



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**HANSARD**

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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

Oh God, may your spirit and guidance be in us as we work for the benefit of all our people for peace and justice in our land and for the constant recognition of the dignity and aspirations of those whom we serve. Amen.

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

Thank you, Mr. Enuaraq. Before we get into orders of the day, I would like to recognize Dave Keenan. Dave is the Minister of Municipal and Transportation Services for the Yukon government. Welcome to the Assembly.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

And also, congratulation on your election. Orders of the day. Item 2: Ministers' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 33-13(4): Canada Endangered Species Protection Act

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak today about an initiative that is very important to all northerners, the protection and management of our wildlife, particularly species at risk. Over the years initiatives to improve conservation of endangered species have been undertaken on a cooperative basis involving all provincial and territorial jurisdictions and the federal government. This commitment of all jurisdictions is demonstrated by the National Accord for the Conservation of Species at Risk, which was agreed to by all wildlife Ministers from all jurisdictions at Charlottetown last October.

We all are committed to a national approach for the protection of species at risk to prevent these species from becoming extinct as a consequence of human activity. We agreed to participate in the Canadian Species Conservation Council to co-ordinate our activities. And we agreed to establish complimentary legislation and programs that provide effective protection of species at risk.

The federal government has placed before the House of Commons the Canada Endangered Species Protection Act. We are supportive of the principles underlying this Act, but the Act itself does not reflect the approach that we agreed to as Ministers in Charlottetown.

Section 3 of the proposed legislation states that the federal government will assume management responsibility for those species in the Northwest Territories and Yukon, as designated by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, as extirpated, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable.

This means that in the Northwest Territories, the federal government will take back the authority for management programs for polar bears, wood bison, three populations of Peary caribou, grizzly bears, and wolverine.

Over the years and through extensive consultation and cooperation, this government and the people of the Northwest Territories have developed and implemented wildlife management and protection programs for these species, and these programs have achieved great success and have earned international acclaim.

Management and recovery programs for species at risk are an integral part of a multimillion dollar wildlife management program here in the north.

Between one and two million dollars annually is spent on research directly related to the species under discussion. The Government of the Northwest Territories also supports these programs through extensive physical and administrative infrastructure that has taken over 30 years to establish. In addition to government resources in Yellowknife, buildings, vehicles, equipment and staff, all are dedicated to protecting and managing wildlife, and these are found in all communities across the Northwest Territories.

Aboriginal northerners have always had a special relationship with wildlife. Wildlife has meant our

survival. The value we place on traditional knowledge and local involvement has resulted in a system of community and regional Wildlife Management Boards. The boards are composed of people whose future depends on adequate resources. We have developed trust and respect for one another and that has contributed substantially to the success of the programs that we have implemented and developed together. People have the local knowledge and are supported by some of the most capable scientists in the world.

I will be leaving for Edmonton to make a presentation to the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development. It is my intention to place before them our record of achievement in the protection of endangered species. I will tell them that we are supportive of the principles upon which the bill is based but that amendments are required for the best interest of our species at risk. I will recommend that the legislation be amended in the spirit of the accord that was agreed to by wildlife Ministers in Charlottetown. The federal government should be involved with the provinces and territories in setting national standards. I welcome federal expertise and especially their money to the table. But, I will recommend that the people of the Northwest Territories remain foremost the primary managers of endangered, threatened and vulnerable species. Thank you.

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-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Ningark.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

Member's Statement On Muskox Quotas

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Having visited the communities of Gjoa Haven and Taloyoak, talked to the people of both communities, and also in Pelly Bay, the hunters and trappers organization in the three communities have indicated to me, requesting the increase of muskox tags shared by the three communities. According to my information, Mr. Speaker, the current quota for muskox is 40 tags. The request of ORAY is 55 muskox tags, according to my understanding Mr. Speaker. In May, 1996 Kitikmeot

Hunters and Trappers Association made a motion in support of an increase for the three communities. In May, 1998 Nunavut Wildlife Board made a motion in support of the request. In July, 1996 the legislation change proposed was sent from the region to headquarters here in Yellowknife. According also to my understanding, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice has indicated the change of status of the quota will come into effect, or be enacted in early January, 1997. Later on, at the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Minister of Renewable Resources of the status of the request. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Members' statements. Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement On Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my honourable colleague, the Member for Hay River, in condemning the government's failure to restore full funding for the Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program. As my colleague pointed out yesterday, Cabinet has received a clear statement of support for this program. The public wants it back. The Members of our Social Services Committee have shown us how to pay for it. What more needs to be said?

Mr. Speaker, last fall I attended a meeting sponsored by the City of Yellowknife that dealt with the problems seniors face in my community. About 30 people showed up. They talked about safety, housing, recreation, and shrinking government programs. I left the meeting with a troublesome thought. The seniors said politicians have been playing a game of bluff. At all levels of government, elected representatives make motherhood statements acknowledging the contribution seniors make to our communities. The seniors feel that the same leaders cut or clawback support programs when budget time rolls around. This is a double standard. In my community, it will eventually drive seniors to places where the cost of living is less of a burden. I am glad that the government is launching a review of services offered to seniors. This project should be completed as quickly as possible. We need a clear cut policy on the support that we will give to our elders. Our current piecemeal approach is confusing and frustrating. I fear that it will push away the people we are trying to help.

Mr. Speaker, the seniors in my community acknowledge the governments fiscal problems. They are prepared to contribute to balancing the budget, but we cannot expect them to accept an uncoordinated, rejigging of support programs. We owe it to seniors to develop a clear cut policy that will be applied fairly and in consultation with them and communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Old Crow School Fire

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with regret that I bring bad news in regards to the loss to the community of Old Crow in the Yukon, where a fire destroyed their education centre yesterday. Mr. Speaker, the following letter was sent to Chief Randall Tetlich of the Vuntut Gwich'in First Nation in Old Crow yesterday by Chief William Coe of Fort McPherson after the news came that the Old Crow school was being destroyed by fire.

"It is with regret that we bear news from over the mountains that the education centre in the Vinti Gwich'in is burning. We understand the sense of loss in their community having gone through a similar experience, less than a year ago in Fort McPherson. The only advice we can offer, turn to do things and work together to resolve your differences, it can limit the effect that it will have and continue education for your children. If there is anything that we can do, let us know without hesitation. If there is one thing that the Gwich'in are known for, it is their ability to lend a helping hand in times of need."

That is from the Chief in Fort McPherson. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Literacy Golf Tournament

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before Christmas, I had written to Mr. Peter Gzowski about coming to Iqaluit to attend the annual literacy golf tournament. Peter is no longer able to participate in every tournament, but he just announced that he will be attending the tournament in Iqaluit, the week of April 21st, 1997. That is good news, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, not only will Mr. Gzowski compete in the tournament, but he will be bringing his Morningside production staff in order to do a remote, live broadcast from Iqaluit. As well, Peter will be accompanied by the film crew from the TV program, Life and Times, who will film Peter as part of a television biography on Mr. Gzowski's life. Other celebrities confirmed for the tournament include well-known actor, singer and star of North of 60, Tom Jackson, Mr. Ernie Coombs, better known as Mr. Dressup, and Nunavut's own children's author, Mr. Michael Kusugak. Michael is also the president of the NWT Literacy Council.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it was in 1990, when we had the first literacy golf tournament in the Northwest Territories here in Yellowknife. That spring, as I caddied around Frame Lake for Ken Dryden and singer Valdy, we never anticipated that the tournament would continue and become more popular every

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year. The funds generated go to promote literacy and literacy projects in the Northwest Territories.

I should give a little history on how Mr. Gzowski was strong-armed into holding a tournament for literacy in the Northwest Territories. During a regular flight from Iqaluit to Clyde River, Dorothy Kuminapik, at that time the adult educator in Clyde, just happened to be sitting next to Mr. Gzowski on the flight. She questioned Peter as to when he was going to have a golf tournament in the north for literacy. As a result, our first tournament, as I mentioned, occurred the following year, here in Yellowknife on Frame Lake. Dorothy is now living in Iqaluit and will be the poet laureate of the tournament.

Mr. Speaker, it was at that time we started the Northwest Territories Literacy Council. I was one of the first paid members and vice-president. Through the years, the members of the Council have changed, but one constant, in particular, has remained. That constant is the hard work and dedication of Miss Lynn Fogwill of Yellowknife. Lynn has been one of the major driving forces every year in arranging the logistics and promotion of these tournaments.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was the first time since November of 1995 that I sought unanimous consent. I appreciate it. Thank you, fans, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, in continuing my statement, the work of Lynn Fogwill, a resident of Yellowknife, has to be acknowledged, and the work she has done with the NWT Literacy Council. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank her for her tremendous work over the past several years. Mr. Gzowski's golf tournaments have raised over \$4 million for literacy to date, and of that, \$297,103 in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Peter Gzowski has many good friends in Iqaluit, like long-time CBC radio personality, Mr. Jonah Kelly, and the one and only, Abe Okpik. The Discovery Lodge, in Iqaluit, has generously agreed to be corporate sponsor and will be donating complimentary rooms for the visiting celebrities. As well, First Air has been very generous in providing air passes for the celebrities to fly from Ottawa to Iqaluit. As in the past, NWT Air continues to be the major sponsor of the tournament in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to officially invite you, the Premier and the Members of the Assembly, to come to Iqaluit and participate in this important fund-raiser for literacy in the Northwest Territories. As a footnote, one of the major organizers of the tournament in Iqaluit is one of our greatest advocates for literacy, our regional librarian, Miss Yvonne Earle, who has been issued a lay-off notice, and I will be questioning the Minister of Education later today on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Enuaraq.

Member's Statement On Physical Handicaps

**MR. ENUARAQ:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening. Hello MLAs. I would like to speak today on people who have physical handicaps. Many Inuit in our area have physical handicaps and some are born already with a handicap. Also some are blind and some are paraplegic. Even some people who are born healthy, because of disease acquire a handicap of some sort. In support of the people who are handicapped, this particular government has not supported the handicapped people in the Northwest Territories. I would like to see, in the future, that this government will provide a support system for the handicapped people in the Northwest Territories. In the Northwest Territories, we will see some people who cannot walk and some people who are blind and other handicaps. When we see the housing conditions for people who are handicapped are not customized particularly for that person who has a handicap. For that reason, today, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking questions to the government for particulars on programs that deal with handicapped people in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Coastguard Icebreakers

**MR. BARNABAS:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends) Mr. Speaker, a situation has come up, one that will directly affect communities in both western and eastern Arctic. As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, the coastguard plans to cut costs by eliminating its one and only icebreaker in the western Arctic. They plan to have one of the remaining icebreakers from the eastern Arctic provide services whenever it is necessary. This plan looked good on paper, Mr. Speaker, but I am very concerned about the effect it will have on remote communities and on sealift operations. Remote communities throughout the Arctic rely heavily on icebreaking services. Without these services, I feel that sealift operations will certainly be at risk. It was only last year, Mr. Speaker, that one sealift operation required the services of both western and eastern icebreakers. Without such services, sealift operations would not have been possible, and the cost of living would have skyrocketed. As I said, Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned with this plan. I urge the Minister to take immediate action on this issue and I will be questioning him at an appropriate time today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement On NWT's Exploding Birthrate

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I would like to briefly address an issue that is of fundamental concern to all the people in the Northwest Territories. That is the issue of our exploding birthrate.

As we start this budget process, those that look at the documentation will see that the total percentage of the overall budget that is consumed by the social envelope of health, social services, justice, housing and education, continues to expand. It is very clear, to those who look at the information, that one of the big drivers to those exploding costs, which we anticipate or project as an annual \$40 million in terms of extra forced growth, is our exploding birthrate.

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Mr. Speaker, we have been consumed with the budget and deficit reduction and we are soon to turn our attention, with equal focus and intensity, to division. However, we cannot forget the obligations we have on the social side. Unless we attempt to start to deal with some of the underlying issues that are driving the cost of this government, we are doomed, in this territory, and the two new territories, to endless rounds of repeated cuts, as we attempt to deal with social costs that we cannot control, with increasingly limited revenues.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just the responsibility of this Assembly. This is the responsibility of every person, every community in the Northwest Territories. No one individual has an answer to this, but it is a situation that cannot be ignored and, maybe by starting to work together to address some of these sensitive but critical issues, we can come up with a way to try to deal with this particular issue. To not do that is folly, and is something that we cannot afford. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Dempster Highway

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, colleagues. The community of Inuvik is continuing to be impacted by this government's decisions in the area of budget reductions. We in Inuvik and the Inuvik Region, are also impacted by other governments in the decisions that they make. For example, Mr. Speaker, last winter in Inuvik, we first heard the news of the Yukon government's discussions on the Dempster Highway in trying to control their costs. It raised a lot of concern in Inuvik and the surrounding area and communities, because the cost of goods in Inuvik rise dramatically when the Dempster Highway is closed, for whatever conditions. We have two seasons right now when the Dempster Highway closes on an annual basis, when the ferries are pulled out and freeze-up starts to occur and when they are put back in.

Mr. Speaker, as a community, we have raised this issue with our Minister of Transportation, and he was good enough to visit us in Inuvik and meet with the people and hear their concerns on the Dempster Highway issue, as well as other highways that we were hoping to see in our lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to say that the Minister has gone a long way since our discussion, and has discussed and had a meeting with the government representatives from the Yukon. I think the people of Inuvik would be happy to hear that we are not looking at the very serious impacts that were first discussed, as a total closure of the Dempster Highway for long periods. I think that as the news is let out on the meeting, the people of Inuvik will be somewhat relieved at what is being discussed today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement on Impact of Budget Reductions on the City of Yellowknife

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is always interesting to read our local Yellowknife newspapers. Some times I like what I read; other times I just have to shake my head. Recently, there was an editorial which I agreed with wholeheartedly. The writer suggested that it was time that Yellowknifers stopped

relying on government for our answers and started to get involved and demand answers of our own. It is true that Yellowknife has been hit hard, very hard in the two years of the government deficit management plan. However, we cannot let these cuts defeat us. Yellowknife was built by a collective of independent, hard-working people. They pulled together as a community and created the vibrant city that I am proud to represent, along with my three Yellowknife colleagues. The City has taken a blow and is limping a bit. We are down but certainly not out. I agree with the editorial, which says that we cannot afford to sit back, and I quote, "Yellowknifers need to get involved. If you don't like what is happening in the city, speak to your MLA."

We need your support, Mr. Speaker, to continue pushing this government to treat Yellowknife fairly and equitably. We need to keep reminding the government that Yellowknife residents are the major contributors to the NWT economy, through our businesses and our taxes. As the MLA for Yellowknife South, I look forward to hearing from Yellowknifers, both with their concerns and with their ideas for how we can make things better.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that many Yellowknife residents will pick up a copy of the budget and give me some feedback, from their perspective, on this document, so that I can represent their concerns better in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Sustainable Polar Bear Population

**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to express my gratitude, coming from Nunavut, that our animals are being protected and the fact that there is being research conducted. I have not received any copies of reports that have been researched. In fact, I know the Inuit have not depleted any of the animals that they hunt. There have been many researches in regards to the wildlife management. So, when the time comes for questioning, I will be asking questions on polar bear research. I know, for a fact, from my childhood, that the polar bears population has changed. In regards to that, I will be directing my question to the appropriate

Minister, and I would like a definite answer. The Inuit have never depleted any of the animals that they have used, even though the environment is harsh and all the animals have a tough time living there, they still sustain the hunting environment. Thank you.  
(Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Evaloarjuk. Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement On Services to N'dilo and Detah

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to speak today about two communities that I represent that are often overlooked by this government. Those two communities, Mr. Speaker, are Detah and N'dilo, which, along the Members that

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live in Yellowknife, make up the Yellowknife Dene First Nation. Mr. Speaker, Detah and N'dilo are often overlooked, partly because they are right beside Yellowknife. It is true there are benefits to this closeness. There are programs and services that are accessible, and which would not normally be available to communities this size. However, Mr. Speaker, there are many disadvantages as well. While the people in those communities have access to the programs and services in the city of Yellowknife, most of them cannot afford them because of their poor education, and therefore, high unemployment rate.

Also, their funding sometimes gets lumped in with the city of Yellowknife, but the city of Yellowknife does not provide services for them. Most people also assume that N'dilo is just part of Yellowknife, rather than a community in its own right. This reduces the ability to recognize and deal with the unique needs of the people in N'dilo and Detah.

For instance, even though many people live in N'dilo and in Detah, primarily the band only receives funding for the people living in Detah, they also have to deal with the housing needs of everybody in the band. Also, when they put on workshops, everybody in the band is allowed to come, similarly with feasts and community events. Funding also seems to disappear. For instance, the recreation dollars that Detah receives is based on their population alone, but the band council has to use that funding for both communities and for all the band members. Mr.

Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, recreation dollars for N'dilo seem to have disappeared. Maybe the people down there are non-existent or something, because they are not included in the block funding for the city of Yellowknife either. So, if they are not included in Detah and they are not included in Yellowknife, where is the money going for those 250 people that live there?

N'dilo also used to be recognized in the government's capital plan a few years back. Today, it is not even listed. Similarly, N'dilo has not received funding for programs like community justice committees, and they have never had a base funded adult educator, and neither has the community of Detah. Mr. Speaker, it is good to see that some departments recognize N'dilo as a separate entity, because they have received community action funding separately.

Today, the two communities are trying to officially link up into one community, and they would have a population of around 500. There is also another 200-300 people living in Yellowknife because of the limited housing in N'dilo, and people are on waiting lists to build houses in N'dilo. Mr. Speaker, this government needs to recognize when it creates the pools of community funding, that Detah and N'dilo may be beside Yellowknife, but the needs of the people are quite different.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that this government should not have to wait until Detah and N'dilo are formally amalgamated through the legal process. This government should recognize and treat Detah and N'dilo as one community as soon as possible. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mrs. Groenewegen.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure today to recognize someone in the gallery who is a familiar radio voice from CBC Inuvik, Yvonne Kisoun, formerly of Inuvik, but now, I am proud to say, of Hay River.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today it gives me great pleasure to recognize from Tuktoyaktuk, the Deputy Mayor of Tuk hamlet council, Mr. William Nasagaluak and his wife Eunice. Mr. Nasagaluak is also the owner of the only Reindeer herd in Canada at this time. He and his wife are also active on the local education board.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a gentleman in the gallery who has been a regular visitor here. From Yellowknife, Mr. Bob Galipeau. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also like to recognize a member of the community of Inuvik, the mayor, Mr. George Roach.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**



Thank you, Mr. Roland. Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery, Mr. O'Brien.

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize Mr. and Mrs. Nasgalowak, they are friends of mine whom I met while working in Tuktoyaktuk. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 151-13(4): Polar Bear Populations

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**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Renewable, Wildlife and Economic Development. I just wanted to ask a question regarding some communities. I just wanted to ask in which region are polar bears becoming scarce in the areas of the Baffin, Kitikmeot and Keewatin? What are the results of studies done in this regard. I just want an update to my question. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 151-13(4): Polar Bear Populations

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, the Member is asking a question of what species of wildlife have become threatened or become extinct in recent years. To my knowledge, between the time since the Government of the Northwest Territories has assumed responsibility for wildlife management in the Northwest Territories, and since we have begun working with local and regional wildlife management boards, none of the species have become extinct or threatened. In fact, certain species that were considered vulnerable, threatened,

or on the verge of extinction, have come back and are well on the road to recovery. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 151-13(4): Polar Bear Populations

**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask a question to the Minister about employees, especially in our region, in Hall Beach, and also other places. As I stated earlier about such animals or the games are becoming extinct or some animals are coming back to our regions and also presently, we have a worker in our region who is always keeping up to date with the CBC from economic development. We are also aware that in our communities, some polar bears come into our town. We have so many problems with the polar bears in our regions, they become a nuisance. If they are becoming extinct, what is the problem then? (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 151-13(4): Polar Bear Populations

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, the polar bear population has been considered to be at risk by the Government of Canada and certainly by the international community. What we have done as a government is a co-management plan with the Inuit, that is, the hunters, the aboriginal communities, the Wildlife boards to manage polar bears that has received international acclaim and has gained the respect of conservationists, environmentalists and the scientific community around the world. It is true, however, that for some conservationists, bears are animals that they never see in their life, but are concerned about. Unlike ourselves who have animals, sometimes everyday, wandering around our communities. We see these animals on a day-to day basis, as in this case encounters with polar bears can prove to be fatal, and our expected occurrences are those on a weekly, or daily basis. There is a different perspective that we bring which makes it almost imperative that we do everything that we can to make southern people,

politicians, environmental groups aware of the realities that we face up here. Thank you, very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 152-13(4): Coastguard Icebreaker Operations

**MR. BARNABAS:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to ask a supplementary to what I said earlier. I want to ask the Minister of Transportation regarding the icebreakers, do they come to our regions all year round? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Transportation. Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 152-13(4): Coastguard Icebreaker Operations

**HON. JAMES ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, from the honourable Member for the High Arctic Member's statement today, the question is dealing with the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaking services for the western Arctic and the eastern Arctic as well. As we know, the federal government is responsible for providing the service, and there is a plan that is proposed, put forward by the Canadian Coast Guard, to cancel a dedicated icebreaker to service the western Arctic during the 1997 summer resupply season. Perhaps, I will leave it at that and wait for a supplementary. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 152-13(4): Coastguard Icebreaker Operations

**MR. BARNABAS:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question. So are you prepared to give us the answer to my question? Have you discussed this with anyone who has the same concern? Thank you. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 152-13(4): Coastguard Icebreaker Operations

**HON. JAMES ANTOINE:**

Yes, Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this situation by the Canadian Coast Guard planning to change the way they provide icebreaker service in the western Arctic is a big concern to this government and to myself. The shipping company, especially the NTCL and other businesses in the High Arctic, especially the communities, are very concerned about this issues. My officials have met a number of times with the officials of the Canadian Coast Guard. We have sent very strong letters to them, and we have attended a meeting recently of the new committee that was set up by the Canadian Coast Guard, they have established a board called The Arctic Marine Advisory Board, that is chaired by the President of the NTCL, Cameron Clement. They have already had a meeting December 6. They are planning to have another meeting February 3 and 4 in Iqaluit. This board is very concerned about the icebreaker situation in the High Arctic, and we are taking a very strong stand to try to find different ways to deal with this issue. Thank you.

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**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 153-13(4): Regional Librarian Positions

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as Mr. Roy Erasmus has reminded us, education is critical to having a population that is self-sufficient. The literacy in the NWT is very low. An important link in promoting this is our community libraries. These libraries are run by dedicated, underpaid individuals who try to help their communities. In the Baffin and Keewatin, these librarians are trained and assisted by regional librarians. This support is critical, Mr. Speaker, because the headquarters for the library staff are located thousands and thousands of miles away in that far off place called Hay River. Can the Minister indicate how cutting regional librarians in these two regions is consistent with the emphasis this government has on promoting literacy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 153-13(4): Regional Librarian Positions

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the elimination of the regional librarian positions in Rankin and Iqaluit will bring those two regions in line with what is occurring in other regions of the Northwest Territories. Given our experience in the Kitikmeot and the Fort Smith regions, we do not feel that there will be any significant effect on delivery of service by the community libraries in those regions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 153-13(4): Regional Librarian Positions

**MR. PICCO:**

I guess we could say, Mr. Speaker, in the old days the library was a place where everyone was very quiet and could get books. As we all know a lot has changed and libraries are becoming very interesting places with computer terminals, and so on. Can the Minister responsible for the library service, Mr. Dent, describe to me, to this House, what he means when he says public library service, what range of service does the Minister see in those libraries, when there is no regional librarian in the library?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 153-13(4): Regional Librarian Positions

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the same amount of support can be provided to the community libraries as is being provided now. We will still have an ongoing program providing management assistance and training to those who staff community libraries. There really will not be any significant

change in what is available to community libraries, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 153-13(4): Regional Librarian Positions

**MR. PICCO:**

Over the past couple of days on my questioning in this area, the Minister keeps talking about some of the changes in the libraries that are going to take place, and I guess the biggest change is technology. I guess in larger centres libraries can access Internet and other technology which expands its service. Does the Minister see Internet services and accessed information workstation as a key piece of future community libraries?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 153-13(4): Regional Librarian Positions

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my expectation that within the next 18 months, every single community within the Northwest Territories will have access to high speed digital lines, and as a result, we will be able to ensure that every community has better access to information which is typically provided by libraries right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral question. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 153-13(4): Regional Librarian Positions

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to joining the Minister on that information highway. Hopefully, passing him by. The idea of having technology in a community library, I guess, is a good goal. However, this government is only now just starting to develop the process of developing the electronic backbone of a system which will allow communities to access

electronic information systems. In the meantime, people will still need a human link between the community residents and the information they need. In the Baffin and Keewatin, the community librarian plays that important role. Can the Minister indicate whether his department considered retaining the regional librarian positions until our technology systems are tried and tested and actually up and running? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 153-13(4): Regional Librarian Positions

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Mr. Speaker, as I have stated, this move will bring those two regions in line with what is happening in other regions of the Northwest Territories. I cannot justify treating those regions differently than I would, for instance, the Kitikmeot. The answer is, we will proceed with changes that I have outlined, and I think it is important to point out that the services will still be available at the community level. This change will not affect delivery at the community level. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Roland.

Question 154-13(4): Inuvik Health Smoke Advisory

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**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question will be directed toward the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Speaker, in Inuvik for the last couple of weeks, as I left the community of Inuvik, the solid waste site was burning and has continued to burn. Since that time, the town council of Inuvik agreed with Inuvik Regional Health Board that environmental health smoke advisory be issued. My question to the Minister of MACA is, will she work with the community of Inuvik in trying to resolve this issue in a quick and decisive manner? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Ms Thompson.

Return To Question 154-13(4): Inuvik Health Smoke Advisory

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will get my staff to work on it right away. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary To Question 154-13(4): Inuvik Health Smoke Advisory

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seeing that the smoke coming from those fires is causing extreme risk, especially to those who have respiratory problems, I would like to know if the Minister would try and meet with the mayor who is in town in the City of Yellowknife at this time, if that is possible to organize that in the short time that he may have here. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Ms Thompson.

Further Return To Question 154-13(4): Inuvik Health Smoke Advisory

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will set a meeting with the mayor while he is down here as soon as possible.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 155-13(4): BHP/GNWT Socio-Economic Agreement

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for RWED, and it pertains to the socio-economic agreement that was signed between BHP and the GNWT, in which there were obligations agreed to by both parties. My question to the Minister is in relation to the commitments made by the Government of the Northwest Territories, of which they are a number. Could the Minister indicate whether there will be new funds for these particular

commitments, or are we expected to use existing resources? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 155-13(4): BHP/GNWT Socio-Economic Agreement

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, the socio-economic agreement, and the commitments that we made, covers a whole range of issues such as employment, training, business development, cultural, health and social service matters. There has been no specific initiative on the part of this government to allocate specific dollars to meet the commitments that we have outlined. All departments are expected to, within existing resources and proposed departmental budgets, meet the tasks that are expected of them in order to meet the commitments made by this government when we signed that agreement. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 155-13(4): BHP/GNWT Socio-Economic Agreement

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recently spent some time with one of the officials with BHP who had indicated that they had met with some of the communities and that the issue of day care centres and day care programs came up. As an example, could the Minister indicate what he means by working with existing resources and working with the communities? Does that mean it goes into the planning process, or that they will just have to get in line with everybody else for the limited resources? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 155-13(4): BHP/GNWT Socio-Economic Agreement

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, there are, I think, provisions within the government programs that will allow for the creation of day care centres and there are possibilities to access some funds within existing programs to establish day care centres where there is a need, and where they are viable. So, there is no specific program being set up specifically as a result of our commitment with the socio-economic agreement. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 155-13(4): BHP/GNWT Socio-Economic Agreement

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister indicate whether the affected departments that are being impacted by this agreement have been made aware of what is being committed to, and that they may be expected to be responding on behalf of the government? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 155-13(4): BHP/GNWT Socio-Economic Agreement

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, as far as I am aware all deputy ministers are fully aware of the commitments that this government makes when we sign agreements. The agreements have been passed on to senior management and being dealt with at that level. To prepare the individual departments, giving them time to develop plans on how they

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are going to carry out the commitments that fall within their mandate and responsibilities. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 155-13(4): BHP/GNWT Socio-Economic Agreement

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is not so much a question, as it is to thank the Minister for his concise and to the point answers. It is much appreciated. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

I will remind the Members about that after question period. Mr. Ningark.

Question 156-13(4): Keewatin Region Muskox Quotas

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for wildlife management. As I stated in my statement, there is an outstanding request from the three communities that I represent to increase muskox quota in the area of H1-2. Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by commending this government, the people of NWT, hunters and trappers, for their effort to make sure that we manage the wildlife the way we are expected by the scientific community, and by the international conservation organization. I think we should show why do we do well in the area of conservation? Mr. Speaker, we do well because we are dependent upon the wildlife that we have in this jurisdiction. As I indicated in my Member's statement, according to the information that I have received from the government, the enactment to change the quota system for Pelly Bay and Spence Bay was to be enacted in January of 1997. My question to the honourable Minister is, what is the status of the request? Has this government acted to allow the increase of muskox quota for area H1-2? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 156-13(4): Keewatin Region Muskox Quotas

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, there is a muskox management area designated in the east Kitikmeot, which the Member is referring to, that has a quota allocated to it of roughly, I think it is, 40 muskox on an annual basis. There has been a request that has been processed with the proper consultation and approvals from the designated bodies over the last year or two. What we require is to change the big game hunting regulations, in order to meet the request to change it to 55. The

changes in regulation are presently within the Department of Justice, and as of this afternoon I am aware that is still, hopefully this will all be done in time to meet the needs of the region in the next few weeks. It is our expectation that we will be able to comply in time for the hunting season. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 156-13(4): Keewatin Region Muskox Quotas

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the same article. Minister, recognizing that we have a support from every wildlife management group conceivable in the system, namely Kitikmeot region, will the Honourable Minister communicate with the Minister of Justice to speed up the process? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 156-13(4): Keewatin Region Muskox Quotas

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Mr. Speaker, I shall enquire of the Minister if there is some assurance that he can give as to how soon the process will be completed so that we can inform the people of Kitikmeot that we have and are able to meet their requests on a timely basis. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 157-13(4): Funding Arrangements for Detah and N'dilo

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier. Mr. Premier, I just wanted to follow up on my Member's statement on the funding for Detah and N'dilo. Considering the fact that they are in the process of amalgamating into one community, is it possible for this government to start treating Detah

and N'dilo as one community, in terms of funding?  
Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 157-13(4): Funding  
Arrangements for Detah and N'dilo

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is not a new issue to this government and it has been raised previously through previous governments about N'dilo and Detah working to become one community and given proper funding. Presently, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and the Minister is working with both Chief Beaulieu and Chief Sangris to try to facilitate that. The Department of MACA is currently facilitating discussions between the band and the city to determine the financial arrangements that can be made to transfer funding to the band, so that it can deliver services to N'dilo residents directly, as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 157-13(4): Funding  
Arrangements for Detah and N'dilo

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Considering the fact that it may take some time for the amalgamation to formally occur, is it possible for the Cabinet to start treating the two communities as one community prior to the formal legal process has been completed, and to inform them of such? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

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Further Return To Question 157-13(4): Funding  
Arrangements for Dettah and N'dilo

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Presently, whenever any issues come up in N'dilo and Detah, I know that many times I have seen the chiefs, Mr. Beaulieu and Mr.

Sangris, visit the Minister's office to talk directly to the Ministers. We never talk to the Mayor of Yellowknife on the N'dilo and Detah issues. We do treat them separately, and we will continue to do that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 158-13(4): Review of Programs Provided to Seniors

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister for Education, Culture, and Employment. Presently the support to seniors in the Northwest Territories run a full spectrum from no support to full support. For example, in public housing where all the living expenses, except possibly for food and incidentals, are covered by this government, programs of support to seniors are uncoordinated and inconsistent. As such, it is my understanding that these programs are in the process of being reviewed. Can the Minister confirm for me that this review is in fact planned or under way and what we might expect to see addressed in that review and what time frame we are looking at? That is just one question, by the way.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. How many questions is that? The Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment, Mr. Dent. Three questions, I heard.

Return To Question 158-13(4): Review of Programs  
Provided to Seniors

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that there is a review under way of programs provided to seniors. I am afraid that I do not have the time table with me for the review, so I will have to take the last two questions as notice.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Question 159-13(4): Old Crow School Fire

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my opening statement I read a letter from the Chief of Fort McPherson to the Chief of Old Crow in regards to the destruction of their school. In response to that, the community has made an offer to the people of Old Crow to assist them because they have gone through a similar incident a year ago, in which we had to cope with the loss of the school and also, how do you deal with the whole question about where you put the students, and dealing with stress that comes along with a loss of any major facility, especially for the children. In regard to the Fort McPherson groups, which consists of the education council, the band, Tl'oondih healing society. They are formulating a committee to look at what is going to be needed for Old Crow, especially because this fire occurred while school was being conducted. A lot of the children were left with just the shirts on their backs. They lost their parkas, their toques, and their shoes, and whatever. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to question to the Premier if there is any way that this government can assist in this matter to help the Fort McPherson working group in regards to their efforts, allow them with this government, to assist the people of Old Crow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 159-13(4): Old Crow School Fire

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to pass on my condolences on the loss of the school in Old Crow in the Yukon to those people. I know how important a building of that nature is to the people in a various small remote community. As far as what this government can do to assist in Old Crow, as the Members know that we as a public government are entrusted with funds on behalf of the public of the Northwest Territories to spend on Northwest Territories residents. It would be quite difficult for us to assist financially in the Yukon, pretty well impossible. We can help by getting the news out, we can help by asking people in different communities to donate to people in Old Crow, Yukon for the books and whatever else is available. We do have people that can assist in that way. I would be pleased to find out who does that sort of thing on behalf of the government and put them in touch with Mr. Krutko. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 159-13(4): Old Crow School Fire

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to knowing this is in another jurisdiction, is there any possible way this government could put out a call letter for items such as clothing for the children in regards to parkas or shoes or whatever. Having gone through this with the destruction of the Chief Julius School in Fort McPherson, is there a policy in place that we can possibly assist by allowing that policy to be used to assist another jurisdiction in the destruction of a fire?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. I am not too sure whether the question was, does this government have a policy in place to help other jurisdictions. Mr. Krutko, is that the question?

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question relates to the incident that occurred in Fort McPherson last year. I asked the question, is there a policy in place from this government to deal with disasters such as a loss of a school, so that we can assist and be able to orientate the community along with the organizations to pull themselves together and know where to go and find those resources to assist in finding locations for classrooms, finding books and other things like that, which may be needed to get them through that period of time when there is no school in that community.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

It is difficult to rule on this because it is related to a concern outside the Northwest Territories. I will ask if the Premier is willing to respond. Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 159-13(4): Old Crow School Fire

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**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said earlier, our sympathy does go out to the community. I do believe that the Yukon government has not requested any assistance from the Northwest Territories government that I know of. They do have the jurisdiction of Old



Crow in the Yukon and they must have emergency measures. As a matter of fact, when I met with the Minister of Transportation from the Yukon government today, he did inform me that as we spoke there was a team going into the Old Crow from the Yukon government to assess the situation, meet with the community leadership, so that the Yukon government could respond in a very effective, timely manner to the disaster in Old Crow, Yukon. The Yukon government does seem to have the situation handled and once again we do pass on our condolences to that community. We wish Fort McPherson all the best in raising donations to assist the Gwich'in in the Yukon. I am sure people watching the Legislative Assembly, if Mr. Krutko could just let those people know where they can send things to assist, I am sure they will, as northerners usually do. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 159-13(4): Old Crow School Fire

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a question to the government, is the government willing to assist in regards to the travel of this working group or committee that has been established in McPherson to assist the people of Old Crow by travelling over there and pick up the cost for that travel?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Sorry, Mr. Krutko. I must rule the question out of order. You are asking the Premier on an issue that is not his responsibility. It is the Yukon government's responsibility. Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 160-13(4): Community Infrastructure Funding

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Finance Minister, Mr. Todd. In the budget address which was tabled on January 27th, a couple of days ago, the Minister, as one of the initiatives to try and create some employment in the Territories, talked about the infrastructure agreement between the federal, territorial and municipal governments. I understand that these funds are mainly targeted for small construction community infrastructure. I think

every MLA could use additional infrastructure in their communities. At the same time, I think this is costing us a lot of additional funds that we do not have now to operate that infrastructure and I think the Minister alluded to it yesterday on the question of zambonies. But my question to the Minister is, is there potential to contribute more than \$1 million from the GNWT? Would the federal government match that money? If this could happen, could it be used for other than municipal projects or small projects? Could we look at some seed money for highways, sort of to continue with that road to resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 160-13(4): Community Infrastructure Funding

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current infrastructure program that we announced in the budget under the guardianship of Mr. Dent, is just an extension of the existing one. The dollars, of course, are pre-determined by the federal government and it is a 50/50 match up. They put up 1.1 and we are putting up 1.1. I asked Mr. Dent in these discussions to indicate to them if there were any other additional dollars, we would be prepared to try and find the matching ones. My understanding is, there are no additional dollars other than what they have identified. We are not in a position, as Mr. Henry indicates, to do the kinds of road infrastructure that he is intimating.

However, I know that discussions are under way right now at the federal level about the possibility of a road-type infrastructure program. It is premature right now to be able to give you any idea whether that politically will move forward, how it will be financed if it does move forward, and what impact it would have on the Territories. But it is something the Minister of Transportation and the Premier have a particular interest in. Depending on how, would it be fair to say, the coming two or three months unfold prior to the next federal election, there may be a possibility of some of these new programs as you have suggested. But under the current infrastructure program, it is just a continuation of the old one and it is to a maximum of 1.1 million, which we are going to match up with 1.1 million. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 160-13(4): Community Infrastructure Funding

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The 1.1 million as a continuation, were there additional funds or more funds contributed in previous years? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 160-13(4): Community Infrastructure Funding

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Yes, I believe, if my memory serves me correctly and if my casual conversation with Mr. Dent is correct, in the previous one, which was I believe a three year deal, I think the total amount of dollars involved was \$17 million. It was done under this previous government. I believe Mr. Dent is close to making an agreement right now with the federal government for 1.1 million. Previous one, over a three-year term, was 17 million. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 160-13(4): Community Infrastructure Funding

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have known the Finance Minister now for approximately a year and a half and I have yet to hear him accepting no for an answer. He tells me that there is potentially 17 million over a three year program that was in place. Will the Minister consider going back to the federal government, first to attempt to get more funds, and secondly try to persuade the federal government that we could use additional infrastructure, major projects such as highways and roads to resources. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. You used up your final supplementary too. Two questions.

Further Return To Question 160-13(4): Community Infrastructure Funding

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Yes. Two questions, six answers. Mr. Speaker. First of all, we did take the initiative as Mr. Henry suggests, to see if there were any additional dollars over and above the \$1.1 million under the current infrastructure fund. I believe, if my discussion with Mr. Dent is right, that was the maximum they were prepared to give us at this time.

I believe that Mr. Dent is in negotiations right now to try and finalize that. We are very much aware, if anybody is aware, we are aware that any additional dollars that we can get, particularly 50 cent dollars, are to our advantage and of course both practical and political. On the larger issue of trying to find additional resources or to make an arrangement with the federal government and possibly industry on the need for a cooperative approach to an infrastructure highway program, that was under way under the previous government and under previous transportation Ministers and I believe is continuing under the current one.

As I said, we are still hoping, and the signals we are hearing, that there is a possibility that a new joint fund may come about. If that does happen I want to assure my colleague that we will be there at the federal government table seeking our share of the appropriate funding that may come about. There is nothing definitive at this time as to whether the federal government is going to move forward on a joint sponsorship of an infrastructure road program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Question 161-13(4): Transfer of Insurance Liability to Communities

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for MACA. It is in reference to the community empowerment and also community transfers. Mr. Speaker, I raise the concern of the transfer of liability provisions to the hamlets. Mr. Speaker, in an agreement that was signed with the Hamlet of Baker Lake. It stipulated that the GNWT agrees to transfer to the council the responsibility and liability, in so doing relinquishes the Minister from any

responsibility and liability. The council agrees to accept all associated liabilities. Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister is, have all the hamlets been clearly advised of the fact that they have to assume all liability? Are they clearly aware of it? Also, are these small communities able to secure this type of insurance? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Ms Thompson. Two questions.

Return To Question 161-13(4): Transfer of Insurance Liability to Communities

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will get more information on this from my staff and I will get my staff to work with the community. I have a regional person in Rankin Inlet, Paul Somotuk who can go there and talk with the community on this issue. I do not really know all the details of this issue in that particular community, but I will get my department to work with the community. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 161-13(4): Transfer of Insurance Liability to Communities

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Mr. Speaker, would the Minister agree to ensure that all the communities are provided with legal advice on this critical insurance matter? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Ms Thompson.

Further Return To Question 161-13(4): Transfer of Insurance Liability to Communities

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 162-13(4): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, and it is on the seniors' fuel subsidy. This issue was first raised last fall and we discussed it in the House in November, if my memory serves right. Since that time, seniors have raised a number of questions with a number of MLAs. The Standing Committee on Social Programs has also considered it. The Minister has informed us that there is a comprehensive review under way, and I would like to ask the question, who is doing the review? Mr. Speaker, Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 162-13(4): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at this point in time, the process is at the deputy minister level where they are working to ensure that we have information on all the subsidy programs that are being provided to seniors, and to bring them forward all at one time. They will bring that information forward to the group of Ministers who make up the social envelope.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 162-13(4): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

**MR. OOTES:**

Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister was trying to run down our clock so we cannot continue to ask questions on these matters.

-- Laughter and applause

**MR. OOTES:**

I guess my next question would be, will this committee take into consideration or consult the seniors?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 162-13(4): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the deputy ministers responsible for each of the departments and all three Ministers in the social envelope met with the Seniors' Advisory Council last week, when they were in town to discuss issues such as this one, and to discuss how the council's input might be received by this review committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 162-13(4): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, we do not know what the timing of the report will be, and that could take substantial amount of time. As the Minister stated earlier, he has to take that under advisement. We feel fairly strongly as Members about this and wondering if the Minister would consider reinstating the fuel subsidy until this report has been completed and that we can discuss it in the House, especially considering the fact that we do not know when this report may be forthcoming? Mr. Speaker, Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 162-13(4): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seem to be getting mixed signals here. I heard the Member, earlier today, indicate that Members of this House and the public want the program restored. I also heard the Member say that a piece meal approach is wrong, and that Members will not support a rejigged or stop-gapped program. I am not sure whether the Member is recommending that I reinstate the program to the

level at which it was last year or, as I understood from the Social Programs Committee, to look for a manner to make sure the program was carried out in the 1997/98 year at a funding level similar to that which is in the current year's budget. It is difficult for me to respond without having some clarity. I would also like to point out that it was only Friday that I met with the Seniors Advisory Council. They indicated that they thought they would be willing to come forward with some suggestions in relatively short order. I asked them to make sure that it was very quick so that if we are able to identify funds to continue this program, we can announce it sooner, rather than later. I think it would be far better to wait to get some advice from the seniors on the design of a program before saying that I will restore the program to the former levels.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 162-13(4): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

**MR. OOTES:**

Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My comments today were, Mr. Speaker, that this review should be completed as quickly as possible, and that we needed a clear cut policy of support to give to our elders, and that the current piece meal approach is confusing and frustrating. But I think it is important to know, if the review is going to take substantial time, if the Minister will consider reinstating the fuel subsidy as it was before the summer, and I understand that there is no money in this particular budget for the fuel subsidy at the present time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 162-13(4): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I took the question as notice as to the timetable for the report of the committee. I cannot necessarily agree with the Member that the report will be a long time coming. I will, when I respond to the question taken as notice, give a timetable for responding. Yesterday, I was accused of not being able to listen well. I have a three

year old son who does not enunciate very well, and I think that I listen very clearly. I have listened to the recommendations that have been given to me and where the funding should come from to provide this service. One of the suggestions was already in the business plan which was presented to the Standing Committee on Social Programs. One would require a reduction in social assistance or income support payments to people who are already desperately in need. The other required moving funds from the Housing Corporation into the Department of Education, Culture, and Employment. Given the tone of the questions I have heard to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation in the last few days, I am not sure how much support there would be for reducing funding to the corporation at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Question 163-13(4): Support for Igloodik Hockey Team

**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be directing my question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. In my constituency, I received a letter from a hockey team. They will be going to a tournament to Pond Inlet from Igloodik. We have requested funding. This game is very important. Maybe the Minister can reassure me that it costs quite a lot of money, up to \$12,000 to go to a tournament, they have to travel by airplane. Can the Minister of MACA reassure me that the funding will be forthcoming? Thank you.  
(Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Ms Thompson.

Return To Question 163-13(4): Support for Igloodik Hockey Team

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hockey tournament team from Pond Inlet to Igloodik can seek funding from the Iqaluit office, Mike Ferris, is the superintendent of intercommunity sports program, funding is available. If that money is not enough, than they will have to raise it locally. They can receive some support. Also, they can

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try and request from NWT Hockey Association. The chairman is from Fort Simpson, Denis Bedard, can be requested for the remainder of money that is available. They will have to raise some of the money themselves, but some support is available. Thank you.

(Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Ningark.

Question 164-13(4): Coastguard Icebreaker Operations

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Transportation. As my friend and colleague, Mr. Barnabas, alluded to regarding the Canadian Coast Guard service to the western Arctic, Gjoa Haven and Taloyoak are services by and from the western Arctic area. It is my understanding that Gjoa Haven and Taloyoak will be effected by the plan to reduce the icebreaker support service in the western Arctic. My question to the honourable Minister, if in effect the services will be reduced, will there be no disruption of yearly supply of goods and services to Gjoa Haven and Taloyoak. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Transportation. Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 164-13(4): Coastguard Icebreaker Operations

**HON. JAMES ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated earlier on, the Canadian Coast Guard plan to cancel an icebreaker to service the western Arctic. Their plan is to use the icebreaker from the east, and that is the plan based on their budget reductions, as I understand. This was announced without any consultation to our people who are going to be effected, the municipalities the honourable Member mentioned, as well as the carriers, NTCL, the government. We are very concerned about that as well. We realize their plans are new and we really have not analyzed what kind of effect it is going to have on the ice breaking services in the north. What I could say is that we are fully aware of the situation, and that we are trying

everything that we can to try to change the decision of the Canadian Coast Guard.

As I indicated earlier, the Canadian Coast Guard established a board, called the Arctic Marine Advisory Board, and this is to consult the stakeholders which includes everyone that I mentioned, the NTCL, the municipalities, the government, everybody will be consulted on this matter. What we are doing, the coast guard has expressed an interest in discussing some innovative solutions to ensure that reliable marine activities exist in these communities. There is a meeting coming up again in February in Iqaluit, and we will press this issue some more at that time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Written Question 4-13(4): Programs for Seniors

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My written question today is for the Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment. In view of the recognition that the assistance to seniors, and programs to seniors are inconsistent and that a study is being undertaken, I am wondering what defence and justification can be offered for such inconsistency which would result in the unfair treatment of some seniors, and in fact, discrimination against seniors trying to live independently in their own homes. We have heard recently in this house, that there is going to be a one year postponement put on the implementation of phase three of the rent scale, because its deemed to require further assessment and study, because it may be imposing financial hardship on low to middle income families. I do not how much revenue this government is forfeiting by such a postponement, but in light of the department's admission of the need to review support to seniors, why does the same principle of postponement not apply?

Why has the department taken such a hard line with respect to a program affecting such a cherished and respected sector of our society who have worked hard, make our communities richer and more balanced places to live, and citizens who may not have the physical ability to go out and find ways of supplementing their usually fixed and modest

incomes. Why has the department taken such a hard line? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To remind the Members when they do drop off written questions, the preamble should be very brief, and the question should not raise a debate. It should be based to provide technical information, detailed information. I will make a ruling on your written questions after I review the Hansards. Mrs. Groenewegen. Written questions.

Written Question 5-13(4): Attention Deficit Syndrome/Disorder

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question is to the Honourable Kelvin Ng, Minister for Health and Social Services, and the Honourable Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. In view of a recent report on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome in children in Inuvik, and the growing identification of Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, the question arises, if these percentages are common for most communities in the north? The fact remains that the diagnosis is a health issue and the subsequent challenge of educating these children is a Department of Education responsibility. Will the Honourable Kelvin Ng and the Honourable Charles Dent clearly identify for the House and the public, what initiatives they propose to take to deal with these pervasive and endemic problems?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Written questions. Mr. Rabesca.

Written Question 6-13(3): Cancer Statistics

**MR. RABESCA:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question for the Minister of Health. Over the years a number of our residents have passed on due to one form or another of cancer. Could the Minister provide the number of cancer cases that have resulted in death for over the past five years? Supplementary 1, could the Minister also provide types of cancer and what the numbers of people that have passed away for each type? Supplementary 2, does the Minister feel that there is enough awareness to the public regarding cancer prevention and treatment? Supplementary 3, does our current health system have the necessary technology

to treat different forms of cancer and provide proper diagnosis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Rabesca. Written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, replies to budget address. Mr. Ootes.

**ITEM 10: REPLIES TO BUDGET ADDRESS**

Replies to Budget Address 2-13(4): Ootes

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is no doubt a weariness by the public with our deficit cutting agenda. However, many northerners know this is important, even if they do not like it. Hopefully, with this budget, we now have the deficit under control. The deficit elimination effort has consumed our attention for two budgets. Last year it was difficult, but this budget is even more difficult because such areas as staff cuts are more pronounced. We are dealing with the most difficult budget in the history of the NWT, as Mr. Todd said yesterday. I am certainly quite prepared to support the tough decisions that need to be made to eliminate this ugly problem. However, even if we balance the books this year, I understand we are not out of the woods yet.

We do not know what the federal financial cut backs are forthcoming, nor if we will encounter any disasters this year. Also, we have to remember, we still have an accumulated debt load of \$50,000,000, which must be eliminated at some point. This debt load continues to cost this government several million dollars per year. Mr. Todd presented an interesting budget address, but I must remind everyone that \$80 million was scooped out of the budget. I think it is important for the public to note where the cuts have been made. The operations and maintenance budget has been reduced by about \$30 million.

The departmental reductions from 1996-97, to this budget are as follows, and I think this is of interest to the public, Mr. Speaker. The Legislative Assembly has been increased by, in the operation and maintenance end, the Legislative Assembly has been increased by \$12,000, the Executive, the following are reductions, the Executive \$5,889,000 reduction, Finance \$974,000 reduction, Public Works and Services \$8,188,000, NWT Housing Corporation

\$3,303,000, Education, Culture, and Employment \$612,000, Transportation \$4,380,000, Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development \$13,968,000. An increase has been proposed for the following departments: Municipal and Community Affairs \$2,131,000, Health and Social Services \$6,011,000, and Justice \$1,201,000. The capital budget has been reduced by \$50,000,000. The departmental reductions from

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Mr. Krutko, your point of order. (microphone off) In the chamber, Mr. Clerk. The Chair recognizes the quorum. We are still on item 10, replies to the budget address. Mr. Ootes, continue.

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is encouraging to get the Members back so quickly, and rather discouraging when we are speaking with a very interesting speech, but thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will continue.

The capital budget has been reduced by \$50,000,000, the departmental reductions from 1996-97 to this year are as follows: Municipal and Community Affairs \$10,600,000, Public Works \$1,355,000, Health and Social Services \$8,152,000, Justice \$1,858,000, N.W.T. Housing Corporation \$3,653,000, Education, Culture, and Employment \$10,566,000, Transportation \$12,086,000, Resources and Wildlife and Economic Development \$2,260,000, and Legislative Assembly has been increased by \$495,000.

We cannot continue to reduce the capital budget to that extent without serious long term implications and the Minister of Finance has said that yesterday as well, Mr. Speaker.

It is also important to refer to staff position reductions and they are as follows: headquarters 242 positions, Fort Smith 93, Inuvik 80, Baffin 37, Keewatin 24, Kitikmeot 13. I am very concerned about the amount of staff reductions, Mr. Speaker. The job reductions effect all constituencies and communities.

I would like to comment on the Minister's statement, that we have participants in the budgetary process. While this is true, I would like to explain that, in my case, like some other Members, this has been limited to a review of business plans for two departments and other Members for perhaps other departments. I did not have a hand in reviewing all the business plans of

all the departments. And as we go through the review and approval process, I think that I will be very observant and ask a number of questions of the appropriate Ministers in those particular areas that are before us.

Going through this budgetary process is a very important step. It must be done by all of us as carefully as possible so we can tackle the next huge hurdle, and that is division. As we head towards division, we must be sure of our steps. From my constituency, division of the N.W.T. means a phenomenal amount of change. Yes, it is true, we have a diamond mine under construction. Yes, it is true, this will provide 600 permanent jobs. What is also true is that not all 600 employees will choose to live in Yellowknife. Many employees will be scattered in various communities, such as Hay River, Fort Smith, Rae, Edzo, Lutselk'e, Wha Ti, Coppermine. Yellowknife has been hit with this budget with the loss of 242 positions. Last year, about 200 positions were eliminated. Division will mean the transfer of several hundred more positions, and the economic impact of all this is very severe for Yellowknife, its business communities, and its citizens. Not only are we losing the positions, and many of employees, but our business community will also be, as times goes, hit with a substantial less demand for existing office space that is here now.

Speaking about division, Mr. Speaker, a big question that we need to urgently know, is: what will be the cost of operating Nunavut? And the Minister of Finance is well aware of our concerns and he also is very concerned about this, so that we can get on with identifying our incremental costs and transitional costs and making representations to the federal government to provide appropriate funding for this government for incremental and transitional costs, as well as the new, so that we in the west know what we can look forward to for funding for our government.

This is the second year that we have seen an increase in the social envelope expenditures. This year, the forced growth is \$40,000,000. This area is out of control. Mr. Todd is right. We need to address this issue. As a percentage of total expenditures, the social envelope funding has increased from 58 percent in 1995-96, to 61.5 percent in this budget. We cannot continue to add to this envelope and take away from

other programs. Otherwise, we will eventually have no other departmental programs.

The northern public has never had to face cut backs the way we have to deal with during our term. But this is reality. It is also real to me that the expectations of northerners will have to be brought down to a more reasonable level. In order to keep our costs at a sustainable, it may mean the public has to accept a lower level of service, or the elimination of some programs. We cannot depend on the federal government to fund us to the hilt forever. Currently, 80 percent of our revenues are received from the feds. We generate very little revenue from our own economic activity.

I am disappointed that this budget did not offer up any large scale economic thrust and very disappointed that the Premier's panel on the Economy did not bring forward a report that would enlighten us all as to what can be done to create jobs and to stimulate our economy. I appreciate that the concentration had to be on deficit elimination, but frankly we seem so engrossed with cutting GNWT staff, thus creating unemployment, and justifying the problems facing the social envelope area, that we are totally ignoring a sector of the north that can provide some solutions to a number of social problems.

We have to develop economic and job opportunities in such areas as tourism, mining, forestry, fishing, and the fur industry, and by small business. I hope the Minister of Finance will soon make announcements about the potential investment program opportunities stemming from the investment search work that was done last summer and a good initiative. We need to look at how we can support northern businesses more effectively, however. This government's role is multi-fold. It is to run an efficient fiscally responsible administration, but it is also here to improve the health lifestyle of its people, and in order to do this, this government must help people get out of the social safety net. My preference for a focus on job creation does not, however, necessarily mean I want to return to high deficits. There will be no argument from me that our government has to continue to act in a fiscally responsible way. I am sure there is not a desire, by anyone here, to return to the past of budget deficit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**



Thank you. I would like to remind the Members, in order to maintain some consistency in the House, that we are informed of Members that wish to make replies. Mr. Ootes, you are part of the House planning committee that meets at one o'clock. If there was to note, a reply, then I would have called a break, so that Members can remain in the House after to listen to the replies. Just to maintain some order in the House. The other point I wanted to make is, again to remind Mr. Miltenberger that when he gets up to express his appreciation, question period is not the time to express that. Replies to budget address. Item 11, petitions. Mr. Miltenberger.

#### ITEM 11: PETITIONS

##### **MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition dealing with the matter of recent budget reductions at Thebacha campus. Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 395 signatures, and Mr. Speaker, the petitioners request that the government and the Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment, reconsider its decision in regards to cut backs in the education field, specifically as they effect Thebacha campus of Aurora College. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

##### **MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. This is not long. Mr. Picco.

#### ITEM 12: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

##### **MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your Standing Committee on Infrastructure has the honour of presenting its report of 97-98 main estimates for the Department of Finance, Public Works and Services, Municipal and Community Affairs, and the Executive, including the Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs and the Financial Management Board Secretariat. Your committee commends it to the House.

The departments in the infrastructure envelope fall into two categories. The Departments of Public Works and Services and Municipal and Community Affairs, both have provided services to government, municipalities and individuals. The other areas in the envelope, the Executive, Aboriginal Affairs, Finance and the Financial Management Board Secretariat are central organizations which serve the entire government and provide central direction.

In all departments in this envelope the two themes that have governed the development of the 97-98 business plans and main estimates are community empowerment and user say, user pay. The effects of these themes are most obvious in Municipal and Community Affairs, and Public Works and Services respectfully. Many of the services provided to communities by both MACA and PWS will be devolved to the communities through the community empowerment initiative. As well the authority to pay for and in some cases contract for most of the services provided to government departments and communities by PWS will be devolved to those departments and communities through user say, user pay initiatives.

As a result Mr. Speaker, both MACA and PWS are changing from service providing departments to service monitoring departments. The change will be especially dramatic, dramatic in PWS of the current 97-98 planned expenditures of \$88 million. However, about \$56 million will be transferred to other departments during the 97-98 fiscal year. Mr. Speaker by 1999, PWS appropriations will have been reduced to about one tenth of their historical levels.

Throughout this review, committee members have examined these devolution initiatives carefully. The Standing Committee wonders whether such initiatives as community empowerment and user say, user pay would have been introduced in a time of fiscal plenty given that these initiatives are being introduced only at a time of severe fiscal restraint.

Committee Members want to ensure that these initiatives really are aimed at making government more efficient and effective. The committee does not want to see these initiatives used as excuses. Excuses for off loading important responsibilities onto other agencies.

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Now there is some concern with the information flow. The Standing Committee acknowledges that consultative way in which departmental business plans and budgets have been developed during the term of the 13th Assembly is new both to the Cabinet and the departments. With that in mind, it is understandable that information flow to standing committees will not be perfect, and what is, Mr. Speaker. However, after more than a year to get used to the new way of doing things, committee members continue to be frustrated, frustrated by the timing of information received by the committee, including

information requests following meetings on the draft business plans in October. Far too often information relevant to a committee meeting arrives on the same day or a day or two before the meeting. More often at the beginning of the meeting itself.

Mr. Speaker, committee members and their staff need to have adequate time to review information provided by the different departments, especially during reviews of the business plans and of course, the main estimates. When information arrives only a short time before meetings, neither Members nor their staff are able to properly analyze the information and prepare for the meetings. Mr. Speaker, as a result, important issues may not receive the detailed attention they deserve. Mr. Speaker, that concludes the introductory comments on the Standing Committee on Infrastructure for our review of the 1997-98 main estimates. I would therefore move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Seamus Henry, that this report be received and moved into the committee of the whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Your motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour. All those opposed. Motion is carried. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Mr. Speaker, I would seek unanimous consent to wave Rule 93(4) and have the Standing Committee on Infrastructure Report on the 1997-98 main estimates moved into the committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. The Member for Iqaluit is seeking unanimous consent to waive our Rules 93(4). Do we have any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent Mr. Picco, and accordingly the Report 3-13(4) will be moved into committee of the whole. Reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters, Bill 8, Community Report 2-13(4) and 3-13(4). Mr. Ningark to the chair.

**ITEM 20: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I would like to call the committee to order. Item 20. We have a number of items to be considered, Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1997-98; Committee Report 2-13(4), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the 1997-98 Main Estimates and Committee Report 03-13(4), Standing Committee on Infrastructure. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Mr. Chairman, I would recommend that we consider Bill 8, Appropriation Act and general comments by Members, followed by review of the Department of the Executive and Finance.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Do we agree? Do we have concurrence of the Members that we will deal with Bill 8, continuation of yesterday's general comments. If we are able to conclude that item, the Department of Executive general comments. We will all take 15 minute break. Thank you.

-- Break

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I would like to call the committee back to order. When we concluded yesterday, we were dealing with Bill 8 Appropriation Act, 1997-98 and general comments. Before I recognize Members under the general comments, I would like to remind each and every Member that we have a rule that we try to follow in the committee of the whole. There are times that we tend to forget about the rule we have, but each and every Member without thinking the rights of Members to express their opinion. However I would like to remind everyone, each and every Member is allowed to speak for 10 minutes each time. When the time elapses the chair will remind a Member that his or her time has run out and at that time I will, as a chair, recognize other Members who have not spoken. It is to be fair. Okay. That rule was expressed in the committee of the whole. In the Committee Ordinary Members Caucus as well as other Members outside of this House. I need the help of each and every Member to try and recognize that in fact we have a rule here. Okay. Thank you. General comments. Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in my general comments to the budget I would like to address a few points that some Members have already spoken towards, but I still would like to address these points from my point of view as well. My first point is the overall picture that this budget gives to the general public is that at first glance it seems that this is a very good budget in the sense that we are now addressing the second phase and possibly the last phase of the cuts to the positions and the reductions to programs. In fact, that is what this budget is doing, but what has to be pointed out is that it will be a year before we know these results to cuts to programs and further cuts to positions.

Up to now, the government has put in place some reductions to programs already and I am sure most of the communities are still analyzing, since their fiscal years are just approaching their ends. They will only now realize whether they have survived this reductions in funding. For instance in the past year the government has reduced water and sewage expenditures by 5 percent to the hamlets and communities. The communities are still absorbing this and adjusting to it and of course the citizens in the communities as well have to adjust to this. There may be further cuts to this in the communities that the hamlets themselves will have to apply in order to adjust to these cuts to water and sewage programs.

Now we are suggesting to them that there is going to be a roll back of 5 percent on overall expenditures for hamlets. This, at a time when there is an increase in power rates and an increase in fuel rates, is hard for the hamlets. At this point in time I am sure administrators are trying to adjust to see how they will put their budget in place to incorporate these cut

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backs and increased costs. So in this regard, the results of these roll backs and expenditures are not going to be really addressed completely or realized completely in the communities for at least a year or two. No doubt, as with other government expenditures, whenever there is a cut back it never comes back later. You never see the government put back money that they have taken away.

There is also the situation of community empowerment where communities are realizing that as they accept these programs, they are accepting them with less funding than the government used to

do the same job. Many of them are reluctant to accept these programs because this is all the impacts of these cutbacks or reductions in costs and responsibilities as well, have not been analyzed completely and not been in place long enough for hamlets to really be able to make decisions at this time as to whether this was a good move on the part of the government. No doubt it was a necessary move on the part of the government, but the hamlets still have to adjust to this.

We talk about reform for income support. Well, the last I heard, the reform for income support was supposed to start January the 1st of this year. I have not heard yet from the communities whether this is in fact being done. Therefore, it is going to be a year at least before we start getting the full impact as MLAs from the general public as to these roll backs and cut backs to programs.

I have heard that there may also be cut backs to the O and M money for my alcohol centre in Tuktoyaktuk for instance. 50 percent cutback. Well if we are going to do these things we must do them in such a manner to allow these communities to actually put their budgets in place by the fiscal year of April 1st. They have the same fiscal year as we do. If we are going to do this, we must do this with enough information to the communities to adjust to this in time. And no doubt there is going to be negative responses from the people that work and deliver these programs because they would feel it is almost impossible to operate at those costs, effectively. So I guess in summary of this particular subject, on the budget, I would say that the reductions in program and positions will not be felt for a time yet and we can expect lots of negative response from the public especially in our ridings.

On the second topic that I wish to talk about Mr. Chairman.....

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Steen, you will need consent of the committee to continue, if you want to continue speaking, your time has elapsed. Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Mr. Chairman, the last time I looked at the number here I had seven minutes to go.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Steen that was my fault, I was momentarily disrupted when I looked up in the gallery and saw my wife sitting there, so I was a little bit slow turning the time on, so I apologize for that but your time actually did run out. Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Do I have unanimous consent to continue?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Steen, committee did agree. Carry on. Thank you.

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will continue. My second point is in regards to the governments plans to start addressing division, as suggested that they have now finished with the cut backs and roll backs. They are suggesting here there is many very important topics that have to be addressed in regards to division. I would like, Mr. Chairman, to address this point from the perspective that last sitting we were here before Christmas, we in committee of the whole talked about the governments response to NIC, and the response put through here was from the government with comments from the Members.

I recall at that time that I stated I was reluctant to impose my will on the Nunavut government or people by suggesting what form of government they should come up with. Therefore I put forward that I would support the government's position provided that we are not going to impose this on the Nunavut people but rather as an advisory capacity. Now that was my understanding of our approach to NCI's Footprints 2. Mr. Speaker, since that time and in this budget address, the Ministers suggested that we are going to come up with a new model of

government which would fit both the Nunavut and the new Territories. Now I am not sure if I totally agree that as a Member that has a riding that will end up in the west rather or not I feel confident in my self that I would be imposing my will, if you may, on the design for the government of Nunavut. I am always under the impression, Mr. Chairman, that this is the responsibility of NIC and I thought we were advisors so to speak as to what they would come up with in the end as far as a design for a new government for Nunavut. Therefore I am reluctant to, and I am a bit surprised, I might say, to find out that this government is in fact designing a new model for Nunavut which is

in fact going to be a new model for this new western territory.

I am not sure if we have the mandate to do this and perhaps the Minister could clarify that from his point of view, but nonetheless as a Member I would be very careful whether I approved such a model for Nunavut knowing full well that whatever I wish on Nunavut no doubt applies to me in the west. In other words, if I suggest this is a good model for Nunavut there is no doubt that I am supporting this model for the west. I am not sure if I am prepared to do that at this point in time. I am not sure if I am prepared to have the government spend that much time doing this at this point in time. Knowing that time costs money.

There is no doubt, Mr. Chairman, that if I as a Member whose riding will eventually end up in the west and if I feel reluctant, not only reluctant, I feel that I have no business designing a government for Nunavut, I would suggest does it also not stand then that the Nunavut Members and Cabinet should be reluctant to design a government for the west. Let us not forget the basic principle of good government. You do not design something you do not have to live with. Since I do not have to live with the results of my decisions in Nunavut. I wonder just how much the Nunavut Cabinet Members have to designing a government for the west because they will not have to live with their decisions either.

I am not suggesting this as a possible confrontation between east and west but it is obvious that at some point in time this has to be addressed. In the east, we could say very easily that NTI, NIC and the new commissioner would be basically responsible for designing the government and a new model of

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government if they wish. But we do not have such a process in place for the west. Although there seems to be one slowly shaping up. It may be that would be the appropriate way to go. On the other hand, we could just leave well enough alone. In other words, leave the status quo in place and let the two new governments come up with a design that suits themselves after division. I have no problems with that. I do not understand why we are trying to fix something that is not broken. I do not understand that. There is nothing wrong with the existing government that I can see.

-- Applause

**MR. STEEN:**

We have the Minister on the one hand saying that he is finished redesigning the government. He is finished cutting the programs. He is finished rolling back the departments and the amalgamations. Does that mean that we have an existing model right now that is good enough? I would like response from the Minister on those points.

My last point, a very important point in my region, is that over the last few days, since we came back from the Christmas break, there has been many comments about the amount of work, job creation, potential jobs at the mines, all this in regards to the southern Mackenzie. Some Members are saying that they are really feeling the cutbacks because of the government positions being lost in the communities. I can sympathize with them in that matter. But on the other hand, if we look at the budget, there is nothing in this budget that addresses the shortages of jobs in my region. There is nothing. There are some training program, they are very little if I have to dig pretty deep to find them. There is no doubt that in the Nunavut area, on top of the expenditures from this budget, there is \$130 million infrastructure money that is going to be spent over there. So there is job creation. There is going to be short-term economic development over there, job opportunities, business opportunities. No doubt about it. In Yellowknife, all these guys that are crying about no opportunities and no development and are asking for a major redesigning to their highways, which are no doubt expensive, they do not seem to realize that there is a big expenditure already, every summer on highways in the Yellowknife area, in Hay River area, in the Fort Smith area. But there is absolutely nothing in the western Arctic, in the Inuvik area and in my area. You could almost look at two thirds of this territory having good economic or job opportunities for this year into the next couple of years, with the mines and with the infrastructure development of the east. But there is absolutely nothing for the Beaufort. There is nothing. What little we have as far as capital plans, I already realized myself that 15 percent of that is going to BIP, what little of that there is.

So, if I take into consideration, Mr. Chairman, everything that I identified in this budget in regards to addressing the job shortages in my area, I would say that no doubt this government is playing a socialist government again, feeding all the people for nothing but do not work it. They still have not changed that attitude. Until they change that attitude we are going

to be nothing but dependents of the government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Steen. I would like to remind the Members of the time limit. I would also remind the Ministers in this case to try to be concise and direct when responding to Members' questions. Mr. Steen indicated he would like a response from the Honourable Minister Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Can I suggest that there may be some other general comments and once that is done I can conclude. Then we can get on with Executive and go line by line.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Mine were not worth responding to?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Mr. Chairman, no. If anybody is worth responding to it is Mr. Steen. I would suggest that I do what I did yesterday, that if there are any other general comments. If there are no more general comments, I will then respond to Mr. Steen. Then I will suggest to as the Chairman that we move on to opening comments from the Executive and get on to line by line.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I am now seeking direction from the Committee Members. Mr. Todd wants to respond after Members who have not spoken in the general comments have spoken first. Agreed? That is noted. Mr. Steen, Mr. Todd will respond to you after some other Members who have not spoken have spoken. Any other general comments? Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to throw the roses first of all and congratulate the government in at least bringing a balanced budget

and second accolade should go to the fact that there are no tax increases. I think there were probably many other initiatives that are very worthwhile. I think there are also some negatives with this budget.

Initial comments I have heard on the government producing a surplus of \$9 million, Mr. Chairman. I would suggest that \$9 million on 1.2 is more like a balanced budget than it is to a surplus. I agree with the comments that were made that a couple of mishaps during the year and you could be \$9 million the other way. Something I would suggest to the government is to take a look at and prioritize projects. If they find when they are nine months into the program and we will be finishing up with at \$9 million at that time the government could use that list of priorities to create some economic activity or contribute to other areas of the economy that will indeed promote job creation.

I think it acceptable to say that there have been large employee cutbacks, both in the present financial year that we are in and projections for the next financial year. I am disappointed at the method that has been used by the government in reducing the bureaucracy. I believe that dollar amounts are identified and then numbers of employees to equal that amount are produced. I think that until does take a look at programs and services that it provides, until it does that and prioritizes what programs or services that they will choose not to supply in the future, I think that is the only constructive way to handle the job lay-offs in the bureaucracy. What I would like to see and have been promoting is prioritize the program that the government should not supply further and the bureaucracy that is employed to administer those programs,

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they would terminate. I think that is a much better way of doing it.

I am concerned also with the cuts to the capital spending. As was noted, it is going from approximately 200 million a few years to 110 million. Some of this money is going to social programs and as I look at the social envelope we have gone from 58 percent a couple of years to 61 percent in this next fiscal year. I think it is evident that we do not have a handle on that spending.

I have concerns about the process of how the budget is dealt with. Ordinary Members, up until last Monday when the budget was introduced, have really been

gagged as to receiving public input. They have been aware of many of the items that are in the budget and have had input, as has been noted, but we have not had the opportunity to receive input from our constituents on this. At the same time there has been Members of the government who have been discussing initiatives that are in the budget with some public. The Ordinary MLAs have not had the same opportunity to receive input from the public.

The Minister, in his document, has talked about this government not being able to absorb any further revenue reductions. Mr. Chairman, I believe the federal government has to be made aware that we appreciate the support over the years but without some form of a safety net, and it has been referred to as a floor, we are going to be in state of turmoil and at the whim of reduction to spendings by southern provinces.

I refer to the social spending going from 58 percent to 61.5 in this budget. I guess that begs a question, are we being better educated or healthier with this additional money. It has been noted a couple of time, I believe that this government has to put more resources into educating people and in some cases children about this government's inability to care of the number and the birthrates that we have in many of the communities. I think it is a topic that is not dealt with as straight forward as it could and should be. The Minister of Finance noted that it can get to a state where we will not have the funds to help people at all.

I listened with interest to comments from Mr. Krutko about the small amounts of capital funding that is contributed to his community. I certainly can identify with that. As I look at the 4.1 million that is received by Yellowknife in capital funding and I divide that by a population of 17,000, I get something like \$241 per person. I would agree with Mr. Krutko, we certainly are in the same boat as he finds himself in.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Hear, hear!

**MR. HENRY:**

I was glad in the document, and it has been announced by the government through Mr. Arlooktoo, that the amalgamation has been put on hold. I would also suggest that the privatization of petroleum products would also get the same amount of debate and consideration before anything is finalized in that particular item.

The question of division, I would also look forward to the Minister's concurrence for a timeline that he agreed to produce which would outline the priorities for division and the groups or individuals or organizations that are responsible for making decisions in a timely fashion so that division can proceed in an organized fashion and that we are not backlogged in making decisions on division for a new western territory and Nunavut without proper time to debate all the issues and concerns. I have stated before that I believe that Nunavut should have a vast majority of the decisions as regards how they wish their government set up.

There are a couple of points that I have been consistent on and I am glad to see the government is consistent on and I would certainly like some response from the Minister in this regard. I note where the budget document under labour relations, there is three points where the government talks about the present staff. The first point talks about all GNWT staff located in Nunavut must become employees of Nunavut government. The second point is existing GNWT headquarters staff should have a hiring priority. The third the principles must be applied to the staffing of Nunavut. I would like the Minister to revisit that particular part. I notice two of the items talk about what the Nunavut must do and as regards existing GNWT headquarters staff...

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Henry, your time has run out. Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would seek unanimous consent to conclude these comments.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

We do not need unanimous consent, but we do need consent to continue the statement. Do we have agreement? Proceed, Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like some comment from the Minister, if it was a typing error or maybe the government could clarify their position on that. As I said, two of the points there are must and one is should. I think probably must in all three cases would be more appropriate. Mr. Chairman, that would conclude my remarks at this time as we are proceeding in the budget under different departments I will also raise individual points. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Henry. There was some implication that Mr. Henry wanted some response from the Minister. As we all agreed, we will allow each and every Member to speak then once there are no other Members who wish to speak to the item on the table, will allow the Minister to respond. Are there any more general comments from the membership? Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Mr. Chairman, did you wish to get everybody that has not spoken first?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Erasmus, I have indicated at the beginning of this forum that I would allow Members who have not spoken the opportunity to speak. You were the first one to signify you wanted to speak so I recognized you. Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was quite pleased to see in the budget address that there has been a slight increase to the social envelope area. I say that because I know that there are some misconceptions out there. The social envelope does not only include the area of income support or what used to be called social assistance. It includes training and education, health and housing, as well as justice. Mr. Chairman, in fact, the income support area has not increased. It has levelled off. The two or three percent increase that is taking place is not because of income support.

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That income support is a very, very small part of the overall budget. I understand that the income support is approximately 15 percent of the overall Education, Culture and Employment budget and four percent of the total budget.

Mr. Chairman, the education levels in the Northwest Territories are at a third world level. Studies in the south have indicated that poor education is related to poverty and related to early deaths and poor health and also to high birthrates. It seems to me that if we want to try to improve the death rates, health and to decrease our forced growth which is largely caused by births to young people, then we have to spend more money or be consistent with our funding at least in the education area.

Also I have heard that we should be putting our efforts into job creation. Mr. Chairman, it does not make too much sense to create a bunch of jobs if we do not have people that are trained well enough to take advantage of those jobs. It seem to me that we have to concentrate on training those people who are unable to take advantage of the jobs and unable to take advantage of the Impact Benefit Agreements that we have negotiated with BHP and that will be negotiated with mines and other areas that come on board in the future.

If we train people, they will be able to get jobs. If we educate people, they will be more able to get jobs. That, in turn, will be able to get them off income support. Mr. Chairman, putting money into education and training is an investment in the future. An investment that the Northwest Territories drastically needs. If it was up to me, I would pour a lot more money into those areas. Mr. Chairman, Education, Culture and Employment is currently working on an NWT labour force development plan. We hope that this will start to address some of the problems that I have spoken about in the areas of training and poor education.

One of the reasons why there has been an increase in the social envelope is because of new initiatives. Some of those new initiatives include early childhood intervention and for families. Mr. Chairman, I have been involved on early intervention projects and I know that there have been studies done which indicate that a child that has gone through early intervention basically if you have kindergarten and maybe pre-school that type of thing you are more likely to finish school. You are more likely to get a job once you get out of school and more likely to go on to post-secondary, which is college, a trade, university, that type of thing. You are also less likely to go on social assistance once you are an adult. You are less likely to be incarcerated, which also places a huge strain on our resources when we have to have hundreds of our people in our institutions. Once you do get a job, if you are laid off you are less likely to remain unemployed for a great length of time.

One American study that I am aware of indicates that every dollar spent on early intervention saves you \$5 or \$6 in the future. Mr. Chairman, I must indicate that these types of initiatives are very good initiatives and we should support them. Some of that money is also going into training people in the communities, so that once community empowerment does happen the people in the communities will be trained in order to do a good job. There are Members who have

commented that the social area is going too high, but they have also commented that to do community empowerment we have to train the people in the communities. We have to be consistent in what we are saying. You want people trained, it is going to cost dollars.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I was not timing you but I believe that your time has run out, Mr. Erasmus. You need consent to carry on. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

No, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to thank you for allowing me to speak and say these brief comments in this area. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

I wanted to remind Members again, we are at the very beginning of the budget review. When we go line by line, page by page, activity by activity, department by department there will be time to allow the Members to come up with general comments and questions. At this time, I would like to indicate to you those Members who have not spoken yet wish to speak. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Point of procedure, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

I will recognize Mr. Picco, then Mr. Steen. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, just a point of procedure that we have asked different things in the committee of whole at this present time and the people in the Northwest Territories like to see us get on with the main estimates and the review of the budget, so that information can come out. Mr. Erasmus, yesterday, had his point on the budget address through pages 416, 417 and 418 of the Hansard. I think we should be moving on with the committee of the whole and stop this type of verbiage from continuing. If he wants to continue with his budget address, he can do a reply to the budget address, he has opening statement, he can do in the Members' statement, and he can also do it as a reply to the Commissioner's address. Not in this forum, he already did it once.



**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I would like to remind each and every Member. Try not to provoke an argument in this forum. However, the debate is noted. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I humbly apologize for taking Ed's time, but I wish he would listen because I already said thank you for listening to me and I did not want to proceed. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I have Mr. Steen and Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Mr. Chairman, I did not realize that the Minister was going to wish to respond to all the expressions at one time. I would just like to bring out two more questions in regards to the budget. One is, I would like to know if the Minister can identify for me where in the budget I might find the million dollars that is going towards the western constitution or self-government discussions. The other one is, I wonder if the Minister can expand a little bit on his suggestion that Mr. Martin has agreed to a process for funding the two new governments. I assume if Mr. Todd knows the formula, he knows then how much money is coming to each new territory. If he does have this information, it might help everybody to design these governments. Thank you.

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**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. We have all agreed earlier that the Minister will respond after each and every Member who have not spoken have spoken. I believe Mrs. Groenewegen has not spoken, and she will be the last person to speak under the general comments. More than once I indicated to you Members who have not spoken to signify and they have not signified, so some Members have repeated their general comments. So I will recognize Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Mr. Chairman mentioned, I have not spoken yet but I will comment as we go through the items, line by line and so in fact that I did not take my 10 minutes, I will say that I

deferred that time to those Members who took the opportunity to speak twice and certainly have covered this budget address very thoroughly and have spoken most eloquently to it. I will save my comments for the line by line. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I will now recognize Mr. Todd, to try and respond to many of the questions that came out. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am assuming that after I conclude my comments that we will be able to move to the Executive's opening remarks. Is that correct? I want a ruling on that before I start. Is that correct?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. When we have the direction from the committee of the whole to proceed with the Department of the Executive you will be given the time to make opening remarks, either the appropriate Minister, I believe he will be Mr. Premier. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

The reason I make this comments, I believe Mr. O'Brien has not had an opportunity to make a comment to the budget and was frantically waving. I am assisting him with the process so we can look forward to his enlightening dissertation on the budget.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. O'Brien, I would like to apologize. You were invisible at the time I was asking. Mr. O'Brien.

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

I guess it must be all the weight I am losing since I have had this flu for the last four or five days. I think finally, Mr. Todd and I have something in common, we both have the flu. At any rate, I believe at this point in time, I tried to get your attention, Mr. Chairman, to speak. Unfortunately you missed my signal. I will forego my comments and will take it up later in the line by line and allow the time for Mr. Todd to continue with his comments. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Thank you for being understanding. Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try to conclude my comments as quickly as possible so we can get on with the line by line and opening comments for the Premier and the Executive.

Let me deal with Mr. Steen first of all, if I may. His opening quote was the budget reductions are necessary. We all agree with that. There is no question that somebody had to do something. We chose to do something. In a perfect world, you die and go to heaven. The reality is this is not a perfect world and we are not going to satisfy all of the people all of the time but we are going to satisfy some of the people some of the time. Fundamentally, I believe that what we did, and I said this yesterday, but I will try to keep it as short as I can. We tried to redistribute as best we can to those who have the least from those who have the most. Some of the Members here have spoken out against that. I will address that in a moment.

Mr. Steen's concern with respect to the new model of government, the implication that we are going to design the new model of government is incorrect. What in fact we are doing is looking at the Nunavut Footprints in the Snow 2 model. We have an obligation to seek the federal government and NTI's response. We have an obligation to reach some consensus because that is the criteria that was set for this commission and for our participation, to reach some consensus on what kind of model is, one efficient, two affordable. So I would not like to give anybody any impression that we are going spend an inordinate amount of time to develop new models. We are going to take what is out there, listen to the comments that come forward by the two other ligated, legal parties to the process, and try to put together what I call a pre-implementation division plan. There is no intent of the government or this ministry to impose any government on anybody. But there clearly is a requirement to develop some pre-implementation, so therefore we can sit at the table and determine how we are going to proceed with the costing, and the negotiations that are necessary with the federal government, to see if they are prepared to pay the cost.

In simple language, Mr. Chairman, that is where it is at. There is no intent, let me repeat, to develop a new model. It is our intent to build on what is there, what it efficient, affordable and to move forward with our partners in trying to put a pre-implementation strategy in place.

On the job creation component that you talked about, I agree that there is not a great deal of new initiatives in this budget that cost money, because there is no money. I mean, you cannot have your cake and eat it too. I sit around this table and listen to some of you dissing yourself on this budget because now it is publicly convenient and yet you know damn well, pardon my language, that part of our problem is the \$40 million growth in the social envelope. There are no large sums of money for new initiatives. But there is a will and a determination on the part of the Premier and the Cabinet to try to move forward in the federal government on some job strategies, particularly in this potential highway infrastructure fund that we hear is being talked about in Ottawa.

There is no large pot of money out there to create a whole bunch of new initiatives. I am just trying to sustain the system. As I said yesterday, so that the essentials that our constituency needs, health care, education, a decent job if we can create it, are there. There is no luxury on the fiscal side. If I sound a little aggressive on that, I am. There is no easy answer to job creation. Job creation, I said last year in the budget and I said this year in the budget, has to be in partnership with the private sector. We can no longer be the engine of the economy. It just simply is not there because sufficient dollars are just not there.

So, we need to develop a strategy aggressively that is going to create some job opportunities and some economic well being

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for our people in conjunction with the federal government and to some extent the partnership concept that we have with respect to the private sector. I believe that we will be able to move quickly on that and I am optimistic that in conjunction with the committees and discussion with the Ordinary Members that within the next 90 days to 120 days we will have a strategy in place and hopefully we will have been able to identify the sources of funding that are required.

On the other two questions, with respect to Mr. Steen's concerns on the million dollars, that is the supplementary appropriation. It will be identified. It is for discussions in the self-government. So it will be there. In this budget it is in the supplementary.

On his comments, with respect to Mr. Martin's process for funding the two new governments, I do not have the formula. What I have, is assurance from

Mr. Martin that there will be a broad base representation at the table to develop two new formula agreements east and west. I think I said in the budget address and I will repeat it for clarity purposes. In the eastern Arctic, it will be the Nunavut Tungavik Incorporated, the interim commissioner. In the western Arctic, it will be the Government of the Northwest Territories and provision has been made for representation of western interest who will be selected through the consortium of interests that are developing the western constitutional process. I think that what we have there, is a fairly broad-based security blanket, if you want for both parties that one is not doing what the other one does not know and we will all pull together on our pilgrimage to Ottawa to determine appropriate funding formulas and the level of funding of formulas that is necessary. The fundamental issue in the financing of the two new territories, is my belief as a Finance Minister, is in the incremental side and you cannot determine, and I will defy anybody in this House to show me how you can determine what the incremental costs are until you determine what the basic new core infrastructure of government is going to be, east and west. And that is what we are trying to move forward on and the Premier has drafted a letter, I believe to Mr. Irwin, and has spoken to others about the need to reach quickly a consensus of what kind of government we are going to have east and west so we can set the dollars to it.

Mr. Henry, I appreciate the fact that his opening comments, and I appreciate his comments on the surplus as that in a sense we have to be careful on the term surplus. It is a projected surplus. It is a small \$9 million. If we reach it, it is based on our ability to meet the targets we met and is based upon ensuring that there is no major catastrophe out there. Nobody can predict the future. So I appreciate the support and the caution as it relates to the term surplus. Perhaps I should have used another term. I know it would be fair to say we have not moved as quickly as we should on the northern job strategy and I apologize for the fact that we have not tabled in this House the affirmative action policy. They are clearly inter-related and I make a commitment today as the Premier did earlier, that we will bring forward both of these initiatives with the hope of some healthy debate and some direction to be given, so we can move much more aggressively on trying to accomplish both these things. One a job strategy and two greater participation by aboriginal northerners in the civil service and outside of it. Job strategy cannot be just left to the government. We simply can no longer be, as I said to the point of boredom, the engine of the economy.

I also agree with the cuts in capital spending and I said it in the budget. For one thing, a cut in the capital spending is a one term deal. It does not make fundamental change to the way in which government is done and the way in which government is costed. So I agree with Mr. Henry, Mr. Ootes and others who have said we cannot continue to cut the capital spending, and it is our intention to listen to that advice. I have some concern that a debate raised by some, Mr. Steen raised it and Mr. Henry has raised it and some others, with respect to looking at the social envelope in isolation. The root causes associated with the increase in the social envelope. Burgeoning population as we have said, overcrowding in our houses, outside of these affluent centres, Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith. Burgeoning populations, burgeoning populations. And we need to deal with the root causes of that. We have not, and I challenge you again, have not dealt with that in this House for that last 15 months, in public debate. We have all talked about it privately, but we have not and I have spoke many times to many Members about this issue. I think it is an important one, and I am glad it is come to light and is coming to light and people want to discuss it now.

But you cannot say that you cannot look at the social envelope increases in isolation on some of these more difficult complicated issues out there and one of we way is population explosion and the impact it has on it. It is also important to say we have not put significant dollars back into social envelope. What we have tried to do is give them the minimum to sustain the system. To get the essentials out there, whether it is in housing, whether it is, as my friend Mr. Erasmus says, in education or for that matter, the difficult task that the Minister of Health is going to have when he has to address some of the choices he has had to make to meet the targets that are set before him.

Mr. Henry also made some comment about, I think the reference was something on the budget, your inability.....

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Todd. I am wondering, should I allow the Minister because he is responding to several of the Members, but I would like to trade the situation of Mr. Todd, a Member of committee of the whole thereby requires the same treatment as any other Member. If you wish to continue, you need the consent of the membership. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, I do not particularly care. If you want me to respond to the Members I will, Mr. Chairperson, and if not, we can just move on to the Executive. It is up to the Members.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Do we agree to allow Mr. Todd to respond to Members, to many of the questions that came up? Agreed. Thank you. Carry on, Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I think I would like to use the word, Mr. Henry implied they were gagged on the budget. I would to point out that this Legislative Assembly has greater participation than any other Legislative Assembly in North America. I mean we could take the conventional European or Canadian approach, keep it all secret and dump it in the House and do battle. The reality is that, right or wrong, we all had a hand in this budget. Yes, there were differences of opinion. I acknowledge that but we all had a hand in this budget. Let us have the courage of our convictions and say

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that. Some of you have and I applaud you for it, but we all had a hand in the budget, and while it may not be a perfect system, I would suggest to you it is a darn site better than most that we have in the rest of North America. As a matter of fact, I think we are the envy to some extent of other jurisdictions.

Mr. Henry again, I am just trying to make my notes here and I think it is an important issue, had some concerns with respect to division, and in particular with the language address in my reply in my budget yesterday on how we are going to deal with our employees. I think it is important to point out that once the interim commissioner is appointed he will have the legislative and legal authority to enter into agreements on behalf of the people of Nunavut. It is not that I am trying to avoid the issue. I am just trying to set the tone, if you want for the protocol agreement, that I said in the budget that I said we would enter into with the interim commissioner, to move quickly. We assure our employees that have been with us, some here by birth, some here by choice, who have been with us for a long time, to buy some security to them. I am very much aware of the concern raised by Mr. Henry, but I think it is important to point out that in the end it will be discussions with the interim commissioner.

Mr. Chairman, I do not know whether I answered all the questions that were asked but I hope I have given the Members some overall indication of our response to the concerns that they have raised and I would suggest that, if I may be so bold, we move on to addressing the first item on the departmental order for review and that is the Executive. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. The Chair was given the direction of membership that once Mr. Todd has responded to, not necessarily every question, responded to Members that we shall move on to reviewing of the Executive. Should we? Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Mr. Chairman, I was wondering if it would be appropriate to deal with the motion and the government operations committee, at this point?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus is seeking the concurrence of Members to deal with his motion. Agreed? Agreed, Mr. Erasmus. Proceed.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move, seconded by the Member for Yellowknife South that the Standing Committee of Government Operation recommends that the Legislative Assembly not consider the budgets of Health and Social Services and Education, Culture and Employment until the government tables the proposed 1997-98 budgets for those departments with financial detail to the task level.

Further the Standing Committee recommends that the Legislative Assembly not consider the budget of the NWT Housing Corporation, until the government tables the Corporation's proposed 1997-98 budget with financial detail to the division level. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. I am informed there is no need for a seconder. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour please signify. Down. Opposed. The motion is carried. Do we have the concurrence of the committee that we will now proceed to the Department of the Executive. Agreed. Thank you. I would now like to recognize the

Premier of this government who is the Minister responsible. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am here today to discuss with you, the Department of the Executives 1997-98 main estimates. These estimates are built upon the departments 1996-97 main estimates and incorporated the recommendations made by the Standing Committee on Infrastructure. Mr. Chairman, the main estimates you have before you reflect the priorities and strategies of this government. The department has streamlined its operations, has assumed new functions to better co-ordinate important government initiatives. It has divested itself of functions not directly related to its core responsibilities. Overall, the Department of the Executive has divided into three activities: Administration of the Commissioner's Office, the Ministers' offices and the Cabinet Secretariat. This represents 72 positions and a budget allocation of \$9,766 thousand. In addition to these core responsibilities as part of this dismantling of the Department of Safety and Public Services, the Public Utilities Board has recently been transferred to the Department of the Executive. The Public Utilities Board is budgeted for four positions and \$482 thousand which represents no increases over the boards 1996/97 main estimates. The Department of the Executive has no capital expenditures.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of the Executive has set a course for the future, and we are holding to that course. To illustrate that point, I would like to take a few moments to advise you on the progress made by the department in addressing some of the objectives set out in the results statement section of the 1996-97 main estimates.

First, the department committed to focus its resources on providing support to the Premier and Cabinet, in coordinating the implementation of Cabinet direction. To this end, the department has eliminated, the executive regional offices, transferred all government liaison officer functions to the respected hamlets and consolidated the Ottawa office within the department to provide a more focused approach to relations within the governments.

Second, as promised in last year's main estimates, the personnel secretariat has been fully integrated into the department of the executive, cost savings have been realized and the departments have been

empowered to make and made accountable for implementing government hiring policies.

Third, the department now holds the responsibility within this government to co-ordinate the GNWT's planning and involvement in the creating of two new territories. Efforts are being made to ensure that a balanced and realistic approach is being taken in the key areas of financing, asset, and liability allocation, legal and legislative matters, and government design for both Nunavut and the western territory.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the department has successfully reviewed the multi-lateral approach to the creation of Nunavut. Working in collaboration with the federal government, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and other Members of coordinating committee of officials on Nunavut we have made progress

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toward the creation of a new government for Nunavut. Mr. Chairman, given our financial targets and the focus of this department, I believe that the 1997-98 main estimates is the best approach to the job we have before us. We are on target to accomplish what we set out for ourselves at the beginning of this fiscal year. I have no doubt, next year will be challenging, but I am confident that we can accomplish what we have committed to do. Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening remark. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Premier. The committee that has reviewed this particular department will have an opening remark, I believe, is Mr. Henry, on behalf of the infrastructure. Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Committee Members acknowledge the Executives' initiative to better meet the mandate in providing overall management and direction to the executive branch of the government. One of the Executives' initiatives is to undertake a review of government policies and regulations. The committee agreed that reducing overlap and confusion and removing unnecessary regulatory burdens is necessary to improve the efficiency of the government. Committee Members look forward to seeing further details of this planned review.

The committee appreciated hearing about further efforts to devolve more provincial type responsibilities

from the federal government, including resource management and criminal prosecutions. Committee Members look forward to further details on these and other devolution initiatives, as well as details about the devolution framework agreement with aboriginal organizations. Of special interest to committee Members is the need to ensure that any programs evolve to the territorial government are accompanied by adequate funding from the federal government. Other intra-governmental affairs, notably the place of northern issues in the upcoming federal election and issues related to Quebec are also of interest to the committee and the Premier is urged to ensure that all Members are well informed of the progress of these issues.

The committee noted that self-government talks with the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit in the Beaufort/Delta could be a precursory to regional government in the NWT. Members felt that is important to establish what GNWT powers would and would not be available to such regional government. Members would like the Premier to clarify this issue by outlining what responsibilities will be available for devolution from the GNWT to possible future regional governments.

Finally, committee Members expressed some concern about the plan to cut 10 percent from the funding to women's organizations. The standing committee understands the need to reduce government spending in this time of fiscal difficulty, but here, as in other areas, the question is one of priority. While the work of the special advisor on women's issues is important, Members consider the work done by the Status of Women Council, the Native Women's Association, and other groups to be even more important to the north and to northerners.

During the review of the draft business plans in October, the committee did suggest another option for this reduction in funding. The committee suggested cutting the grant by five percent instead of 10, and making up the difference by reducing the position of the Special Advisor on Women's Issues to a half time position. However, the Premier chose not to accept this suggestion. Committee Members would still rather not see the work of these important organizations be hindered by a 10 percent funding cut. The standing committee, therefore, offers two further suggestions. One, leave the grant unchanged, cancel the 10 percent cut, and eliminate the position of the special advisor entirely. The Minister responsible for the status of women could then be advised directly by the boards and executive directors of the women's associations. The second suggestion,

the special advisor could work with the status of women council, the special advisor could then continue to advise the Premier and Minister about her services, and could assist the council sufficiently to ease the effects of the 10 percent cut in funding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That concludes this report.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Keeping up with the tradition of this forum, I would like to ask the Premier, before we get into general comments, if he wished to bring in witness or witnesses. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, please.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Premier. Could we have agreement of the committee? Agreed. Proceed. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses. Thank you. Mr. Premier, with a great deal of regret, I am not able to provide you with a better chair than the one you have other there. Sorry about that. Mr. Premier, would you please introduce the witnesses to the committee.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my immediate left is Jeff Gilmour, secretary to Cabinet and to his left is Bruce Cates, assistant director corporate services for Executive. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Premier. General comments from, we are reviewing the Department of Executive, are taking general comments from Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have one general comment but with a specific focus and that is the issue of, at the regional level in the South Slave for sure, and I have heard it from other Members as well, is the whole issue of co-ordination of services. Now that the regional directors are no longer with us, that is, as a species they are extinct. I think it was an issue raised by Mr. Evaloarjuk in terms of extinction of species, that is one of them. My concern is, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, is that there is a gap that the organizational structure has not been readjusted to adequately address the whole issue of, oh, I am sorry, Madam Chairman, I am sorry, I was not

looking. The organizational structure has not been adjusted to compensate for the departure of the regional directors, and that in a whole different number of areas, from the daily activities to the implementation of broader issues of empowerment and having a one window approach for people in the region to deal with, that it is not there now. There is clearly not a lead superintendent and people are not aware of who to talk to. The departments have, basically, hunkered down to deal with their own internal changes. What was once there and what we have been working on in the South Slave with communities to have a one window approach with

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government, to be able to respond in a timely fashion on government wide initiatives, is not there adequately. I sent Mr. Gilmour, a while back, a fairly lengthy message outlining my concerns and I have not had a chance to talk to Mr. Gilmour about his trip, but I know this is an issue that has territorial-wide concern, having listened to other Members as well. That is my comment at this point, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I also received a copy of Mr. Miltenberger's concerns and the secretary to Cabinet has gone basically into every region now to meet with all the regional superintendents of every department to discuss some other issues as well as those. He will be going back into those regions for follow-up meetings. We do need to make sure that, in the regional level, people have easy access to government and government services and it may mean that in some cases that we do need more regional co-ordination between superintendents. We will have to work with them to organize that. We have saved quite a bit of money by deleting regional managers that we did have in place and we would like to try doing that with the same amount of dollars that we have right now and trying to solve that problem. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Premier Morin. Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. My question in regards to general concern would be that there are ways, in my opinion, to restructure the organization with existing resources, such as the appointment of possible lead superintendent. Given the focus on empowerment, it seemed to me that a natural choice for that would be the superintendent of MACA somehow being given the authority to be able to pull other superintendents together to talk about government wide initiatives. If people in the region have a concern that are government wide, it should be made very clear that somebody like the superintendent of MACA would be a logical person to fill that role as you would work out the bugs, because I do not think every region would be the same. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. That is happening now in certain regions. What is also happening is there is a regional committee of the superintendents of every department and they rotate the chair every four months for the lead regional superintendent, MACA does have the lead for community empowerment and they should have the ability to pull other regional superintendents together to discuss that issue. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Further general comments. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to make some comments with regard to the review of government policies and regulations. We discussed and asked previously many questions on the sole sourced and negotiated contracts, and we discussed in various committee meetings the possibility of having the government look at the many policies that seem to be in place regarding letting contracts. Apparently the regional superintendents have to go through different procedures for different purchases, and they are finding that there may be a huge stack of policies and procedures to follow in the event they have to do purchasing and it would seem that this is an area that the government should look at and I am wondering if this review will do that, because it must be extremely frustrating for anybody in the region to spend an

inordinate amount of time on what should be straightforward and simple purchasing procedures, but additionally it is important that we get some guidelines and ask the questions, is there one policy for sole-sourced and negotiated contracts, but we got back word that no, there is not one definitive policy. I am wondering if that could be addressed, if the Premier could comment on that. The second item that I would like to have the Premier comment on is with regard to the potential establishment of regional governments in the NWT. There has to be some consideration given to what will this government devolve to - a regional government in the event of that becoming reality. What powers is this government prepared to transmit to those particular regional governments? And what is the status of that? Again, I think it is important for us to know where we are in that whole process with regard to the step of regional governments. Understand that naturally the federal government is party to this, but I think it is important for us to know what is happening. My third and final comment is in regard to the Ottawa office. I would like to know what staff members are there. In relationship to that, last year there were some comments made with regard to a national communications program and I wonder if the Premier could tell us and brief us as to what has transpired with that particular program and who has responsibility for it, if such exists and perhaps some rationalization behind the purpose of it? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Premier Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I will just go through all these negotiated and sole source contracts, you had requested that. The Financial Management Board Secretariat has initiated modifications to the production of that quarterly report. For contracts over \$5 thousand that have been awarded on a negotiated tender and sole-sourced bases. Copies of the reports for the first, second and third quarters in 96/97 are expected to be completed by the end of February 1997, and government officials have been asked to make sure that all new government contracts including wording, which would notify contractors in advance of the government's intention to make public for each contract, over \$5 thousand, the name of the contractor, the value proposed in term on contract and whether the contract was tender/negotiated or sole-source. We do have clear policy on negotiated contracts through Cabinet so there is a policy on how

to do a negotiated contract and reducing government regulations and policy. The reduction of the government regulation and policy to create a more favourable business climate is establish of one of the government strategies and preliminary work has commenced with a collection of some of the information and consideration of possible approaches. According to our schedule, the strategy for this work is to begin on April 1st, 1997.

Review of regional governments: At the present time, the number of responsibilities and the programs related to land

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and resources, have yet to be transferred from the federal government. These are matters the Land Claim negotiations have dealt with in that context. All the core management has been the preferred option in land claim negotiations. There may be room for transfer of some jurisdictions related to land and resources through self-government agreements and it is premature to be define any relation to what responsibilities might be transferred to community governments or regional governments because we are in that process already and we are into that process in good faith with our aboriginal partners in the north as well as the federal government, so it would be premature to comment on that at this time.

As far as the Ottawa office is concerned, we have three staff in the Ottawa office. The communications strategy should be able to take that to the Committee late next week and then to caucus as promised. So that just has to go to Cabinet. It is pretty well done. And I have the responsibility of that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Premier Morin. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to thank the Premier for the comments and explanations. I would like to ask him to brief us a bit more with regard to my question on transfer of powers to regional government. I understand the Premiers' concern that it may be premature to discuss the details, but I wonder if he could tell us what is happening in that particular end because if I heard him correctly, he stated they are in discussions with the aboriginal groups in the federal government, in this regard, perhaps the Premier could clarify that for me?



**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. Aboriginal Affairs plays a key role in issues and negotiations of self-government agreements that are presently undergoing between the federal government and land claims organizations. We also play a role in that, and we will have a seat at that table. As far as what will be transferred over to regional governments, it is, like I said earlier, premature and I do not think that I could really sit here, Mr. Ootes and comment on that because it has not even come before Cabinet as of yet so we still have to consider this at Cabinet, so it would be very premature to comment on that whole issue yet.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Mr. Ootes. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. In the Premier's opening statements he had indicated that the Personnel Secretariat had been integrated into the Department of the Executive, and that cost savings had been realized. Could we get an explanation of the cost savings, please?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. In 96-97 the total net ongoing savings to the GNWT would be \$1.9 million. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I do not know if the opinion will be right or if he is under medication for his pain in his leg. I asked for an explanation of the cost savings. Is it possible to get an explanation of this \$1.9 million savings?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair, and I have not taken any medication for my leg for just about two weeks now. I do prefer to feel the pain. I am wide awake, Mr. Erasmus, and I must have just misunderstood your question. So the casual referrals, we have saved \$60 thousand, lay offs we have saved \$1.440 million, reduced recruitment costs \$220 thousand, eliminated 2.5 staffing positions \$180 thousand for a total of \$1.9 million. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. Does this savings include the cost of the departments hiring all the personnel staff that was laid off? Or the majority of the personnel staff that was laid off?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. This is net savings to our government. Each department always had a personnel function in their department. Now they have the responsibility of staffing. Every Minister and every deputy minister has that responsibility. They have not received any new money from this government to fund that position if they had it in their department, except for existing funds that were there before, so this is a net saving to us. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Morin. I would just like to remind the Members that general comments are intended to be general comments within a context of speaking to the whole department. Just with respect to Mr. Erasmus' most recent question, if I could refer your attention to page 2-14. There is a specific item under "Cabinet Secretariat-Personnel Secretariat" which is responsible for developing, monitoring government recruitment so on, is on there as a specific item which might better come up under the detailed consideration of the department. If I could just remind Members of that. That we are on general comments. Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I know that last year that we had asked several questions under general comments and Mr. Ootes asked questions as well, so I assumed that we were able to ask questions under general comments.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Yes, my comments were not directed at you specifically and as a matter of fact, I was going to reserve the reminder to Members until the end of this discussion, but it just became evident that things were becoming very specific to things that are detailed in the detail report. I do not intend to offend the Member by centring him out, but just suggesting it

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might perhaps be dealt with in better detail. Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. Now that the department, or the secretariat, is integrated into the Department of Executive, who is responsible for overseeing affirmative action, that the policy is being properly implemented? Does this mean that the FMBS has someone present at all the job interviews for all hiring that the various departments do? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. No, FMBS does not have people sitting at the interview. There is clear direction from this government that the departments must follow the hiring policies of this government. If they do not, then there is an appeal system and I believe that is when FMBS gets involved is through the appeal system. For example, two people applied for the job, one person got the job. The other one felt they were not justly dealt with, they can appeal it and then that is when FMBS comes in and takes over. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Madam Chair, I find it very, very difficult to envision how anybody can be expected to oversee implementation of a policy if they are not actually at the interviews. Having been involved in many interviews myself, I know that it is very subjective in nature and it is very easy to do things the way you want. So, how does the Premier expect FMBS to do a proper job of overseeing this policy, if they are not at the job interviews? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. When we eliminated the function of the Department of Personnel, previously in previous years everybody was able to pass the buck. Personnel would say well it was the department's fault that affirmative action does not work. Then the department would say will it is Personnel's fault that affirmative action does not work. From now on, nobody will be allowed to pass the buck.

When Ministers of every department appear before you, that is when you would ask that question, how many affirmative action employees do you have? You can ask those questions, and they will tell you. Then the next year, do a progress report, how many do you have the next year? Why do you not have a plan in place to increase your affirmative action? The Minister will be held responsible by the House and the deputy minister will held responsible by his Minister. So, there is no more passing the buck.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. With this type of process that has just been described, we could already be divided into Nunavut and Denendeh before we are able to see the results of how affirmative action is actually being implemented. What I would like to know is, has any done a study, FMBS I guess is implementing this, have they looked that of all the jobs that have not been filled by people who we have already laid off or have been moved to another job, how many of those positions were filled by affirmative action people. Have they checked how many of those jobs are filled by people that are assisted through the affirmative action policy? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. I will ask the Premier to answer. However, we are not considering general comments on FMBS right now, we are considering general comments on the Executive and think we have crossed the line into FMBS. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I do not have that information and I do not know if that information has been compiled, Mr. Erasmus. I will ask the Minister of FMBS to get us that information. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I move we report progress.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):**

Okay there is motion on the floor. It is not debatable. The motion is in order. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? Motion is carried. I would like to thank Premier Morin, Mr. Gilmour, and Mr. Cates for their attendance at committee of the whole today. I will now rise and report progress. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The House will come back to order. Item 21, report of committee of the whole. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**ITEM 21: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, committee has been considering Bill 8, Appropriation Act 1997-98 and Committee Reports 2-13(4) and 3-13(4) and would like to progress with one motion being adopted. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Seconded by Mr. Arlooktoo. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk. Item 23, orders of the day.

**ITEM 23: ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

Mr. Speaker, meeting of the Nunavut Caucus immediately after adjournment this evening. Meeting for tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of the Ordinary Members Caucus and at 10:30 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Social Programs.

Orders of the day for Thursday, January 30th:

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

- Bill 8

- Committee Reports 2-13(4) and 3-13(4)

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned to  
Thursday, January 30, 1997 at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT