4): Staff Units For Sale In The Communities

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Mr. Steen has caught me again. I guess it would be difficult to talk to the tenants if there are no tenants in the units. Where we have empty units and where tenants decide by the end of December, I have to wait until the end of December, that they do not wish to purchase their units, we will then sell those units to the communities. There will be some conditions attached to it, because we want to ensure that our employees whether they be butchers, bakers or candlestick makers, have some secure, affordable housing.

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So, it is our intention to go out at the community level to sell those units, and it could be to a variety of operations. It could be, as we have had discussions with the Gwich'in, in Mr. Krutko's riding, it could be the hamlet council in Mr. Ningark's riding, it could be a variety of individuals in your riding. So, right now I have to wait until the end of December to determine how many houses are left over which will include the empty ones plus the ones the tenants have not purchased. Then we will set up a process to ensure that your community has adequate opportunity to purchase those units. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 59-13(4): Staff Units For Sale In The Communities

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not understand. There are no units for sale before the end of December? Is that correct?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 59-13(4): Staff Units For Sale In The Communities

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, the process that we put in place was because we were looking at the tenants to purchase the units first, okay. So, we were looking at a process that would give the tenants an extended time period, and, primarily, if I may, and it is because of the teachers, because they were out for the summer and they came back and needed a little more time to purchase units, so we extended the time period to allow them to do that. So, after December the units that are not purchased, we will work with the communities to determine how these houses will be purchased.

I would have to check with Mr. Voytilla, but I would imagine the empty ones would be in the same category because we would not want to go out several times. It is my belief that in early January we will work out an arrangement with each community as to which houses are left over and who wishes to purchase them. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. Ootes.

Question 60-13(4): Work Done On Motion Of Disclosure

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to go back to the item on the disclosure motion that Mr. Picco spoke about. It has been seven months since this motion was passed. Could the Premier tell me if the Department of Justice been working on this for seven months?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 60-13(4): Work Done On Motion Of Disclosure

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member is well aware, the Department of Justice works on all the legislation for this government as well, and every issue that this government addresses has to go through the Department of Justice. They are very,

very busy. This is one issue that they are addressing as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions, supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 60-13(4): Work Done On Motion Of Disclosure

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I trust we have not been paying the lawyers for seven months to look into this situation, Mr. Speaker. However, my question would be, what seems to be the argument of why this cannot be released? It is my understanding that the federal government, B.C. and Ontario and other jurisdictions all have public disclosure of these items, and I am wondering, what seems to be the difficulty here? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 60-13(4): Work Done On Motion Of Disclosure

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I do not have the briefing out handy that I had from the Department of Justice. I did read the whole briefing though, out loud in this House, though, previously, and the concerns that they did have, I would not want to state anything unless I was sure, that I had it exactly right, word for word. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, oral questions, supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 60-13(4): Work Done On Motion Of Disclosure

**MR. OOTES:**

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I believe the Premier also committed to provide, in confidence, the list of negotiated contracts and sole sourced contracts. I believe he made that commitment in the last session, and that has not come forward. So I am wondering where we are going with this issue, Mr. Speaker, and I would like an answer to the question, is he going to

reveal whether we get a list of sole sourced contracts, and negotiated contracts. It is a very plain question.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 60-13(4): Work Done On Motion Of Disclosure

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As is normal, the member has his facts wrong again. That list of negotiated contracts and sole sourced contract, is given, through Mr. Todd, to Government Ops on a quarterly basis, and that is always done. Previously it was given to the finance committee. So, that information is also passed on, through Government Ops, I believe, to other members, on a quarterly basis. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 60-13(4): Work Done On Motion Of Disclosure

**MR. OOTES:**

I wonder if the Premier could tell me if that was for 1995-96?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

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Further Return To Question 60-13(4): Work Done On Motion Of Disclosure

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the previous Legislative Assembly, the 12th Assembly, we already agreed here, it is provided on a quarterly basis, four times a year, to the Government Ops Committee. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. Enuaraq.

Question 61-13(4): Funding For Clyde River Adult Education Centre

**MR. ENUARAQ:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct this question to the Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment, the Honourable Mr. Dent. In Clyde River, we have requested funding for an adult education centre. This amount is quite large. Perhaps the Minister of Education could answer my question, will the adult education centre be built? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 61-13(4): Funding For Clyde River Adult Education Centre

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Prior to the budget being tabled in this House, I can not make any commitments for the next year, but can say that the adult learning centre is in the five year plan. The problem is, the facility identified in the five year plan was seen by the community and the college as being too small for the needs of the community; I know the college and departmental officials have been working with the community to see if there is some way to address that size problem. I am confident Mr. Speaker, that we will be able to find the solution to the problem and am hopeful that we will see it resolved when the budget comes forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, oral questions, Mr. Barnabas.

Question 62-13(4): Administering Staff Houses From Arctic Bay

**MR. BARNABAS:**

(Translator) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct this question to the minister of Finance but, since he is not here, I will redirect it to the Premier. There are 16 government staff houses in Nanasivik, and they, have not been sold to date. I would like to find out, how they are going to be administered from Arctic Bay? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 62-13(4): Administering Staff Houses From Arctic Bay

**HON. DON MORIN:**

I take that question as notice. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Again, to remind the members not to mention the absence of members, or even to indicate by department, the absence of a minister. Mr. Barnabas.

**MR. BARNABAS:**

Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I already asked the question to the Premier.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Question 63-13(4): Deputy Prime Minister's Meeting In Greenland

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Deputy Premier. I would ask the Deputy Premier to advise the House, on his recent meeting in Greenland with Minister Irwin and others. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Deputy Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 63-13(4): Deputy Prime Minister's Meeting In Greenland

**HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I will do is, I will pass along information to the House from notes I gave to the Premier, in my report to him this morning. Over the last few days, I represented the Northwest Territories as part of a Canadian delegation to Greenland which was led by the Honourable Ron Irwin, Minister of DIAND. The delegation consisted of senior political and business leaders from Canada, and we were able to meet with our counter-parts in Greenland to share ideas and information.

I was very pleased to be part of a delegation which consisted of key Inuit political leaders from Canada, which included John Amagoalik, from the Nunavut

Implementation Commission, Josie Kusugak, from NTI, Mary Sillett, from ITC, Rosemary Kuptana, from ICC and Ambassador to Circumpolar Affairs, Mary Simon and Zebedee Nungak, from Makavik Corporation. During a meeting of Greenland cabinet, I was asked to chair discussions that ranged in topics from Greenland's Home Rule system, about the fiscal management and ours. We exchanged information on housing programs, education, government structures and their system of justice.

I also want to mention to the House during this trip to Greenland, on the way back I represented the GNWT in the signing of the Nunavut Unified Human Resource Development Contribution Agreement, which is of \$5 million value. This program will help provide the funding for a variety of education and training strategies, to assist the Inuit to be prepared to take advantage of employment opportunities that will be available with the creation of Nunavut.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Again, just by way of education to the members, I was not sure what the answer would be, so I allowed the response. When you are asking a question, a question must not require a lengthy or detailed answer. To

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remind the ministers, when you answer a question the answer must be brief, they must not be lengthy. Oral questions, Mr. Erasmus.

Question 64-13(4): Funding Eligibility From Business Development Fund

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Last month, in the third session, I asked the minister a question about contribution from the Business Development fund. My concern was that we do not have a bottomless pit of money, that we should make contributions to start businesses, which will grow and prosper, but that we not put ourselves in the position of having to keep businesses afloat with continuous contributions. I appreciate recently having received the response from the honourable minister which clarifies that the Business Development fund policy does not include a requirement to provide ongoing support to businesses.

However, I would like to ask the minister for some further clarification. If a business has received start-up funding from the Business Development fund, are they eligible to receive further funding in following years? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 64-13(4): Funding Eligibility From Business Development Fund

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, in actual fact, whether or not it has been habit, or whether on occasion, in the past, this has been done, I have no idea. So, it would be difficult to answer that question. However, on the surface, it would be safe to suggest that it is the intent of the program that we have to initiate businesses that, in the first instance, they should be viable businesses, except on the occasion of a NWT Development Corporation, which is intended to start up businesses with the sole purpose of trying to create some local economic activity, even though the prospects of return on those business initiatives are not very good.

In principle, the idea behind our programs, especially in the Business Development fund, to support businesses that look sound, that have been well organized, well researched to get off the ground, in cases where conventional finance institutions are not willing to take the risk. Generally speaking, we try to do it on a one time basis, hoping that everything that should be considered, and included, is included in the original package, and that we do our homework and make sure that things that will not require additional support are not overlooked, or left out, in the first instance.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 64-13(4): Funding Eligibility From Business Development Fund

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that generally we attempt to ensure that businesses that receive funding would not require further funding, but I can also assume from the minister's reply that there are

instances when they do require ongoing funding. So, I would like to know if the minister can provide me with a list of businesses which have received funding from the BDF, both for initial funding, and for ongoing funding. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 64-13(4): Funding Eligibility From Business Development Fund

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, while I will not want to deny information to any member of the House, as a minister responsible for a newly formed department that is presently over-loaded with work just trying to keep up with the day-to-day requirements of their jobs, I am not certain that I can add another request at this time, or give any assurance to the member that I could give it to him on a timely basis. As a member just said, why does it take seven months to get a response to a simple question? In some cases, it is simply because we are spending, as the Premier said on one occasion, up to 30 to 40 percent of our time in the departments responding to requests for information, meeting requests from constituents, and from members of this legislature.

So, having said that, no difficulty in trying to provide the information as the member requests unless there is some legal reason that prevents me from doing that, confidential reasons in serving clients, then probably the best avenue may be to meet with the member on an individual basis and try to narrow down specifically what is the information that is required. That would be my preferred route, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Question period is over. We will take a 15 minute break.

-- Break

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Chair recognizes a quorum. Item 7, written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to opening address. Petitions. Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Todd.

**ITEM 13: TBLING OF DOCUMENTS**

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, Tabled Document 16-13(4), the Workers' Compensation Board Corporate Plan, for 1997 to 1999. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, Tabled Document 17-13(4), the Annual Report of the Business Credit Corporation for the year ending March 31, 1996. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Tabling of documents. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a document, Tabled Document 18-13(4), coming from the Beaufort/ Delta leadership conference that happened in Inuvik on November 13, 14, 1996. The document is all the resolutions that were passed by the Beaufort/Delta leaders.

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**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Notice of motions of first reading of bills. Motions. Mr. Ootes.

**ITEM 16: MOTIONS**

Motion 4-13(4): Extended Adjournment

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to proceed with Motion 4-13(4) today, regarding extended adjournment.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The member for Yellowknife Centre is seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Do we have any nays? They are no nays. Mr. Ootes, you have unanimous consent.

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable member for Keewatin Central, that notwithstanding rule 4. That when this House adjourns on November 30, 1996, it shall be adjourned until Tuesday, January 21, 1997. And further, that any time prior to January 21, 1997, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council, and members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon, the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Your motion is in order. To the motion? Question has been called. All those in favour. All those opposed. All those abstaining. Motion is carried.

-- Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Motions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Motion 5-13(4): Formal Discussions And Response From The Federal Government On Constitutional Development For The Western Northwest Territories

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to proceed with motion 5-13(4) today, regarding formal discussions and response from the federal government on constitutional development for the western Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The member for Hay River is seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mrs. Groenewegen you have unanimous consent.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the Constitutional Working Group is seeking full public discussion on the Draft Constitution

Package by the people of the western Northwest Territories through a process of public consultation;

AND WHEREAS the principals contained in the Draft Constitutional Package are consistent with the principals adopted by the many constitutional processes carried out in the western Territory over the past twenty years;

AND WHEREAS the people of the Northwest Territories strongly supported the 1992 Charlottetown which provided for the constitutional recognition of aboriginal government;

AND WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories is a signatory to modern Aboriginal treaties which contain constitutional guarantees regarding the negotiation of Aboriginal government;

AND WHEREAS there is a desire in the western Northwest Territories to develop a system of territorial government after division which reflects a partnership of public government and aboriginal self-government;

AND WHEREAS the federal government will ultimately be called upon to make the necessary legislative changes to adopt the constitution approved by the people of the western Northwest Territories;

Therefore, I MOVE, seconded by the honourable member for North Slave, that the Legislative Assembly support and urges the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the Minister of National Constitutional Affairs to formally present the draft Constitution Package, Partners in a New Beginning, to the Federal Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. To permit formal discussion with the Federal Minister on Constitutional Development in the western Northwest Territories.

And further, that these discussions lead to a clear response from the federal government on the acceptability from a federal perspective of the principles and the design elements contained in the three different models contained in the draft constitution package.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Your motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I request a recorded vote? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Steen, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Barnabas, Mr. Enuaraq, Mr. Picco, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Roland, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Henry, Mr. Ng. Mrs. Thompson, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Kakwi, Mr. Morin, Mr. Todd, Mr. Arlooktoo, Mr. Dent.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

All those opposed please stand. All those abstaining please stand. The vote is 22 for, none against, and no abstentions either. This motion is carried unanimously.

-- Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Motions. First reading of bills. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to Item 13, tabling of documents.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The member for Yellowknife North is seeking unanimous consent to return to Item 13. Do

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we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Erasmus, you have unanimous consent.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table this document, Tabled Document 19-13(4), entitled Importance of Education. It includes a letter from myself to ordinary members, as well as some sample reports showing the need for education. Some of the reports cited are Time and Assistance, the Study of Patterns of Welfare Use in the NWT from 1991; also from Nunavut, the Unified Human Resources Development Strategy 1996; and the NWT Labour Survey 1989; and the Aurora College Corporate Plan;

A Snapshot of the Western NWT labour market 1996; and also from the Canadian Fact Book on Poverty in 1989. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Tabling of documents. Second reading of bills. Mr. Ng

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 3: Family Law Act

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the honourable Member from Aivilik that Bill 3, Family Law be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill consolidates and reforms family law legislation in the Territories by:

- defining spouse to include both married and common law spouses;
- permitting spouses, by domestic contract, to establish rules, other than those set out in the Bill, governing their respective rights and obligations during the relationship and on its breakdown;
- permitting persons who are not spouses to enter into parental agreements, a form of domestic contract, governing their respective rights and obligations in respect of a child;
- setting out the formal requirements of domestic contracts and the circumstances in which such contracts or their provisions may be disregarded or set aside by a court;
- setting out a person's obligation to provide support for his or her spouse and parents;
- setting out the objectives and considerations to be taken into account by a court in determining the amount, form and duration of support;
- setting out the procedures to apply for, vary and enforce support orders;
- recognizing that each spouse is entitled to an equal share of the value of their family property on the breakdown of their relationship, unless the court is satisfied that an equal division would be unconscionable;
- providing for the calculation that must be paid to the spouse who owns the lease valuable family property



in order to ensure an equal division of the value of such property;

- setting out the procedures to apply for, vary and enforce orders respecting a spouse's family property entitlement;

- recognizing that each spouse has an equal right to possession of the family home, regardless of the fact that only one spouse may have an interest in the home;

- protecting a spouse's possessory right in the family home from compromise by precluding the disposition or encumbrance of the home without that spouse's consent or permission of a court;

- providing for the making, variation and enforcement of a court order granting exclusive possession of a family home to one spouse in the appropriate circumstances;

- repealing the Matrimony Property Act.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr Ng. Your motion is in order to the principle of the bill. Question is being called. All those in favour. All those opposed. Motion is carried. Bill 3 has had second reading.

-- Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Second reading of bills. Mr. Ng.

Bill 4: Children's Law Act

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 4, Children's Law Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill consolidates and reforms the law respecting children in the Territories by:

- re-enacting the provisions, with minor changes, respecting status of children and the establishment of parentage now set out in the Child Welfare Act;

- allowing a court to order testing to determine paternity;

- requiring that issues of custody be determined in accordance with the best interests of the child concerned, with a recognition that differing cultural values and practices must be respected, and setting out factors that must be considered in determining a child's best interests;

- setting out who is entitled to the custody of a child and allowing a person entitled to custody to appoint another person to have any of his or her custodial rights or responsibilities;

- setting out procedures to apply for, vary and enforce custody and access orders;

- providing for the recognition of custody and access orders made outside the Territories and setting out in what circumstances a court in the Territories should or should not exercise jurisdiction to deal with applications for custody and access;

- setting out the procedures to apply for a guardianship order or an order respecting the disposition a child's property;

- allowing a guardian to appoint another person to be guardian for a limited period of time after the death of the appointer;

- setting out who is obligated to provide support for a child and the considerations to be taken into account by a court in determining the amount and form of support;

- setting out the procedures to apply for and vary child support orders.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, your motion is in order to the principle of the motion. Question is being called on this in favour. All those opposed. Motion is carried. Bill 4 has had second reading.

-- Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Second reading of bills. Mr. Ng.

Bill 5: The Adoption Act

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**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Bill 5, The Adoption Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this Bill reforms family law respecting statutory adoption in the Territories by:

- setting out the purposes of the Act, the paramount one being to promote the best interests of a child being adopted;
- setting out a test to assist courts in determining the best interests of a child and providing that the determination must be made with a recognition that differing cultural values and practices must be respected;
- allowing a step-parent to adopt a child of his or her spouse without requiring the spouse to adopt the child as well;
- allowing certain couples who are not married to adopt a child together;
- requiring the Director of Child and Family Services or an Adoption Worker to provide certain information to expectant parents, at their request;
- allowing a relative of a child, or the chief of the band of which the child is a member, to apply to the Supreme court for an order that would prohibit a parent from placing the child for adoption outside the territories;
- setting out how and when a consent to an adoption (by a parent, a child or the Director of Child and Family Services) may be revoked;
- allowing a judge to make an order respecting access to the child when making an adoption order;
- establishing an Adoption Registry in which the following information will be maintained:
  - the name of the adoptive child, the names of the natural, adoptive and any previous adoptive parents of the child and of the siblings and adoptive siblings of the child,
  - the records of the Director of Child and Family Services in respect of a child who has been adopted,
  - the personal information provided by the child, the natural and adoptive parents of the child, the grandparents and the siblings and adoptive siblings of the child;

- allowing an Adoption Worker to collect personal information from the following persons, which information will be maintained in the Adoption Registry:

- a natural parent, an adoptive parent and any previous adoptive parent of a child, if the parent consents,
- a grandparent of a child, if the parent and grandparent consent,
- the siblings, adoptive siblings or the adoptive child, if the parent consents (where the sibling or child is under 12 years old) or if the siblings or adoptive child consents (where the sibling or child is 12 years or older);
- allowing the Registrar of the Adoption Registry to disclose the information contained in the Adoption Registry and facilitate a reunion between children, parents, grandparents and siblings in the circumstances set out in the Bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Your motion is in order. To the principle of the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour. All those opposed. Motion is carried. Bill 5 has had second reading.

-- Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Second reading of Bills. Mr. Ng.

Bill 6: Child And Family Services Act

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the honourable member for Tu Nedhe that Bill 6, Child and Family Services Act be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this Bill reforms family law respecting the protection of children in the Territories by:

- setting out the principles by which the Act is to be administered, the paramount one being to promote the best interests, protection and well-being of children;

- setting out a test to assist courts in determining the best interests of a child and providing that the determination must be made with a recognition that differing cultural values and practices must be respected;
- defining "child" as a person who is under the age, or appears to be under the age, of 16 years;
- allowing the Director of Child and Family Services to enter into agreements to provide services to families to support and assist them in caring for a child, and agreements to provide services to children who are between the ages of 16 and 18 years, inclusive, and cannot live with their parents to support and assist them in caring for themselves;
- providing for the establishment of a committee, in respect of a child who has been apprehended or about whom an investigation has been made, to make an agreement setting out a plan of care for the child;
- specifying that a plan of care agreement may provide for, among other things, the residence of the child, support services for the child's home, counselling, the responsibilities of the persons who sign the agreement and support for the child;
- allowing a person having lawful custody of a child or, if the child has attained the age of 12 years, the child to require that the matter proceed to court rather than to a plan of care committee;
- setting out the procedure for bringing a matter before the court;
- setting out the orders that a court may make after a hearing, including orders to grant access to the parent or person having lawful custody of the child and to approve a plan of care for the child;
- setting out the procedure for obtaining an order from a court approving medical treatment that is necessary to preserve the life of a child and the criteria to establish when the director of Child and Family Services may, without such an order, authorize such medical treatment for a child who is apprehended;
- allowing a court to make an order for permanent custody of a child without finding the child in need of protection, where the child's parent delivers the child to a Child Protection Worker for the purposes of adoption;
- allowing orders placing a child in the temporary or permanent custody of the Director of Child and Family

Services to be extended from the time the child attains 16 year until the child attains the age of majority;

- allowing the Minister and one or more municipal or settlement corporations to enter into an agreement transferring responsibility for matters set out in the Act to the municipal or settlement corporation, designating a council of one of the municipal or settlement corporations that are parties to the agreement to act for all corporations subject to the agreement and establishing a child and Family services Committee;

- allowing, subject to regulation, municipal or settlement corporations that have entered into a community

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agreement to establish community standards to be used in determining the level of care adequate to meet a child's needs and whether or not a child needs protection;

- stating that information received under the Act is confidential, but may be disclosed in certain circumstances or on order of a court.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Your motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question is being called. All those in favour. All those opposed. Motion is carried. Bill 6 has had second reading.

-- Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Second reading of bills. Ms. Thompson.

Bill 7: Municipal Statutes Amending Act

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 7, Municipal Statutes Amending Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this Bill amends the Charter Communities Act, the Cities, Towns and Villages Act, the Hamlets Act, the Local Authorities Elections Act, the Property Assessment and Taxation Act and the Settlements Act to:

- enable municipalities to enter into community agreements with the government of the Northwest Territories to administer and deliver programs and services;
- provide municipal governments with broader by-law making powers to allow them to respond more effectively to local needs, such as the power to establish qualifications for taxi driver, the power to regulate devices capable of propelling projectiles and the power to appoint by-law officers to enforce specific by-laws;
- provide council members with greater protection against civil liability;
- enable hamlets and charter communities to borrow on a long term basis for land development where the general revenues of the municipal corporation are to bear no part of the cost of the developments;
- allow municipal corporations to collect arrears of charges levied for services that relate to real property in the same manner as arrears of taxes;
- provide an alternative process for the collection of tax arrears through tax sales;
- provide for a chief municipal electoral officer to oversee the conduct of municipal elections, to receive notices of improper conduct during an election and to make any necessary application to a judge in respect of an election;
- allow returning officers to establish mobile voting stations to permit persons who are physically incapacitated and unable to leave their place of residence to vote;
- clarify a number of procedural and interpretative difficulties in the various acts.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question is being called. All those in favour. All those opposed. Motion is carried. Bill 7 has had second reading.

-- Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Bills 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 have had second reading and accordingly stand ordered to a standing committee. Consideration in committee of the whole of bills and

other matters. Minister's Statements 1, 5, and 6, Tabled Documents 4, 5, 13 with Mr. Steen in the chair.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

I would like to call the committee to order. We have in consideration Minister's Statement 1-13(4), Premier's Sessional Statement; Minister's Statement 5-13(4), Division Planning; Minister's Statement 6-13(4), Western Constitutional Development; Tabled Document 4-13(4), Partners In A New Beginning; Tabled Document 5-13(4), Footprints 2, Second Comprehensive Report on the NIC; Tabled Document 13-13(4), Discussion Paper on Amalgamation of Infrastructure Department. How does the committee wish to proceed? Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I would recommend that we consider Tabled Document 4-13(1), Tabled Document 5-13(4), Member's Statement 5-13(4) and Member's Statement 6-13(4) together as one document, followed by Tabled Document 13-13(4).

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Committee agrees. Mr. Ootes, could we get some direction on Minister's Statement 1-13(4)?

**MR. OOTES:**

Do we want to report that the item is concluded, Mr. Chairman?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Does the committee agree then that this Minister's Statement, 1-13(4) is concluded?

**HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

We then move on to Minister's Statement 5-13(4), Division Planning, Western Constitutional Development; Tabled Document, Partners in A New Beginning; Tabled Document, Footprints 2. Does the committee wish to proceed? Are there any more

opening comments on these particular items? Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Yes, thank you Mr. Chairman. I believe yesterday, when we concluded, that a number of Members spoke on the division issue, and that we would hold our comments, both myself as chair of the division committee, and Mr. Antoine as chair of the Western Constitution process, until now. Mr. Chairman, we listened very carefully, not only yesterday, but in caucus earlier this week. Let me start by saying that it is our belief that division should be seen as an opportunity, not a problem. I think that is an important way in which to view it.

I would also like to start out by saying that our position as a cabinet on Footprints 2 has not been finalized. It is important for ordinary members or the public at large to recognize and to understand we have a clear process in place that will provide all members with an opportunity to comment on Footprints in the Snow 2, either through the ordinary members caucus, through the Government Ops Committee, and especially the Division Committee, and of course, as individual members. So there is a considerable amount of opportunity, to filter, if you want, your participation in the final response to the report. Once we finalize that response, hopefully by the end of

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December, if not before, then the Premier will advise both Mr. Kusagak and Mr. Irwin of the government's position on it, and the NIC.

I think it would be fair to say that, as a government and a division secretariat, we are pleased with their report, at least in our initial review. I think that the strong working relationship, at the staff level, has provided us with a more enhanced relationship as the process of this second report unfolded. I think that is an important point to make, Mr. Chairman. Yesterday I believe a number of the members indicated that this report contradicts, to some extent, what the GNWT is doing. I would suggest to you that this government will probably take the position, subject to your approval and, of course, the Premier's, that most of the report we will agree with. But, in any situation, there are a number of areas of disagreement. That is exactly what they are, disagreements, not contradictions.

Other members indicated that we must prepare for division, and we need to ensure that our plans reflect

it. I think what is important in this report that we have, and what was not in the previous report, is the clarity as it relates to how the structure of the government would come in to being. Clearly that was needed and clearly we now have that. We will be able to move reasonably quickly to incorporate some of the recommendations that the report implies.

It is important again, if I may, to repeat to everyone the position of the government, and that is we have to establish the implementation of two new governments, and it must be done sooner, rather than later. A number of members talked about their concern for staff, which is a legitimate concern. I think it is important to point out, again, the position of this government. We need to conclude a comprehensive staff transition plan that will lessen the economic impact of division. We need to encourage our people to relocate, allow for on-site training and the preparation that needs to occur.

We are very much aware, as are ordinary members, of our obligations and responsibilities to our staff, but the reality is, that on April 1, 1999, that there will be two governments in this part of the country. There will be two new bureaucracies in this part of the country. The transition of these two new governments, is absolutely essential if it is going to be done in an orderly and timely manner. Staff will be treated with respect, and appropriate steps will be taken to find alternative employment, perhaps, early retirement if it is required, and certainly, my understanding is, and our position is, the option to participate for those staff in the west that are not related to the new Nunavut government. We have made that clear on a number of occasions.

So, if I may, because it was a major concern to certain members of the House, I want to say again, it is our position to conclude a comprehensive staff transitional plan that will ensure two new governments are up and running, and it will require staff to move from west to the east. We must deal now, not just with the theory of division, but with the hard reality of establishing two governments. We all know how many days are left. We cannot deal with the theory of it. We have to get it on paper and, at some point, we have to reach some compromise, or some decision, to implement it. To say otherwise, is foolish. Costs are a critical factor, and in my role as the Finance Minister and as chair of the Division Committee, nobody recognizes it more than I do.

Many members have raised, both in caucus and in the House, their concern with respect to transitional,

incremental and the two new gross expenditure bases. There is a process in place now, to ensure an east/west participation, and we are working towards, particularly the western participation, and I would encourage all of us to come to a quick conclusion to whom should represent the west as we move towards the negotiating table with Mr. Martin. I have said numerous times that I will be discussing this matter with Mr. Martin, hopefully, sometime this month, where we will be able to determine, hopefully, timing, terms of reference, the participation and the process to move forward to conclude two new formula financing agreements. Also, to try to identify, as it states in the Nunavut Act, reasonable incremental costs. We must move quickly on the issue of costs, because at the end of the day, no matter what structures do unfold there will be a requirement for incremental costs both, and let me say it now, clear, east and west and it will be my job, and my role, to impart that to Mr. Martin in my future meetings.

Some members have expressed concern, I believe, Mr. Erasmus, about the CCON table, that is the co-ordinating committee of officials, and I agree with him. Mr. Antoine and myself have met on this issue, and we intend to correct that to move some other officials who are directly involved in the western constitutional process to the table with respect to the east and vice versa.

I will use these words deliberately, because I think it is important. It is an issue that I have been raising on a consistent basis, some member, I believe used the term, and I do not use this to dramatize, but just to demonstrate, there could be a bloodbath. I think what is essential as we move forward in the division of the territories, that we find some third party dispute mechanism that we are all comfortable with for division and the divorce, if you wish to put it that way, is an amicable one. I am a strong advocate of third party dispute mechanisms because, no matter what our best intentions are, there undoubtedly will be areas in which gridlock occurs.

I think as we look at division, and we have discussed at some length, as I hear everybody talking about it in the responses we have, and that is, I believe Mr, Roland stated yesterday, it is vitally important we remember why we are doing this and that is for the betterment of territorial residents. I would hope, at the end of the day, that we would all remind ourselves of that on a consistent basis, so that we avoid getting into public or private squabbles as it relates to the assets and liabilities. This should be, in my opinion, a

technical exercise which requires some political direction.

So, Mr. Chairman, if I may, our initial response, if I could summarize, to the Footprints in the Snow is a positive one. There will be the ability for each and every one of you to provide us with, through the different mechanisms I earlier outlined, your contribution to and response to the report. It is the desire of this government and the Premier to respond in a timely manner, and that time is the end of December, that is what we have committed to, and, hopefully, our response will be reflective of many of your concerns.

I would like to end it by reminding everybody of Mr. Morin's comments, he has said on a number of occasions and must take full credit for it, that April 1, 1999 should be a reason to celebrate for both territories, with your support and, more importantly, cooperation, we will. Thank you.

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**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Comments from the members. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JAMES ANTOINE:**

Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on a debate that is going on in regards to Footprints 2, and particularly in regards to Partners in a New Beginning document, a draft constitutional package that was recommended by the constitutional working group of the western caucus of this Legislative Assembly and the aboriginal summit, the comments that I heard yesterday on the constitution itself, were that there are some areas where we need to work and concentrate and to give direction here. In the motion that was unanimously passed today, it gives further direction to myself and my colleague, the Minister of National Constitutional Affairs to present this document to the federal minister and to permit formal discussions with the federal minister on the constitutional development in the western NWT.

These discussions will lead to clear response on the part of the federal government in regards to looking at the principals of this document and then design elements that are in the documents as well. We received good direction today, for that I would like to thank the members of the Legislative Assembly for

their support, unanimous support, to continue on this process.

Since we began this process formally in the Spring or June, we have undertaken a big task here to try to develop something new and innovative here in the west. There is commitment from this Legislative Assembly. There is commitment from Aboriginal leaders in the communities. I think there is a lot of support out in the communities although they are not as vocal as some of those I have heard expressed. That is what we expected Mr. Chairman, that the debate that has already begun over this document. We knew that there was going to be some strong opinions on all sides. We were hoping, and expecting that with the criticisms and negative responses we heard from those who are making those kind of responses, we are hoping as Northerners, we will all work together to try and come up with something that will be acceptable to all of us.

We have heard many times from mainly Aboriginal communities in the North in which there are a large majority of people that have lived here for many years that this present system is not really acceptable to them. Similar to what the people in Nunavut had said before division. And that was one of their main reasons for division is that this system is not really reflecting the way they want to govern themselves. And that was one of the reasons for division.

We in the West supported that and continue to support that process. So, in that regard, I have been an optimist that we are all living in the North here together and that is the reality, and we have a lot of common areas where we can work together. There are differences of opinion in some of the areas, however, we should continue to work together to try come up with something that is acceptable to the majority of the people. I am still quite hopeful and optimistic that this will happen.

For those people who have taken a very negative and strong approach against this process, I would only say that along with the criticism, they should also offer their own opinions on how it could work. Rather than being totally against this process. That is the intention of this process here.

So, along with the continuing of the consultation process, we continue to work with the federal officials to try to determine the adequate approach to the funding question for this process. And that looks like more promising as we deal with them, at the time, the motion today directs us to engage the federal

government to engage the principles of this document rather than the specific elements that are contained in some of the models that were discussed in these documents.

So based on this approach, we feel that we could get the federal government to take a position on what they would accept and what they would not be able to accept in such a document. In this way then we will have a better understanding of what the possibilities are as we develop this package. For that to happen, we need to approach the federal government as soon as we can to begin discussions on this area here.

So in that, this process here, in the communities, people are beginning to talk about this document and we need to have adequate funding from this government, and the federal government to undertake the work to go into the communities to see what the people are saying about this document here. Perhaps, after a few months of that process, we would have a good indication of what is acceptable to the majority of the people in the communities in the new document for the Northwest Territories.

And all along, since this debate happened publicly, people that I have been talking to are saying that the majority that I have talked to are saying that this is a necessary, this is a good process. I am fortunate enough to be in different meetings in the north. I went to the Beaufort/Delta meeting. I heard there that there is support for such a process and that the process should continue on. That gives really positive type of indication to me that there is support out in the communities and in the regions for following through with this process.

Some of the comments that I heard yesterday during the debate was the majority of it was focused on the Footprints 2. And the comments that I have heard is that there is a relationship between what we are doing and the development of the constitution. And at the same time looking at the contents of the recommendations from Footprints 2 that was just released here by the Nunavut Implementation Commission. And there is a real need now for us here in this Legislative Assembly to look at how we in the west could be more involved in the division of the Northwest Territories. And the creation of two territories.

We have to be involved in the whole area of looking at the assets and the liabilities. We have to look at the incremental costs and be fully involved in the development of the financing formula agreements that

will be in place here prior to this division. So there is a commitment by this government here to work with the western caucus and perhaps other organizations in the west to come up with some sort of mechanism here to work on this area here.

My colleague, the Chairman of the Division Secretariat, Mr. Todd was just mentioned that we in the west we have to determine for ourselves whom would be involved in this whole process. And I guess it is up to us in the west here in the western caucus and with the people in the west to determine what this forum is going to take and how we are going to get involved in this process towards division. I think it is a positive move. I think up to this point in time, we have been in

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government here for one year now and with our portfolios we have been here for a year and a lot of things have happened within a year and perhaps we should have got into this one here as soon as we got into our portfolios and picked up our duties as MLAs.

However, we are getting involved now and we have to try to work together both east and west for the next number of months that are remaining before division to try and make sure all these three key areas are dealt with in a very positive way so that we will not have confrontation type of approach between the east and the west and once we discuss these things. And I think the main point I want to make is that I have worked with my colleague, Mr. John Todd here to discuss these areas here and the CCON table where the bureaucrats are dealing with the division question. There are going to be people working in the Aboriginal Affairs that are going to be getting involved in this whole process. So that we are more aware of what is going on in this whole process that has been in place here for looking at the division of assets and liabilities and the whole look at the manpower issue in the east and west.

Just to say that this perhaps might have been an oversight, it is an oversight, during the presenting of this Partners and new beginning document, Mr. Chairman, 120, when there was no content in the presentation of the Inuvialuit. You made a comment yesterday that there was no reflection at all of the Inuvialuit culture in the presentation last fall. I would like to apologize for that oversight, and want to make sure that sort of thing does not happen again here in the west as we work on this together.

Furthermore, I ask for the translation into Inuktitut of this document, I think that is a very good suggestion and I think we should do that. With that, I would just like to thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Before I go on, I would like to remind the members that there is a ten minute limit to speak at any one time. Are there any more member statements. Mr. Ootes?

**MR. OOTES:**

Mr. Chairman, I have a couple of questions, I wonder if I could present?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Yes, Mr. Ootes, go ahead.

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will start with, with Footprints 2 and I will cover that area first. Yesterday, I spoke about my concerns regarding the staff. I have a couple of questions in that regard.

I think this is a good opportunity to present our view point to the cabinet who will be formulating the reply to Footprints, and I appreciate Mr. Todd's comments that we will have further input into that, which I think is necessary for all to pay attention to. I appreciate that this has to be done certainly by the end of December, and I think, initially the cabinet was hoping to have that out of the way by mid-December. I feel very strongly that the members do need to, at this particular time, put forward their viewpoints because the division issue is the most important issue facing the Northwest Territories. It is an extremely important one. The creation of the two territories changes the whole face of the territory in many ways, and the area that it has the most dramatic impact on is the staff. We have people that have been with the territory government for 5, 10, 15, 20 and some more years.

They have provided a lot of good service and are continuing to provide that good service. They have experience to be able to help both governments. But they have no job security. There are no assurances from what Mr. Todd said in either case in east or west. That has to be an area which I am certainly very concerned about. I wonder, if the minister, as Chairman of the Transition Committee, could perhaps answer, or address or respond to the following question for me. Will the Government of the



Northwest Territories consider negotiating a comprehensive personnel agreement?

I know he mentioned they are working on a comprehensive staff transition plan, but would he look at doing a personnel agreement with the interim commissioner of Nunavut which would provide the existing government employees whose jobs are entirely or in part transferred to Nunavut to have the first priority for employment? And that similarly the staff at the regional and community levels in Nunavut will be offered appointment to comparable positions with Nunavut?

Further, that those employees whose jobs are eliminated because of the creation of the two territories, that priority status be given to those to be given comparable public service opportunities with our government. That is my first question. I will lead into a second question after, or do you wish me to carry on with my second question?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. That was a long question. To whom was it directed?

**MR. OOTES:**

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try to keep the answer short, because I know time is of the essence and we are concluding today at 6. We fully understand the concerns that have been addressed on a consistent basis by Mr. Ootes, Mr. Henry and others. We are very appreciative of their position. But I think it is important to say, out loud and clear, division is a reality. It means there will be, unfortunately, some job loss. I think it is important to say that. Their constituency should hear and they have some obligation to try and send that back.

However, as I said earlier in my opening comments yesterday, we are trying to develop and recognize a transitional document that will provide our staff that may be Nunavut-bound, if you want staff that who be responsible for the new phase in Nunavut hopefully with first opportunity. Our position has been consistent. In fact, I believe the NIC -- I cannot speak

for them but what I have read -- is also of a similar position, that is, existing staff in Nunavut have to get first option at the jobs. Secondly, that those that are in the west or headquarters, if you want, that are Nunavut related. It is the same position. We fundamentally believe not only morally but legally that there is some obligation to the Nunavut government to give these people the opportunities. Also, I mean, just on the pure grounds of ensuring that the machinery of government runs, there is no question, we require that level of knowledge and understanding. It is our intent to advance that position on a consistent basis over the coming months.

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I would answer the question with respect of the interim commissioner, once the interim commissioner is appointed, and we have seen what letters of direction and instruction he gets, I would be prepared to commit today to institute discussions with him, to see if he or she would agree to what Mr. Ootes has suggested. I want to say again, the position of this government is to try to ensure that our civil service is protected. Those that do not get jobs, we will deal with them in a fair and consistent way, the same as we have on the lay-off issues, that is, earlier retirement, severance packages, new job creation, training, et cetera. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Todd for your comments on that. My second item was with respect to transitional arrangements, there may be areas that can be shared between the two governments, and I spoke on that yesterday. There may be organizations that can be shared between the two governments. I would ask the minister if he could comment on my comments of yesterday with regards to those particular areas. Will the minister look at a comprehensive transitional plan? He stated it was a staff plan but perhaps he would tell me if he will also look at a comprehensive transitional plan to address the transitional areas that would in the end be beneficial for both territories. I am speaking of shared areas. For example, we have the Kitikmeot boarding home in Yellowknife, Stanton Hospital and the Kitikmeot will no doubt wish to continue with those items. It is important that we address those areas. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me start by saying, I did say in my opening address yesterday and I fundamentally believe it. One, we cannot wait until April 1, 1999. It is incumbent upon this government, east and west to develop at least some functions of government so that we have two governments functioning on April 1, 1999.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

So, from a philosophical point of view, that is where we are heading. From a practical point of view, as a pragmatic politician it is not conceivable, at least in my mind, that you have two governments, wave a magic wand, in place. There is going to be some staging of the services, and the level of government, et cetera. We have still got to discuss formal financing, et cetera. Many of us have mentioned that, in fact, we are only 28 months away from it. From a practical point of view, I would hope we can do as much as we can to ensure there is a reasonable government up and running. I do not think we will do it all, obviously. Which leads me to the joint sharing of services, whether it is the Kitikmeot boarding home facility, whether it is correctional facilities, whether it is the Stanton Hospital, et cetera, I would think that these arrangements from a practical perspective right now, will probably continue.

However, I qualify it by saying I cannot make any commitment on this issue, because it will be a new government that will be in place. But from a pragmatic point of view, with the last 20 plus years we have used the correctional facilities, for example, in Yellowknife; the Kitikmeot people have used the Stanton hospital -- there may be some changes, I do not know. It would not be politically correct for me to say what a new legislator is going to do. I am just saying as a pragmatic person it would seem to me that it will be phased and perhaps if there is some cost-effective reasons for it or political reasons for it or whatever, that it will probably continue. But that will be up to the two new governments to make bilateral arrangements with each other. I suspect because we are so short of time there will be a requirement for

some bilateral arrangements that may be permanent, that may be phased, et cetera in the delivery of services, as Mr. Ootes has suggested. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Mr. Chairman, my final comment and question is with respect to Partners in a New Beginning. I appreciated Mr. Antoine's comments on it and I think he emphasized there is a need to continue to work on developing a constitution. I think we are all aware that the main proposal in Partners in a New Beginning has extreme difficulties being accepted by certain numbers of people. By the same token, there were two other proposals in that document that can perhaps be fleshed out further and discussed further. I do have a question for Mr. Antoine. Could he just briefly indicate what the schedule may be of the Working Group with respect to public input and public consultation?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JAMES ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Constitutional Working Group has a work plan that we would like to follow. But first of all, we have to secure funding from the government of the Northwest Territories as well as the federal government. Like I said earlier, our officials are meeting and hopefully they will have some sort of decision in the next little while, but in the meantime the work plan as set out is not really firm yet.

We hope to have consultation process to go into the communities in the next few months. Originally, we were hoping to go and do consultation process to the month of March, April in that vicinity. Then, redraft the constitution so that it will be acceptable for some sort of ratification process, perhaps a plebiscite by June. That was the original intention, but things are not firm in the work plan. As we go along, we become more flexible sometimes with time constraints, financial constraints and we may have to readjust the time frame so that the conclusion of this process by ratification process may be as late as in the fall, maybe October next year. These are the different time frames we are looking at the present time to carry on the work. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Questions or comments on the four items on the agenda. Does the committee agree that deliberations on item Minister's Statement 5-13(4) Division Planning, Minister's Statement 6-13(4): Western Constitutional Development, Tabled Document 4-13(4): Partners in a New Beginning, and Tabled Document 5-13(4): Footprints 2 Second Comprehensive Report of the NIC are concluded.

**HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Very well. We have only one item left on my agenda. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

I recommend that we proceed with the item left on the agenda, Mr. Chairman.

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**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Does the committee agree we proceed with Tabled Document 13-13(4): Discussion Paper on Amalgamation?

**HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Over the past six months, the government has raised the possibility of amalgamating the NWT Housing Corporation and the Departments of Public Works and Service, and Transportation. Ordinary members have serious concerns about this possible amalgamation. In our previous session, we passed a motion in the House to ensure there was full consultation and support of the members for the amalgamation before it proceeds.

Ordinary members of this House met this morning to discuss the paper tabled yesterday. We have a number of concerns. Other members will probably discuss these items in full detail. However, I wanted to give a general overview of some of the issues. The government's paper mentions taking into consideration changes necessary for 1999. However,

the proposed structure is not consistent with the structure being proposed for Nunavut in Footprints 2.

In 1989, the government felt there was sufficient justification to divide the department of Public Works and Highways into two departments, the Department of Public Works and the Department of Transportation. Less than 10 years later we are putting them back together again. The motion passed in this Assembly directed that the amalgamation not proceed until a paper on the amalgamation is tabled, and approved, in the Assembly. However, in the covering letter from the Premier, the final paragraph indicates that the Premier announced the decision to amalgamate. It also says that the plans must be completed by April 1st, 1997. This is certainly not a letter indicating that there is any room to discuss whether the amalgamation should occur.

Ordinary members are only being offered an opportunity to comment on the mandate. In any discussion paper on the amalgamation members are expecting strong reasons and explanations for why it is necessary. The paper tabled is very broad and does not provide sufficient rationale for making this major change. It is not the sessional discussion paper members are expecting. Members are aware that employees are being told that there is a possibility that departments will amalgamate and, some members understand, that this has been communicated to employees in written form.

To introduce the air of uncertainty for our employees who have already been through the difficulties of budget reductions, is unacceptable. The Premier has assured this House that no decision will be final until the amalgamation is approved by the Assembly, however, members are well aware, through their constituents, that there is preparatory work going on.

While, in theory, things can be stopped at any point, we are, unfortunately well aware, that it is difficult, or impossible, to stop the wheels of government process once they are in motion. These are some of the key points ordinary members raised this morning related to the proposed amalgamation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. I have Mr. Krutko, Mr. Picco and Mr. Enuaraq in that order.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In response to the amalgamation of the departments, I just want to make it clear that, my view, as the member representing the Mackenzie Delta, is that we have been here for a year, this amalgamation was discussed in regards to the overviews that we did last year. It is also on the document that we accepted in this House that we will be looking at the possibility of that amalgamation. We will have an opportunity to discuss it.

In the case of the Mackenzie Delta, the community that I represent, there is a real question of doubt in their minds about how government operates. You have infrastructure, which consists of Public Works who have their own garage, a maintenance office, vehicles and, take care of a few buildings. Then you have the Housing Authority, which takes care of the housing units, and they have a garage, a maintenance shop, equipment, and also you have the hamlet council who has a garage, and equipment and, also, they take care of their responsibilities in the community in regards to buildings and structures.

Somehow, there has to be a real need of coordinating these efforts so that you do not have people who are trained and deal with specific areas in regards to maintenance of buildings, operating equipment and taking care of the day-to-day operations of the water treatment plant in regards to the hamlet, the recreation facilities and, also, the maintenance of the roads. Then you have another department, the Housing Corporation, whose sole responsibility is to maintain housing units on behalf of the Housing Corporation.

So, we have to somehow take a look at it in the context of who are these departments there to serve and what the cost is of maintaining and operating these different departments. Yes, I agree, that it has to be looked at but it has got to be done in such a manner that we do take into account the individuals in the community that do work for these different departments that are going to be amalgamated and how those individuals could be reallocated in consideration of saving those jobs that are in the communities that are few compared to the other centres in the regional centres versus the head office, usually in Yellowknife and other locations.

Also, this was a measure we were looking at in terms of saving money, especially in these days of financial restraint and the deficit, we do have to find a new way of doing government better. I think we have to allow this process to happen but it has to be done in a coordinated fashion with input from the regular

members through committee structures and, also, through the community empowerment. Allowing them to take over responsibilities such as the housing authorities, through public works, through the hamlet offices, through the bank offices and look at the possibility of allowing those communities to do things that could be more productive and also a reasonable way of operating small communities where you are talking 500 or 600 people, where you are talking sharing the resources that are there.

Instead of splitting up the departments where they are responsible for a small portion of infrastructure in the community and another group is responsible for another portion of that community. We have to look at amalgamating these groups so it serves the people of that community best. That is my view, that we have to look at it in that context and not look at it in the context of how many people are going to be in the head office or how much it is going to cost. I think we

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have to look at the cost factor, and also, the economic viability of how this is going to happen. Thank you.  
Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as some of the members have already stated, the amalgamation issue has been first and foremost since it was brought up for a topic several months ago. Like most of the members here, I expected the discussion paper to be tabled and given some debate. After considerable prodding it was documented and tabled yesterday and I do not think it gives us enough time to fully debate the merits of the amalgamation plan. For example, Mr. Chairman, some communities have regional housing offices in their smaller communities which provides much employment. Would those offices be closed down and those people be out of work?

In my riding, where I have the three regional offices of Transportation, Housing Corporation and Department of Public Works and Services, we might expect to see serious downsizing, reductions and lay-offs. I want to fully be able to debate and be briefed on this area before anything occurs so that I am properly

representing the constituency where these lay-offs will occur.

I do not think we have enough time to properly do that because when the budget comes down in January it will be a major component of the deficit reduction plans of this government to do an amalgamation and, thus, we will be in a fait accompli situation.

I also note that in the discussion paper tabled yesterday and in the tabled document, there would be a process and an opportunity to involve all stakeholders. I would like to know what type of consultation with the stakeholders is going to be done. What is meant by extensive consultation? I am still unsure about that area, so I look forward today to hearing some more general comments from the members and then, some direct questions to the ministers involved in the amalgamation process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. You directed a question to Mr. Morin.

**MR. PICCO:**

Or Mr. Arlooktoo. My question is, the work plan calls for extensive consultation as part of the amalgamation process, does he want to answer the questions now or just do general comments, Mr. Chairman?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Well, it is time for general comments, Mr. Picco. I will give you the opportunity later to ask questions. I have Mr. Enuaraq, Mr. Miltenberger and Mr. Erasmus, in that order.

**MR. ENUARAQ:**

(Translated) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make some comments on this issue, on the amalgamation of the departments of DPW and Housing Corporation. Last year we started the process. When we got elected I have not seen a number of priorities that we established and I have not seen a lot of the changes that we proposed for instance the Public Service Act was changed and the provisions that were changed had to do with positions and when we are amalgamating the three departments how many employees are going to be cut in these three departments?

We had said when we first were elected that we were told that we had a deficit and that we will have to try and cut this deficit and for this reason, I would not like to see employees being cut. If these departments are going to be amalgamated I believe that they will be cutting some employees' positions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Enuaraq. I have Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a few general comments I would like to make mainly to outline the concerns that I have on amalgamation. They are based on a years experience now as an MLA, a little over a year, and all the change and restructuring we have gone through as a government. I would like, before I could support an amalgamation, I want a very clear idea of what the structure is going to look like, not only at the general headquarters level, but at the regional and area level, I want a very clear idea of the location of offices, what the cuts are going to be.

I would be strongly recommending that we clearly indicate in whatever plan we are putting forward, that we recognize and try to build upon some of, what I think are the mistakes we have made in dealing with employees and communicating what is happening. When I think of RWED right now there are employees still sitting there since August with their fate undecided getting pay cheques, but with no clear job to do. I think we have to show that we have learned from that. We have been telling people that we have been learning as we go, so I hope that whatever plan is there that it will clearly lay that out. Communication is going to be critical and I recommend that be clearly outlined as well.

So, I realize that what we were given is a general overview, so as the details flesh out those are some of the key concerns that I have and I will be waiting with great interest and I will be scrutinizing very carefully. I want to make it very clear that I want to encourage the government to make sure that they honour the commitment that there will be no work done on amalgamation until we have discussed it in this Assembly and that they have approval of the Assembly. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Erasmus, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Barnabas, in that order. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that Cabinet has been working under the wrong assumption. They seem to feel that amalgamation has been approved and that all we want to do is comment on their work plan. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Government went ahead with dismantling Personnel and amalgamating Renewable Resources, Economic Development and Tourism and Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, in to one department without it ever having been discussed in this House and formally approved by all the members.

Cabinet knows that was a problem that we had discussed and that we were trying to do away with. Ordinary members have in no way approved amalgamation and are not looking for a work plan that we can give advice and comment on before Cabinet proceeds with amalgamation. What we are looking for are strong reasons and rationale why this amalgamation should occur. That is the type of discussion paper that we are looking for and that is the reason why we are here today,

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having had to table this very broad and varied document that is very, very insufficient.

In the Premier's comments yesterday, on page 107 of the transcript he indicated that "Cabinet has approved a work plan for amalgamation of these departments. I have sent that work plan to the government operations committee. Government operations will I am sure have a lot of good suggestions and advice on the amalgamation of those three departments." That is not the plan Mr. Chairman.

This House should approve that amalgamation. We do not want to just give advice and suggestions on the forgone conclusion that amalgamation will occur. Also, it seems as though lay-off notices are being sent. In the response, written response to Mr. Henry, the Minister of Finance indicated that some employees may receive notice of lay-off prior to the approval of the budget. Because the provisions of the collective agreement entitle the employees to a 90-day lay-off notice. These notices will have to be sent out over the next several months to ensure that all aspects of the budget can be implemented on April 1, 1997.

Mr. Chairman, it is not up to the Finance Minister or the Premier or anybody on Cabinet to be sending out lay-off notices prior to the approval of that budget. If the budget has not been approved, they have no business sending out these termination notices. Do those termination notices say that you may be laid off? If it says that, then I do not think that complies with the 90-day lay-off period that is required in any event.

I think that it is unacceptable for this government to be sending out lay-off notices in the hopes that something is going to be approved. Are we as this Legislature being treated as a rubber stamp? Does the government feel that we are here just to rubber stamp their decision and that we have no minds? I certainly hope not. I take strong exception to that. As I said before, I expect and I know the other members expect strong rationale and reasons why this amalgamation should occur. We do not want to be expected to comment on a work plan, when we may not even approve of the amalgamation in the first place. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I believe there are no more questions. I will ask the minister, do you want to respond? We have decided we all make general comments and come up with the response later. I have Mr. O'Brien, Barnabas and Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. O'Brien.

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we have somewhat of a general consensus by the ordinary members as to the concerns regarding the possible amalgamation. Some of the questions I have are in relationship to the fact that we really do not know what is going to happen to the employees as far as lay-offs. In my case for example in Arviat where there is a regional housing office located, we do not know what is going to happen to that particular office. There was the possibility of three PY's being transferred from Rankin Inlet sub-office to Arviat. That has been on hold. So, that is another issue that has not been dealt with yet.

I have great concern. It is difficult to deal with this when you really do not have the facts on the matter. The other issue is that this government has been saying over the last week or two that we support the Footprints 2 document in-so-far-as that they have no intention of interfering in any way with the structure of the government and how they want to set themselves up. Well, this for example flies in the face of what

Footprints 2 is stating and what they wish to see. So I think there a number of things that we have to get more information on before we can debate this any further in an effective manner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. We are discussing the decision paper on the amalgamation of infrastructure department. Mr. Barnabas.

**MR. BARNABAS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a brief comment on this matter. As a government we agree to transfer some responsibility to the communities. If we amalgamate these three departments, I believe the funding for taking responsibility for the communities will be less than if we amalgamate these departments. I also have a concern on the employee cuts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. The honourable member for Hay River, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, we covered a number of concerns I had in my member's statement today with respect to the process that this amalgamation seems like it is following, the program that we are following. This concern about process as the government knows is not an isolated situation. I have heard these same concerns voiced over several other initiatives this government has put forward.

I will say as an ordinary member I do not feel I am given ample opportunity to discuss and consider the options before us. Yet the thing still goes ahead. Even when something does get referred to a committee, many times we make what we think are very strong comments and good input only to see the next step of the initiative. I am sure most of the people in cabinet have sat on the ordinary members side, as you can understand this is very frustrating to us as ordinary members.

I understand how the system works. I understand how the committee system works. It is good in a sense. The stuff comes from the government. We have a chance to look at it in committee but we are bound in that committee by confidentiality and we do not always get to see what is going on in other people's

committees. So we focus on the departments that are before us. But all too often I feel we turn around and see progress on stuff and maybe summaries of committees is only advisement to Cabinet and the government, and maybe they do not have to take what we say seriously, but if at that level of the process we cannot get our point across, well then the only other forum available to us is to bring our concerns out here in the public on the floor of the House. That is why I am pleased there was a strong commitment by the government to bring the amalgamation document for full debate.

I do not know when that debate was anticipated to take place. The time lines are a little bit curious to me on when they were suggesting that it was going to happen. Considering that there is reference in several documents to the fact that it was going to all be implemented by April 1, 1997. So, I am not exactly sure of what the government had in mind in terms of our opportunity to debate that in the House.

There has been feed back from committees. I mean it is not for public consumption but I have summaries of committees where they are looking forward to detailed plans. When we

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say detailed plans, we are talking about rationalization. The government is a business. And I don't think the ordinary members are dull, but if no one can make a presentation to us that is concise enough that we can understand, that outlines details on what are the upsides, downsides, costs, savings, the structures that have been put in place, what is the rationalization for this. I mean draw us a picture, draw us a big picture, draw us a small picture at community level, exactly how it will work. How the department sees it actually coming out to work in real life. That is the kind of stuff that we need.

If we do not have that, we do not want to be swept along in an initiative that we are not sure of. It is a moving thing and we have to have a significant role to play in that, otherwise we are going to be very frustrated and you are going to be listening to a lot of complaining and maybe more serious things than that.

I have concerns even on basic issues like how do you mix a corporate entity like the NWT Housing Corporation with departments? What are the structural differences in those two entities that might affect them in being put together into one

department? Are we going to amalgamate them and then find out that the Housing Corporation just operates as an independent arm of a larger department or what is involved?

So, we have, I think, legitimate questions and we do not want them to be breezed over and we do not want things happening that will cause difficulty in reversing decisions or backtracking or putting this government into embarrassing situations in having to, or even costing money, going down a course then to turn back or to stop is going to cost this government money. We do not have money to waste.

Those are some of my concerns, and the argument for amalgamation may be there. It may get the support of the members of this House. It may get the support of the committees. It is just like so many other things, we do not feel we have had the opportunity to say yea or nay. And until we say yes, I do not think anything should happen or anything take place that would commit us in any way. So that is the extent of my general comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. On this list I have Mr. Steen and Mr. Henry. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I agree, I concur with the other members that have spoken towards the fact that amalgamation as one of our priorities or part of our business plan was taken quite or interpreted quite liberally by cabinet to mean they could basically amalgamate this whole government into one department. I do not think that was my intent. I recall at the start, like some other members, that it involved one or two small departments. I appreciate cabinet's plan to use this amalgamation process as a way of reducing costs by reducing duplication.

On the other hand, when I came here I thought I was going to have input into, not all, but most major decisions of cabinet, to some degree. I realize that I am not on the Government Operations committee and I am not in cabinet but, at the same time, major changes to policy such as this, I would appreciate input and I do not believe I have had the opportunity.

I definitely think that I do not agree with the amalgamation of Transportation into a social envelope such as Housing. I do not think we have

addressed, either, which one of the envelopes is actually going to be responsible for this new department, if it is ever formed, because all these departments are in separate envelopes. I do not know if that was ever addressed by the members but I am sure that I was never involved in that discussion.

I firmly believe that Transportation, in particular, is an engineering department and it should not be amalgamated in to the social envelope. I think that a lot more thought yet is needed before we could even consider putting these three departments into one. I have to refer to the fact that, I can recall when DPW was Public Works and Highways, at one time, and, if I remember rightly, it was when the government took over arctic airports that the government decided to take highways and put it into a department that would be responsible for airports and all transportation. I think there was probably a lot of thought put into that at the time that it was done. I am sure there must have been a lot of thought, there must have been a lot of justification for that. So, I am wondering why we are pushing this thing back to what it used to be, with housing included now.

I really think that cabinet did proceed far beyond what was approved by the ordinary members. What I find embarrassing is when employees of this government walk up to me with pink slips and show me pink slips that mean they have basically been laid off and they ask me why I have done it. I have to respond that, I do not know, I was not involved in the decision. As far as I know there was no decision made. But they have the pink slip in their hand to prove it. Now, how are we going to reverse that? How are we going to reverse the fact that we have given out pink slips when the decision has not really been made by the Assembly? I find it embarrassing to have to say to someone that I do not know.

I do not really know even now, maybe the Premier will clarify to me and to those people with those pink slips how the thing is going to be addressed if, in fact, you do not get amalgamation of these three departments and it does not affect as many employees as we thought. I do not know how this is going to be addressed. I feel a little bit embarrassed about the whole situation. I know that, basically, I have to tell the person that I cannot speak to the thing because maybe it is involved in a new business plan for this year. So, I cannot speak to it without letting out the business plan, but the person already knows the business plan better than I do. So, I am caught in a bad situation in that case.



So, Mr. Chairman, in regards to amalgamation of these three departments at this time, if I could summarize. I am not sure even with more information or opportunity to discuss this further that I would ever be in favour of putting Transportation in with the social envelope. But I believe that, definitely, we, as an Assembly, have to have more input and we have to indicate clearly to cabinet whether we support some of these new policies they are coming up with. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, before I recognize Mr. Henry, the honourable member for Yellowknife South, I would like to recognize, in the public gallery, the better half of Minister Manitok Thompson, Mr. Tom Thompson.

-- Applause

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Welcome, Tom. We have Mr. Henry, the honourable member for Yellowknife South. You have the floor now, thank you.

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**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am really hoping, and I sincerely mean this, that we have created much ado about nothing here. In the point of view that I would have liked at the very start to ask the Premier what this was, I think it is fair to say that there are some inconsistencies in the document that was presented. From my perspective I see what was presented and tabled in this House as a discussion paper. I take a look at the work plan and it talks about release of the discussion paper in November, then it talks about prepare and release discussion paper two in February. So, from my perspective I would like to think there has not been any decision made by this government to amalgamate this department.

And before we go any further, can I ask the Premier, and I know he was holding his remarks to the end, but we seem to be debating something that we have decided from information that has been presented, so could I ask the Premier, yes or no, has it been decided by the government to amalgamate these three departments? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I would like to ask the members of this committee if it is okay for Mr. Henry now to ask Mr. Premier for his response. We had initially decided that we would wait until everyone has spoken, but in this case do we agree?

**HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Mr. Henry. The paper that was tabled in the Legislative Assembly by the chairman of Government Operations is a discussion paper on the proposed amalgamation of Public Works and Services, Transportation and the NWT Housing Corporation. Cabinet has passed this paper to go out to discuss with all stakeholder groups, with Government Operations, with MLAs so that they can take all that information in and then, possibly, make a decision on amalgamation. The problem, Mr. Chairman, is that we missed a step and that is what I said yesterday.

The ordinary members addressed it through their chairman. In any discussion paper on amalgamation members are expecting strong reasons and explanations why it is necessary. The paper tabled is very broad and does not provide significant rationale for making this major change. It is not the sessional discussion paper members are expecting exactly. It is not that. Because it is not that, it is a discussion paper, we missed a step. Before you can even make a decision to amalgamate these departments of government you have to have a discussion. We have to do the work so that we can present something to discuss.

Now, just to alleviate, Mr. Chairman, a few of the members concerns. When we go on a process, all 24 of us, of developing a budget for the next fiscal year, there are rules that we have to follow. Part of the rules are the negotiations between the union and the government of the Northwest Territories. So anything you are proposing as a 97/98 budget, which, I may say the amalgamation is not part of the 97/98 budget. It is not part of it, okay. So, if you are going to downsize, or if you have to lay people off as part of your fiscal restraint program that you are proposing in your 97/98 budget, you have to, by law, give off lay-off

notices to those employees, That is what was negotiated. Mr. Erasmus, I hope you are listening because that is what it is.

Those notices should have gone out January 1st, no sooner than that, they should go out for January 1st, separate process altogether. What we are looking forward to is to having open discussion with members of the Legislative Assembly so that we can discuss this paper, and it is all in here, the time frames and then we can make a decision as a Legislative Assembly and move on, whether we do it or not. But it does not go ahead until it is approved. Nobody loses their job until it is approved.

The plan itself was not ready for tabling in this Legislative Assembly, that is why I choose, as a government, not to table. This is a discussion paper, that is what it is. So, I hope that clarifies some misunderstanding, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, could I suggest in the future if there are misunderstandings like that, like what has been happening for the last hour or so, that someone from the cabinet make a point of order, we are good at doing these points or order and points or privilege, and say, look, I think you have the wrong idea, you are going off on a tangent here, so we can stop the discussion much earlier on.

Anyway, Mr. Chairman, I sort of twigged reasonably early on that this was not a final document by any stretch of the imagination. One thing, there are 9 pages in the document, one of them is referring to who can be contacted for discussion or that of the amalgamation, so really we are looking at 8 pages. It is really a timetable and when I compare that to something like the input support reform, I would suggest there is a need for a larger document. Also the fact there were no briefings that took place. We spent much time discussing the mortgage investment corporation, we had two briefings, we had people come in and tell us about the benefits, the negatives, the impacts, the cost. So, Mr. Chairman, I think I will end there, now we can, hopefully, have some discussion about sending this to committee and reworking the document, bringing it back to this House so that we can all agree. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I believe anything under this roof is subject to review. I have the honourable member for Hay River, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few questions, I understand we are on question time now. My question is, why would the government go to the expense and trouble of discussing this with all stakeholders if the MLAs did not agree to doing it in the first place, because that means it would not get through the House? Why would they waste that kind of time and money? Are we viewed as a special interest group to be consulted along with any other stakeholder out there? And when were we going to have this open public discussion? When was that planned? I am just curious. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, I would like to remind all the honourable members to respect a person when a person is speaking please.

**HON. MEMBERS:**

Hear, hear!

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-- Applause

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The members of this Legislative Assembly are elected people, they are not a special interest group. Let me make it very clear, if we did not send the document out to the stakeholders groups there would be one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight maybe, members raise issues - you did not go and consult with the public - so we do both unilaterally. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Any further general comments? Yes, Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question. Mr. Chairman, the Premier indicated that the process is to have discussion prior to the amalgamation and to have input from stakeholders and the rest of that. Where was the discussion and the input from the stakeholders when they amalgamated what is now RWED? There was none. There was no discussion in this House. I do not understand how he came up with this process. I guess that is a comment.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I have Mr. Roland and then Mr. Ootes. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have had a lot of discussion on this. It is good the clarification came across because I think with all of the things that have happened over the summer to this point, that is one of the reasons we have come to this place today. There is a little bit of caution on our side as to the way the thing flows. Understanding on both sides of the line is needed. The reason I asked the question yesterday was so that hopefully we could get an understanding that no part of the amalgamation will happen during our time away from here before we have a chance as a group in standing committees and again in the House to discuss this. I take your answer as no, none will happen. We are in the House, you have said it, it is down on paper and you have been in to this much more and longer than many of us and I would say, myself, that if cabinet went ahead and did something like that, we could hold you to the fact that you said no, none will. That is clarification. Let us get on with it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Ootes wanted to speak but the indication from here is he is going to pass for now. Mr. Premier did you want to respond to Mr. Roland? Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The discussion paper on amalgamation is going to go to Government Operations, Mr. Arlooktoo will be handling that issue. I have already said it does not go ahead until we have the agreement of the majority of the members of this Legislative Assembly. Through the committee process, we have full discussions. Nobody loses their jobs until those discussions take place. We have to go

through that process. We all agreed on that process. We are fully committed to that process but we have to do the work in order for the discussion to happen. We have done that. So, now we can have the discussion. Then once the discussion is complete, if the majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly say, yes, that sounds like a good idea to do that, they fully understand the issue, then we move ahead. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Ootes, do you want to speak now?

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I have a question for the Premier. The question is with respect to Public Works and Services. Why have they laid off 62 employees to meet the 1997-98 budget reductions?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd or Mr. Arlooktoo.

**HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:**

Mr. Chairman, perhaps I could make a couple of comments on some of the things that have been raised. But first to answer Mr. Ootes' question, and as the Premier said, there have been no lay-offs in the civil service because of amalgamation. Any job reductions that are going on now are a result of other reduction initiatives such as user pay/user say, that were approved by the House last year. That would be my response to that. If you would allow me, Mr. Chairman, to make a couple of general comments in response to what was said earlier.

I think what is happening is that members are mixing up different initiatives such as user pay/user say initiative that departments are doing to implement deficit reduction targets with amalgamation. What we are doing now, as the Premier said, is planning for amalgamation and issuing this discussion paper so discussion can take place in order that we may consult with our constituents, with other stakeholders, et cetera and then a decision will be made. But I would say that we do not have a lot of time. We do need to make a decision within the next couple of months. I would hope members will look at the discussion paper seriously and give comments back.

Myself, as the minister that has been assigned the task of looking at a possible amalgamation, and Mr. Joe Handley who has also been assigned to head up

a team to see if this is a workable idea or not, have done some consultations directly with our staff in the last few weeks. Generally, I would say that most of the staff that we talked to believe that amalgamation is a good idea, that amalgamation is only a common sense thing to do in this day and age. There are dissenters of course, some loud ones but in general they seem to understand that we need to do something to reduce the size of government.

One of the things that I must point out to people is the fact that with division in only two years and some odd months, it will be impossible for the two new smaller governments to support three separate bureaucracies that run relatively small departments, separate housing departments, separate public works department and separate transportation departments. Because of the small populations and because we will lose some economies of scale after division, it will be impossible to justify that. It is my own view that we either do it now or we do it later. If I could point out also, as we talked to staff just with the government itself, the major concerns that have been brought up by staff are the same that MLAs have voiced. The biggest one is job loss, whether or not they will lose their jobs, whether or not they will have to relocate or regional offices will change and the fact that they really want to have some input into any changes that may come about.

The other thing that staff have told us is, if amalgamation is to occur and if their job will be effected, changed or eliminated, they want to know right away. They want to know as soon as

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possible. I think that after discussion of the paper, it is our responsibility to do that. I would like to reassure MLAs again, as the Premier has stated, that no lay-offs will be issued until we know that this thing is going ahead and until we have a very good idea on what will be affected. Mr. Miltenberger did say that he would likely not support amalgamation until he sees a structure in place first, but I would point out again that I think what we have to do is to figure exactly what it is we want the department to do. We would like a department that provides housing, that deals with roads, that deals with infrastructure. Then identify the critical issues such as job losses, how does it effect community empowerment, division, et cetera.

Once those things are answered then we deal with the structure. I know the issue of how personnel will be affected is very sensitive and I can appreciate that.

I think it is no secret that the regional centres and headquarters will be the ones that are most affected. People ask how many jobs will be lost, that is a question which cannot be answered right now because we are not far enough into the process. Clearly, we would need one deputy minister instead of three, assistant deputy ministers would probably go from the five or six we have right now to maybe two. You have corresponding less duplication in areas of financing, human resources, et cetera.

I cannot hear myself talking right, so I will stop there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. We have Mr. Ootes, Mrs. Groenewegen and Mr. Picco. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Mr. Chairman, first of all I seek unanimous consent to extend sitting hours until we complete the issue.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

According to the rules, we have to deal with the motion. There is a motion to extend the sitting hour. At this point, I will recognize Mr. Ootes' motion to extend the sitting hour. To the motion. Question is being raised. All those in favour of the motion, please signify. Opposed? The motion is carried. The sitting hours are extended to conclude this particular item. Point of order Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will assume, my point of order is, I am not sure I will have to review Hansard, but I believe the member for Yellowknife Centre may have inadvertently made comment and made reference to confidential documents that relate to the 1997/98 budget, with respect to job loss.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. The chair does not have the clear indication of what was said in the Hansard so will review the point of order and make a ruling from there. Thank you. We have Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to touch on the issue of these lay-off notices. Notice of lay-off as opposed to employees being laid off. When we talk

about notice of lay-off, we talk about it as if it is nothing and it can just be reversed and you can just tell a person, you got your job back. I do not know how many of you have had lay-off notices lately but I am telling you the risks and effects of a notice of lay-off has some fairly serious ramifications. One of the risks is you can lose some of your good employees. You issue a notice of lay-off and do not think for one minute that those employees are not scanning the market looking for a new job. You can lose some very valuable staff that way.

Another thing is that it affects their moral and their performance on the job. It is not a thing to be taken lightly, a notice of lay-off. I am concerned about that. Just to say well, we can reverse it but we need to hand them because if the proposed amalgamation goes ahead, we have to implement it by April 1st, 1997.

I am going back to the question I asked a few minutes ago. I did not get an answer to this. This is a time line we are talking about. Lay-off notices would have to be out in the mail by January 1st in order to implement amalgamation on April 1st, 1997, because that would be the 90 day requirement. Right? As far as I know, this House is adjourning today. If we were going to have an open and public debate in this House on amalgamation, my question that did not get answered before is, when was that supposed to take place? When were we going to do that? We are not coming back here to Yellowknife until the middle of January. So, I do not know when we were going to do that. That is still a concern and question I have. I think everybody should really, seriously consider the risks of tentatively laying the employees off and then changing your mind 60 to 90 days later, or when it is convenient to this government. I have a problem with that.

Can I speak to the point of order, Mr. Chairman? No, I cannot, okay. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I believe Mr. Premier wants to respond to the honourable member for Hay River. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me state again that amalgamation is not going to go ahead until the majority of the members support amalgamation through the process we have. Nobody loses their jobs until that is approved by the majority. According to the

discussion paper that is out there right now or proposal, there is a time frame in it through this work plan. If this work plan stays intact and everything goes then it would not be until April the 1st that you would have to give any lay-off notices to do with this amalgamation because you can see it there that it takes April, May, June, July to even put it into process. You have all the other time up front between now and then to do the consultation, get everybody's input into it then make the decision, set up the senior management team and then move ahead. It takes time. We are not going to do this over night. It has nothing to do with amalgamation. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. On the list I have Mr. Picco. The honourable member for Iqaluit, Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I do not think there is anyone trying to be adversarial here. We are just trying to get to the point where is amalgamation going to occur. So on and so forth. My question would be, have any lay-offs taken place that would be affected by the amalgamation process to occur on April 1st, 1997? That is a fair question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There have been no lay-off notices, no lay-offs to do with anything about amalgamation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Picco.

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**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, so there have been no lay-offs to do with the amalgamation to date. There have been no lay-off notices to date. Have there been any lay-offs in the past six months with plans that were under way for amalgamation?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Order. Mr. Picco, could you repeat that question please?

**MR. PICCO:**

I will repeat. For clarification, again I am not trying to be adversarial. My question is to the minister of Public Works and Services. Can the minister of Public Works and Services tell me, have any lay-offs, have people lost their jobs, or their jobs been downsized in 95/96 impending on plans that we are making for 97-98, in context with 97-98?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Minister. Mr. Arlooktoo.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To be totally honest, I do not have a clue what he is talking about. I cannot understand the question. Maybe he can rephrase it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Picco for the Premier could you rephrase the question so he can understand it?

**MR. PICCO:**

If I have three or four more chances at it, I think I can get it right. I will try again. This will be the fourth time. I am asking if there have been any lay-offs in 95/96 based on projections or things that this government is doing or planning to do for 97/98. Now, anything that has occurred in the past should be able to be discussed. That is all I am asking.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier or Mr. Todd.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is the member referring to the future budget, that document?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

I do not know what document he is talking about. I do not. Asking me about what document I am talking about, what document? I am asking if there have been any lay-offs in 95/96 for plans of this

government for 97/98. Have we laid off people six months ago because of plans that were progressing for 97/98? That is my question. I do not see any document. The only document I have is the division document.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

The indication that I am getting here is that it has been a long day. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Mr. Chairman. There have been no lay-offs or lay-off notices given out to do with amalgamation, the discussion paper that we are talking about now. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. We have Mr. Henry and Mr. Picco.

**MR. HENRY:**

I am fine. My question has been answered.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

I just wanted to finish my line of questioning, Mr. Chairman, if that is okay? If that is the case, thank you Mr. Morin, I appreciate your answer. My second question is then, in the division document right here, is there anything in user pay user say that is part of the amalgamation process?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The user pay/user say was part of the budget last year. It has nothing to do with amalgamation. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

If user pay/user say has nothing to do with amalgamation, that was in the budget last year, does

that mean then that the user pay initiative will not result in amalgamation?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

The user pay/user say initiative was approved last year through the budget, when we talked about the budget and managers managing and being responsible within their own departments, the stuff that is before the House now is a paper exercise to move the money to the departmental budgets. A discussion paper on the proposed amalgamation of Public Works and Services, Transportation and the NWT Housing Corporation is a separate issue. It is an issue that is exactly what it says, a discussion paper. It has nothing to do with the other. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. We have Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

(microphone off)

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Okay. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the problem we have here is that there are so many documents flying around it is like a blizzard. So, you cannot comment on one, you cannot comment on another, you cannot comment on budgets, so, as a legislature, as a MLA you are hand-tied, tongue-tied what you can ask. It is like a mine field trying to tread around these questions.

My last question, so I can let someone else ask a question is, will there be any amalgamation before April 1st, 1997 in this government with the plans we are looking at today, as a consequence of the plans that we are studying today? That is my question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is the whole reason for the discussion paper. If the majority of the members should move ahead then it will be happening, the plans and everything else according to the work plan of this document. But the discussion has to take place and I am not going to pre-empt that discussion. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I now recognize Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like some clarity on this lay-off notice issue. Yesterday Mr. Morin indicated in a response to me, it is in the Hansard, of course it is not the final version but the unedited version says, that the member is not exactly correct by saying that notices have to

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be given by January 1st, 1997. But yet today in response to a statement that I made, he indicates that they have to give notice by January 1st, if there is going to be three months notice, if there are going to be people laid-off as a result of the budget. So, I would like to have clarification. What is actually in that collective agreement, or whatever agreement they have with the union, if it is not in the collective agreement, if it is some other agreement. What is the actual wording and what does it actually say? What are the requirements for lay-offs? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason the member got the answers he did is because one has to do with a discussion paper on the proposed amalgamation. Lay-off notices do not have to go out January 1st because you have not made a decision yet. We are just discussing it.

On the budget, because you are preparing the budget based on the business plans, the members have been through, we have to according to, whether it is the collective agreement -- I will get the member where it is exactly through the finance minister -- you have give lay-off notices 90 days in advance. That is through the budget process. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the Premier mean to tell me that if something in the proposed budget which has not been approved, that they propose to lay off people because of the amount of money that is going to be in their budget, they have to give notices in the beginning of January before the budget is approved. Is that what he is saying?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister of Finance says he addressed that yesterday and that is correct.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

General comments. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is it possible for us to get some documentation that shows this?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes the Minister of Finance will make that information available to all members of the Legislative Assembly. He will just send you the information.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

That is noted. Are there any more general comments on the item we are considering at this time, tabled document 13-13(4), Discussion Paper on Amalgamation of Infrastructure Department? Are there further discussion on this. Do we agree this matter is concluded, Mr. Ootes?

**MR. OOTES:**

Mr. Chairman, I would like to move a motion.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, the motion is being distributed. Copy of the motion is being distributed to all members of the committee.

**MR. OOTES:**

Tabled document 13-13(4) which contains a discussion paper on the proposed amalgamation of Public Works and Services, Transportation and the NWT Housing Corporation entitled Establishment of Infrastructure Services Organization be referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review in consultation with all ordinary members. And further, that the Standing Committee on Government Operations provide a report to the House on its review of the discussion paper no later than January 24, 1997.

And furthermore, that the Executive Council not proceed with any action to implement this proposed amalgamation until such time as the discussion paper and the Standing Committee on Government Operations report has been debated and approved by the Legislative Assembly.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Motion is in order as read. To the motion. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

At this time I would like to ask for a recorded vote on this.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, the member is asking for a recorded vote. Before we vote, I have Mr. Arlooktoo.

**HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:**

Mr. Chairman, I would just like perhaps clarification on perhaps the intent of the motion. As per the discussion document, there is a certain amount of pre-work and further study needed and a look into critical issues et cetera that has to be done by staff. This will give us a better understanding and maybe a more intelligent debate on the issue perhaps some of that information the Government Operations Committee could use.

Perhaps if it could be clarified to me, is this motion suggesting that we put a hold and a stop to the pre-work that is being done now?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**



Thank you, I guess, perhaps the mover of the motion can allude to the second paragraph. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

No, I do not believe the intent is to stop the work on that Mr. Chairman. The intent is to refer this paper to Government Operations and for the committee to look into this issue and report back to the House with a paper, and that no action be taken until this House has approved it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Ootes, do you want to have a further final say on this motion or ... okay. Question is being called. All those in favour please stand.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

Mr. Ootes, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Henry, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Steen, Mr. Barnabas, Mr. Enuaraq, Mr. Picco, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Roland, Mr. Miltenberger.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, all those opposed to the motion please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

Mr. Ng, Mrs. Thompson, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Morin, Mr. Todd, Mr. Arlooktoo, Mr. Dent.

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**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. For the motion 13, against 0, abstentions 8. The motion is carried.

-- Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Do we then agree that tabled document 13-13(4) discussion paper on amalgamation of infrastructure department is concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Agreed. Thank you. Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, as a suggestion to the minister responsible, if there is any documentation related to this, could it always be referred to as a proposed amalgamation so we do not go around in circles again until we vote on it?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

There was a motion on the floor to extend the sitting hour until the matter was concluded. The matter is concluded so I will rise and report progress. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The House will come back to order. We have Item 20, Report of committee of the whole. Mr. Ningark.

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

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Ministers' Statements 1, 5, and 6 and Tabled Documents 4, 5 and 13, and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted and Ministers' Statements 1, 5 and 6 and Tabled Documents 4, 5 and 13 are concluded. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, seconded by Mr. Dent. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All in favour. All those opposed. Motion is carried.

-- Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

**ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS**

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member from Tu Nedhe that Bill 1, Supplementary Appropriation Act No. 2 for 96/97 be read for the third time.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, the motion is in order. To the motion. Question. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Mr. Speaker, I would request that we have a recorded vote.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Picco to the motion.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have some reservations with Supplementary Act No. 2 96/97 because I feel there maybe some user pay/user say initiatives in that Supplementary Appropriation which are part of the amalgamation scheme. At the appropriate time I will be voting against it.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Again to remind the members that on the third reading stage of a bill, a member does not speak to the bill itself as it has already been concluded. Also the only time that a member can speak to third reading of bills is to propose a motion. Third reading of bills, a recorded vote has been requested. Third reading of bills? Question has been called. All those in favour please stand.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

Mr. Todd, Mr. Arlooktoo, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Steen, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Roland, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Henry, Mr. Ng, Mrs. Thompson, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Kakfwi and Mr. Morin.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, all of those against, please stand.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

Mr. Picco, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Barnabas.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, all those abstaining, please stand.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

Mr. Enuaraq.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion, we have 17 for, 4 against, and 1 abstention. This motion is passed and accordingly, Bill 1 has had third reading. Third Reading of Bills? Assent to Bills. Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain if Her Honour, the Commissioner is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent the Bills?

**COMMISSIONER (Helen Maksagak):**

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I hereby assent to the following Bill. Bill 1, Supplementary Appropriations Act number two 1996/97.

Mr. Speaker and the members of the Legislative Assembly, this will be my last opportunity to address this House before the Christmas break.

It has been a very busy year. Full of difficult challenges and decisions. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you, your families and all the people of the Northwest Territories, a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Before we ask the Clerk for the Orders of the Day, I would like to wish members and their families the best this holiday season. This is the time for members to go home and spend time with their families and friends, enjoying the happiness and the celebration that comes with this time of year.

We have had to make some difficult decisions during the last year and it does not get any easier from here on either. Members may be feeling that they have not been able to get all they wanted for their constituency. Or that the Grinch stole away some of their Capital projects. But do not despair if you do not find much in Santa's sock for your constituency this year.

Santa Claus has remembered us. A constituent of the High Arctic, even Santa Claus, has not escaped the cut backs. Members should also keep in mind that it is not the gift that counts, but the thought behind it. I am sure you are high on the lists of the ministers in their thoughts that is. Also remember, good things come in small packages and good things come to those who wait.

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I would like to extend Season's Greetings to all and all the best in the New Year to the members, their

families, the staff of the Legislative Assembly, the Cafeteria staff, the Hansard, and the Government of the Northwest Territories employees. People across the North, Canada, and the world. Have a safe and happy holiday. Mahsi Cho.

Mr. Clerk, Orders of the Day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

There will be a meeting of the Management Services Board at 1 pm tomorrow, and of the Standing Committee of Government Operations at 9 am on Monday morning. Orders of the Day for Tuesday, January 21, 1997.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Return to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitor's in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration of Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. As authorized by Motion 4-13(4), this House stands adjourned to January 21, 1997 at 1:30 pm.

-- ADJOURNMENT