



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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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, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Henry, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Miltenberger, Honourable Don Morin, Honourable Kelvin Ng, Mr. Ningark, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Picco, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Roland, Mr. Steen, Honourable John Todd

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 constant recognition of the dignity and aspirations of those whom we serve. Amen.

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Good morning, Members. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Morin.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 42-13(4): Minister Absent from the House

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Manito Thompson will be absent from the House today to attend the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in Calgary and present an award this evening. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 43-13(4): Aboriginal Achievement Award

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to advise this Assembly that tonight, in Calgary, our honourable colleague, Mr. Stephen Kakfwi, will be honoured with a National Aboriginal Achievement Award. Mr. Kakfwi is receiving a lifetime achievement

award from the Canadian Native Arts Foundation, recognizing his role as a passionate and effective advocate for aboriginal people, for his role in the development of the modern theory of the inherent right and, in general, as a defender of the rights and interests of all people north of sixty.

Along with Mr. Kakfwi, another Northwest Territories resident, Mr. Kiawak Ashoona of Cape Dorset, is also being recognized for his lifetime of achievements as an artist whose work has not only gained regional and national attention, but brought international recognition to the north as well.

I am sure I speak for all Members and for citizens in the Northwest Territories, in congratulating Mr. Kakfwi and Mr. Ashoona on these honours. While the awards are for individuals, I believe we can all share in the pride of this evening's presentations and celebration, and in the honour and distinction these two citizens bring to the north. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi Cho.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Fundraising Effort to Raise Suicide Awareness

MR. NINGARK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, Members. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise my honourable colleagues, through you Mr. Speaker, that a resident of Pelly Bay, Thomas Suvissak, who is originally from Pelly Bay, has been one of the volunteers within the community in trying to help people with social problems. Thomas Suvissak from Pelly Bay is one of the community members who has been volunteering to help the people that have been in need within their community.

Every year in the north, we hear of young people committing suicide, particularly in the Nunavut area. It is not our fault that these things happen. Although we would like to help young people as much as we can, there is not much we can do when they succeed in the attempt.

Mr. Thomas Suvissak from Pelly Bay, will be going to Repulse Bay and he will be walking in trying to help people, particularly young people, and their parents. He will be making an attempt to walk to Repulse Bay from Pelly Bay. He would like to seek some support from our Members and from us because we all know that what we do in life is sometimes very difficult to achieve. When we support each other, things can happen that would be good for the people of the north. This is what he told me he would be attempting to do, from Pelly Bay to Repulse Bay. He will be making the attempt in April. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Rabesca.

Member's Statement on Rae-Edzo Friendship Centre

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to talk about an organization in my home community that has gone from the brink of poverty to a reorganized, prospering, aggressive operation. Mr. Speaker, a couple of short years ago, the Rae-Edzo Friendship Centre was having financial problems. That of course came from the severe cuts that were introduced by the federal government. It got to the point that this organization had a difficult time to find a payroll for the remaining staff or to find the volunteers to help with bingos.

The board realized the need to reorganize and were able to do this with as little pain to staff as possible. It has taken about two years to rebuild but they are now working for the community and providing many excellent programs for all ages. They will be expanding their services in the near future

Page 468

to include bus service to and from Yellowknife for passengers as well as freight. They will be supplying all local businesses with freight shipped out of Yellowknife, mail and courier services, all on a daily basis. Other areas that they are working on include an Internet service centre, which will allow members of the community to come and use the centre's computers and to surf the world by web or to find information they require, along with the ability to provide computer instruction, as well as for the general public to have access.

Mr. Speaker, the Friendship Centre has also recognized that, in ways, bingo is a form of addiction and is slowly removing itself from operating bingos and moving towards more community-orientated groups, still providing addiction counselling services, and now are starting to provide other very important services that are also helping the residents of Rae-Edzo.

Mr. Speaker, this organization is becoming a very positive figure in the community and also within the region. It is good to see that, with a bit of imagination and hard work, an organization like this can come back and provide some very interesting and helpful services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement on South Slave Leadership Meeting

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to briefly comment on a meeting of some importance that is being held in Fort Smith tomorrow and on Sunday. Mr. Speaker, the leaders of the South Slave are going to gather, for the first time in about three years, in a common forum to talk about issues like working together and, most importantly, economic strategies that could benefit the South Slave region. This has not been done for a number of years and it is seen as critical, from the response I have received from the leadership, which will include MLAs, lawyers, Dene chiefs and presidents of the Metis Nations, to gather and discuss these very fundamental issues. The world, as we know it, has changed dramatically in the last couple of years and every region, I think, is going to find it incumbent that they find ways to work together for the benefit of all the communities within their jurisdiction. So, I am very hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that this will be a very fruitful meeting and the first of many as we move into the 21st century. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement on Original Thoughts on Government

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once there was a man who had a very huge thought. That man's name is not important but, for the record, his name was I. C. Clearly. However, he was rolled over and smitten for coming up with that original thought. What was that thought? The thought was that good government should be accountable to the people; good government should be answerable to the people and good government should listen to the people. When word got out that his idea was beginning to gain a following, the leader of the cult, known as Fiscally Cat, became angry. He ridiculed I.C. Clearly every chance he got. When I.C. Clearly presented petitions supporting this thought, Fiscally Cat dismissed them as rhetoric, and he stepped up his campaign of ridicule towards I.C. Clearly. He called I.C. Clearly a fearmonger. He blamed him for evil incarnate on the earth. But I.C. Clearly continued his one man mission and the masses began to see that the ideas warranted discussion. Fiscally Cat became outraged. He called on his minions to attack the character, the clothes, the thick accent, anything, to discredit I.C. Clearly.

Finally, in frustration, Fiscally Cat asked I.C. Clearly to explain his thoughts and ideas. Fiscally Cat still did not understand the ideas, thoughts or concepts represented by I.C. Clearly but realized his campaign of marginalization was not working. All it did was help propel I.C. Clearly to myth-like status and I.C. Clearly was prepared to be a martyr for his thoughts. Fiscally Cat enrolled McGill Mole and Cloyed Coland to run interference, but it was too late. The masses sent in more petitions, letters and faxes. Glasnost was breaking out all over Fiscally Cat land. Perestroika took hold and I.C. Clearly finally won the day. The moral of this tale is that when they laugh at you, ridicule you and show you no respect, remember, I.C. Clearly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement on Brain Cell Regeneration

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to update the House on a recent, scientific and medical breakthrough. Canadian medical scientists have caused lab animals to grow new brain cells. The scientists say that, within two years of trying their technology, which also opens the door to repairing brains, they will be able to do this on human patients. The cells were regenerated on laboratory animals without transplanting brain tissue. Researchers at the University of Calgary have generated all three major cell types present in a healthy, human brain. The cells were grown, using 65 year old brain tissue, obtained during a biopsy. All of a sudden, it does not seem impossible, any longer, to replace brain cells. The researchers say that the challenge will be to target the healthy, new cells towards precise locations inside the brain. It has long been thought there were no stem cells, cells that could grow new brain cells, in adult mammals. But in March, 1992, scientists reported finding a stem cell in an adult mouse brain. That is very scary. I wonder if that was Mickey Mouse. Anyhow, since that discovery, millions of human brain cells have been isolated in a laboratory and transplanted into test animals. It is now reported that these new lab-grown brain cells will go into people in two years. A laboratory in Calgary is looking for volunteers to participate in their scientific research and it was recently reported in the Nunatsiq News, that Edward Picco, the honourable Member for Iqaluit, has volunteered for this ground-breaking experiment.

-- Laughter/applause

The Members of this House would like to applaud the Member's willingness to stop at nothing and to go to any

Page 469

lengths to serve his constituents and fellow mankind. Thank you, Super Ed.

-- Laughter

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Soon, he will not only be the most popular, the most sought after, the most well-spoken, the best looking Member of the territorial Legislative Assembly. Was that all you told me Ed?

-- Laughter

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

He soon will be able to also boast being the smartest.
Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement On Legislative Assembly Curling
Funspiel

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last weekend, we had the good fortune of attending a curling tournament here in town for Members, staff, family and friends. Yes, we do have a few friends. The tournament was lots of fun. Those who did not come out missed some good curling. We have a lot of competitive people here. They did quite well. The way the tournament worked is that there were too many teams to all curl at once, so they had to take turns curling. Once you lost you go into a different category: A, B, C, on up to G. Only the top four divisions: A, B, C, and D won prizes. The winner of the A division was Vera Raschke, and her players were Dean Meyer and Nicole Lajeunesse. B division winner was Fred Behrens, and he had Krista Vivian with him, and Ed Picco played for him in the final. The winner of the C Division... was yours truly, Roy Erasmus. Third was the clerk, David Hamilton

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

We also had Celine Antoine and Trevor Thompson.

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

The winners of the D division was skipped by Kat Nicholson and on her team was Joan Irwin, Richard Bargery, and Leslie Straker.

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

Sounds like a stacked team. As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, we do have a lot of competitive people, but we also had some other prizes. One was for the most hogged rocks, Mr. Floyd Roland.

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

The man with the strongest arm for sending the most rocks through the house was Mike Kalnay.

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

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. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent, Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, we do have a lot of competitive people. I just wanted to tell you a little bit about some of them. Of course, first of all we have Mr. Hamilton, the Clerk, who is very competitive. He played every game that was played. Because, as I said, there were too many teams to play all at once, so the teams would alternate. One set of teams would play a game, and another set of teams would play a game while the previous ones had a rest. Anyway, David played on his own team and then he played on my team. He told me confidentially that playing on two teams increases the chances of winning.

-- Laughter

MR. ERASMUS:

I could not substantiate it, but rumour is that he tried to play on a third team. But he could not figure out a way to play two games at the same time. So, he played twice as many games as anybody else. On Monday morning, I saw him coming around the corner clutching his prize, all curled up like an "S" limping. As soon as he saw me, he just straightened up and said, "Good morning, Roy. How are you?" and went around the corner and started limping again. Then, of course, there was a well known MLA, Ed Picco. He also played on two teams. Played on his own team and when they were knocked out and they lost the A division semifinal, he then played as a spare for Team B and they won that division.

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

At the end of the tournament, they gave out some prizes. The winning teams of each division would go up and choose a prize. A division went first, B division, C division, like that. Then, the semi-final winners. Instead of waiting for his team to go up, when the B team went up, Ed went up with them even though he only played one game for them, and he took the best prize there. It was a nice phone, everybody was trying to get it. Ten teams later when his team went up for a prize, he went up again, took another prize. Someone said they heard him mumbling under his breath, "All those mental midgets want to know I won a place."

-- Laughter

MR. ERASMUS:

Then, there was Ernie Comerford. Ernie asked me before we started, he said, "Is one team supposed to be at one end and another team at the other end, and we throw rocks back and forth at each other?" So, I thought this guy does not know how to play. I was trying to explain things to him, you know, in turn, out turn. I found out later that he coaches the NWT junior girls team.

-- Laughter

MR. ERASMUS:

And of course, Minister Antoine also played. We all know how competitive Jim is. I really did not believe him when he said that he never played before. Knowing how competitive he is, I thought he must have played. That was until they said it was time to start, when he pulled his skates out and started to put them on.

Page 470

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

Mike Miltenberger is also very competitive. He is so competitive that he thought curling was too slow for him. He went to Fort Smith to play hockey.

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

He wanted to play in an old timers' hockey tournament but he was very surprised when his team

would not let him play because they did not want him to ruin their chances of winning.

-- Laughter

MR. ERASMUS:

Mr. Roland is also a very competitive man and was also the biggest guy out there. You never see anybody arguing with him. You should see him sweep. You do not want to get in his way. That is dangerous.

-- Laughter

MR. ERASMUS:

Somehow, he seemed to lose his strength when it was time to throw rocks. There is a line down at the other end, and if your rock does not go over it, they take your rock out of play. It does not count. They call it a hog line. I do not know how it ever got that name. But anyway, in the tournament if your rock did not go over the hog line, someone would give you a little pink pig. I guess it is a hog. But at the end of the day, you could hardly see Floyd's jacket. It was just pink. He had so many pink pigs.

-- Laughter

MR. ERASMUS:

Apparently, when he found out that you win a prize for getting the most pigs, he played on two teams too. Some guys are so competitive, they will do anything to win a prize. Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not say something about my curling prowess. I had never curled before this tournament, but luckily Mr. Hamilton curled with me and we were on the C side, but prior to that in preparation I had ordered some tapes from the Labatts' Brier. I also ordered some tapes called, Curling with Linda and Ray. Linda and Ray are former world champion curlers and they analyze the brier on TSN. I watched these tapes for weeks. I learned all the terminology, strategy, how to sweep, how to throw rocks, throwing in turn, out turn, all that, about the hog line too, of course. It worked, when we started playing I could not miss a shot. But, I do not know what happened, when it was time to play the first the game, the rest of my team must have heard that I had never curled before because none of them showed up.

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

It was a good thing that Mr. Hamilton wanted to increase his chances of winning because he came and played for my team. It must have rubbed off on him because he could not miss either. The only time we missed was when Ed stood behind us when we were shooting, yelling as loud as he could, "Shoot hard, shoot soft. You are nervous." I think he must have looked at the prizes in advance. He wanted to get that phone. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I have made copies of my curling tapes. I am giving a copy to Floyd, and I am also leaving a copy in the library for next year so that all other beginners can become as good as Mr. Hamilton and I.

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

Actually, Mr. Speaker, it really was a wonderful tournament and we have a lot of people to thank. I would first of all, of course, want to thank Linda and Ray for sending me their tapes. But it was great fun, I would like to thank the organizers Brian Menton and Ronna worked very hard ...

-- Applause

MR. ERASMUS:

They twisted a lot of arms getting some gifts donated. I would also like to thank Wesmac for donating the free curling time, paying for the rink time. Of course, all the agencies that donated, News/North, Inkit, CIBC, CJCD, NorthwTel, MicroAge, Mack Travel, and also Matco Transportation, NTPC, NWT Housing Corporation, and RWED. I would also like to thank Ernie Comerford who helped with the scheduling and with the draws. I would also like to thank Vera Raschke who also worked very hard twisting a lot of arms for gifts. In fact, she was the main organizer and someone mentioned it was a fix because she won the tournament. In fact, I loaned her my tapes as well. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Are there further Members' statements? Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Picco.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 260-13(4): Responsibility For Privatization Initiatives

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Honourable Don Morin, the Premier. My question concerns privatization. Yesterday, we were doing a few questions on privatization. I would like to follow up on those by asking the Premier for more clarification. When property management services was privatized just a few months ago, that privatization initiative was not carried out under the auspices of the Minister of Economic Development, Mr. Kakfwi. I wonder, is the privatization scheme based on the size of the privatization, or is some other definition running privatization? When we did the information services, it was not under Mr. Kakfwi. I would like to know why some are under one Minister and some are not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 260-13(4): Responsibility For Privatization Initiatives

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the privatization initiative of POL, it is an initiative of this government and it is handled jointly by the Minister of DPW as well as the Minister of Economic Development, now known as RWED. This has been in place since the beginning of this initiative and it has been brought forward as such. Whenever Mr. Arlooktoo made a presentation to the committee, there was always economic development staff with him. So that is

Page 471

how that privatization was carried out. Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I called you Mr. Chairman, I am sorry about that.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 260-13(4): Responsibility For Privatization Initiatives

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we privatized property management services, the contracts are now being let, Mr. Kakfwi was not involved. Is there a level of privatization? For

example, if it is a major initiative like POL then the Minister for privatization is involved? The Minister did not answer my question. What is the level of privatization? If we are contracting information services, does the Minister for privatization or DPW do that, or is it Mr. Kakfwi? Is there a level of privatization where one Minister takes it?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 260-13(4): Responsibility For Privatization Initiatives

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of RWED will be involved in all privatization as it has in the past. It is economic development, part of that department, that has assisted this government in putting together the plans of privatization. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 260-13(4): Responsibility For Privatization Initiatives

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regarding the ongoing privatization of property management services, Mr. Kakfwi is not involved with that right now. Is the Premier telling me that he is going to get involved tout suite, right away?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 260-13(4): Responsibility For Privatization Initiatives

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Whenever we have any privatization initiative, RWED is involved and they will continue to be involved.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 260-13(4): Responsibility For Privatization Initiatives

MR. PICCO:

I guess I am getting a little confused again, because as the chairman of the Infrastructure Committee, when Mr. Arlooktoo presented the privatization scheme with POL there was no one from RWED at our meetings, but the Premier had just earlier said that there were RWED employees. They have not appeared yet and I am still at a loss as to why the privatization is going on with POL and Mr. Kakfwi is involved, and why, when we are doing property management services, it does not seem like he is involved. As yet, the Minister of FMBS is doing those. My question to the Premier, my final supplementary to the Premier is, can he give a written policy on exactly what the privatization scheme is, and break it down into what is privatization and what is under individual Ministers? Because as Members, it is very difficult for us to ask questions when we do not know who to ask questions to, because it seems to be fuzzy at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 260-13(4): Responsibility For Privatization Initiatives

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the privatization initiatives of this government, the Department of RWED is involved in all those initiatives, as well as the Department of Finance and the sponsoring department. In the privatization of petroleum products, for example, the majority of the work is done by Mr. Arlooktoo, the leg work. A lot of the advice and other work is done by RWED. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 261-13(4): Tl'oondih Healing Society Funding

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Social Services in regards to committee motion 6-13(3) relating to core funding for the Tl'oondih Healing Society which was carried on May

21st, 1996. My question to the Minister is, what has happened in regards to this motion? Has it been carried out?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 261-13(4): TI'oondih Healing Society Funding

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, no, we have not carried out the recommendations from that motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 261-13(4): TI'oondih Healing Society Funding

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to the motion, when do you anticipate carrying out this motion and having to ensure the long-term liability of the TI'oondih Healing program in my riding to ensure that it does have a fair chance of continuing on into the future?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 261-13(4): TI'oondih Healing Society Funding

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not in a position to proceed with providing core funding based on that recommendation of that committee motion to the TI'oondih Healing Society, as a result of some of the reform initiatives that we are undergoing through our alcohol and drug programs, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Page 472

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 261-13(4): TI'oondih Healing Society Funding

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to the long-term viability of the program, when you talk about community empowerment, this initiative has been supported through motions by the Gwich'in Tribal Council and also by the communities in the Mackenzie Delta in regards to the Beaufort Sea. They have also passed motions in regard to the regional meeting, supporting this initiative. There is support there from the region. I would like to ask the Minister, is his department willing to sit down with the TI'oondih Healing Society to allow them the opportunity to compete with other institutions in the north for the same type of services? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 261-13(4): TI'oondih Healing Society Funding

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated in past discussions and past answers to the questions from the honourable Member on the particular issue of alcohol and drug funding, we are planning on putting out the dollars into the regions and to the community level if they so choose after it goes to the regions, to allow them to have the flexibility and the decision-making authority to place those alcohol and drug treatment dollars, Mr. Speaker. It would not be for the department or myself to dictate what facilities they would support, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 261-13(4): TI'oondih Healing Society Funding

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to the economic viability of institutions in regions such as my region, the Mackenzie Delta, which already has an existing facility, do you find it odd that we are basically entering into commitments to institutions who are

south of the Mackenzie Delta, such as the South Mackenzie, allowing those institutions to thrive. The communities within my region, have to send people to southern institutions at possibly a higher cost of maintaining this service in the region if there is an existing facility. Will the Minister commit to sit down with the Tl'ooondih Healing Society and explain to them exactly the changes that are going to take place so they can have a fair chance to compete and also deliver those services to the Mackenzie Delta region and the Beaufort Sea?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 261-13(4): Tl'ooondih Healing Society Funding

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do plan on having staff speak to all treatment operators and any groups interested in delivery of alcohol and drug programming after some of the reform initiatives have gone through our budgetary process, Mr. Speaker, when they become enacted early in the new fiscal year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Again, just to remind the Members. The Member for Mackenzie Delta started by making reference to a motion passed in the House and then went off the topic and discussed the Tl'ooondih Healing Society as a supplementary. When you make your preamble on a motion, stick to the motion that you are making reference to. I will be observing the Members with regard to keeping order when they are asking a question that they stick to the questions that the preamble is referring to. Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 262-13(4): Reducing Duplication of Infrastructure Services

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Public Works and Services. I would like the Minister to provide a status report, if he could, and a little more clarification now that amalgamation is no longer going to happen, on the type of issues and areas you are looking at in regards to your comments about duplication, et cetera, because I am very concerned about any further cuts that may happen in

my community, for instance, and others as well, but for sure our community. Public Works and Services has been hit very hard. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Deputy Premier.

Return To Question 262-13(4): Reducing Duplication of Infrastructure Services

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I am also aware that there is concern in the regions about whether we are, in fact, not amalgamating, as I had announced a couple of weeks ago. I would like to assure employees, and Members especially, that there is no other plan for amalgamation but we did say that we would look at other areas of duplication and overlap. Some of the areas that we are looking at, for example, are the three infrastructure departments which all have different maintenance systems, computer programs, et cetera, that help with maintenance schedules, inventory and whether getting one system for all three departments would save some money. We have annual consultations by departments to the communities which the departments do separately. I think there would be some cost savings in coordinating those. There are some other areas that we are looking at. The distribution of tender documents, for example, comes from three different sources. Those are the types of changes that we are looking at.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 262-13(4): Reducing Duplication of Infrastructure Services

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary to the Minister is this: I gather from your comments that the focus is going to be more on improving efficiencies, in terms of procedures and process, and possibly restructuring the systems you do have, as opposed to looking at any further staff cuts. Is that correct? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 262-13(4): Reducing Duplication of Infrastructure Services

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct. It was clear from statements by Members that one of the biggest concerns was staff cuts and one of the areas where we had proposed to make savings was in reducing the overlap. So that is correct. The other thing that we are doing is to ensure that at the deputy minister and assistant deputy minister level, these three infrastructure departments meet at least on a monthly basis to make sure that whatever they are doing is as coordinated as possible and we will also likely be doing that in the regional offices.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 262-13(4): Reducing Duplication of Infrastructure Services

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The areas that the Minister has touched on in terms of improving efficiencies are not ones that I can argue with. In fact, they make good sense to me. I just want to confirm as well that this particular initiative continues to look, on an ongoing basis, in the areas of duplication and the areas that the Minister mentioned, are outside of the current budget that is before us and are not in any way meant to try to hit budget targets, but are more a function of good management.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 262-13(4): Reducing Duplication of Infrastructure Services

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, the Member again is correct. The areas that I did mention would result in some savings, but I would imagine not significant enough to have much of an impact on the overall government fiscal picture.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 262-13(4): Reducing Duplication of Infrastructure Services

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given the extreme sensitivity in all quarters in regards to cuts and changes in government that we are now aware exists, will the Minister commit to keeping us apprised of how things are unfolding, so that we may be kept current on this and fully informed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 262-13(4): Reducing Duplication of Infrastructure Services

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, what I will do is, once I have briefed Cabinet fully and get Cabinet's okay, it is my intention to approach the appropriate committee to brief them also on what we are going to do.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Steen.

Question 263-13(4): Plan for GNWT Lease Agreements

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Premier. Mr. Speaker, in committee of the whole yesterday, we had a fair amount of discussion on the leased buildings that this government is presently involved with. The Minister of Finance stated that there is a plan in place to make use of these vacant, leased buildings. I would like to ask the Premier, Mr. Speaker, how far advanced is this plan, if there is a plan?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 263-13(4): Plan for GNWT Lease Agreements

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This plan is presently being developed by FMBS, as well as the Housing Corporation and DPW. My understanding from the Ministers is that this plan will be done by June and we will make a public commitment to the Member that we will bring that plan into the Legislative Assembly or make it available to all the Members through the proper committee. That work will be done on how we can address the issue of empty staff houses that are on lease, so that all those houses could be used to their fullest extent and it will be done by June. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 264-13(4): GNWT Privatization Initiatives

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up on the question regarding privatization. I wonder if the Premier could tell us, what major areas are being proposed to be privatized?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 264-13(4): GNWT Privatization Initiatives

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. POL, computer services and property management. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 264-13(4): GNWT Privatization Initiatives

MR. OOTES:

Mr. Speaker, if I interpret the Premier correctly, it is POL, computer services and property management, if I heard him correctly. I wonder if the Premier could tell us, who would we address questions to if it came to questions regarding property management?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 264-13(4): GNWT Privatization Initiatives

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Todd. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Page 474

Supplementary To Question 264-13(4): GNWT Privatization Initiatives

MR. OOTES:

Yes, I wonder if the Premier could explain to me. I was of the understanding that was under the direction of Mr. Arlooktoo and when was this changed?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 264-13(4): GNWT Privatization Initiatives

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There has been no change. Property management has been with Mr. Todd, through FMBS. Mr. Arlooktoo's department does all the legwork for that issue. Mr. Speaker, on August 6, 1996, I wrote to Mr. Picco, as the chairman of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, the Minister, Mr. Arlooktoo, wrote to Mr. Picco, as chairman. I do not know if they share letters with other Members of the Assembly, but we made it very clear. We enclosed two briefing notes outlining the status of privatization of computer systems and operation and the privatization of petroleum products in the Department of Public Works and Services. At that time, you were probably aware that the Minister responsible for Economic Development and Tourism was coordinating all privatization initiatives of the Government of the Northwest Territories. So, we made it very clear to Mr. Picco, as the chairman, as well as the Members on that Committee, if they share their mail. We made it clear that Mr. Kakfwi will coordinate the privatization initiatives of this government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 264-13(4): GNWT Privatization Initiatives

MR. OOTES:

I am sorry. I am still a bit unclear. On petroleum services then, if we had a question on that, to whom would we address the question on privatization?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 264-13(4): GNWT Privatization Initiatives

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the coordination of privatization, and how it is being developed, you would address your questions to Mr. Kakfwi. On detailed questions for the legwork that the department is doing, you would address your questions to the Minister that is responsible for that department. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 265-13(4): Process for Privatization Review

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Privatization of petroleum services seems to be a popular topic this morning, so I will not change the flow. My question is to Mr. Arlooktoo, the Minister responsible for Public Works and Services. Can the Minister assure me that the discussion around the privatization of petroleum services, which has, at least in my time here, always come to the Infrastructure Committee, will it continue to come to the Infrastructure Committee for feedback and consultation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for Public Works and Services. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 265-13(4): Process for Privatization Review

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I did, with my officials and the officials of Mr. Kakfwi's department, brief the Infrastructure Committee last fall and have passed on numerous bits of information as requested. I did make the commitment, then and now, that we will keep the committees informed about issues and about our progress and respond to information requests, as required.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 265-13(4): Process for Privatization Review

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was, will it be brought directly back to the Infrastructure Committee? I believe I understood Mr. Arlooktoo to say he would be bringing it to committees. I am saying that this privatization has been dealt with by the Infrastructure Committee. So my question directly to the Minister is, will it be brought back to the Infrastructure Committee to be dealt with before it is passed on to the Government Ops Committee? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 265-13(4): Process for Privatization Review

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, we will ensure that the Standing Committee on Infrastructure is completely briefed, along with the Standing Committee on Government Operations.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 265-13(4): Process for Privatization Review

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Final supplementary. Could the Minister advise me at what meetings the RWED employees, who were referred to earlier today, what

meetings of the Infrastructure Committee were they at? I believe I was at all of them and I am not sure what meetings are being referred to where the RWED employees were with the Public Works employees in front of Infrastructure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 265-13(4): Process for Privatization Review

Page 475

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I will look through the transcripts of those meetings and find out and pass them on to the Member. I do not have that information in front of me.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 266-13(4): Implementation of Affirmative Action Policy

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, the last couple of days, there have been a lot of questions and concerns expressed about affirmative action and the way that it may or may not be implemented. Cabinet ministers have seemed to indicate that they are not worried that affirmative action is being handled properly. I would like to know if the Premier would confirm that Cabinet is not concerned about the way the hiring is being done in regards to the affirmative action policy?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 266-13(4): Implementation of Affirmative Action Policy

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess some Members in this House could take the meaning of many things different ways. Let me assure Mr. Erasmus from Yellowknife North that this government is committed to affirmative action. We always have been committed to affirmative action. Managers are hired to manage, they are paid to manage and they have that

responsibility in every department. Every manager in every department, every Minister in this House, has a responsibility to ensure that the policies of this government are followed. So, Mr. Speaker, let me assure Mr. Erasmus that affirmative action .. unless you have some specific cases that we can address. What we need are specific cases, not innuendo, not "I heard this uptown or that uptown". We need specifics in order to address concerns raised by Members or by the public in general. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 266-13(4): Implementation of Affirmative Action Policy

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear the Premier confirm that this government is committed to affirmative action. I would like to know whether Cabinet has any concerns. It has nothing, absolutely nothing, to do with commitment. Are they are concerned about whether the affirmative action policy is being properly implemented in the hiring? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 266-13(4): Implementation of Affirmative Action Policy

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Members are fully aware, all Members of this Legislative Assembly have said in the past that we have to look at the affirmative action policy and readdress the affirmative action policy. We still have something like 31 to 34 percent aboriginal people in our civil service. It seems to have hit a certain percentage and stalled, so we have to look at the policy. The affirmative action policy is a concern of all Members, including Cabinet. Not whether it is being implemented the way it is but whether it works or not. That is why we have agreed to look at it and rewrite it and work with Members of this House to redraft a new affirmative action policy. We have agreed to that and we are doing that work. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 266-13(4):
Implementation of Affirmative Action Policy

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to know that the government is going to readdress the affirmative action policy and we all do share concerns that we want aboriginal people and long-term northerners to get jobs. What I would like to know is, is Cabinet concerned that the present affirmative action policy is being properly implemented?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 266-13(4):
Implementation of Affirmative Action Policy

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I have said previously to the Member, Cabinet has a concern, so do the Members of this Legislative Assembly, that the policy is not increasing the number of aboriginal and long-term northerners in positions in this government. We are looking at that policy, to rewrite that policy, so it will achieve what it is supposed to achieve. That is to get 50 to 51 percent aboriginal and long-term northerners into government positions.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 266-13(4):
Implementation of Affirmative Action Policy

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Premier for his information. He said that everyone is concerned. Is he then admitting that the current affirmative action policy is not being properly implemented? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 266-13(4):
Implementation of Affirmative Action Policy

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I am speaking a little too fast for the Member, so I will slow down. I made it very clear to the Member from Yellowknife North that we, as a government, as well as Members of this Legislative Assembly, are concerned that the affirmative action policy is not working. We have 31 to 34 percent aboriginal and long-term northerners in government positions. The policy is not working so what we have committed to is to look at the policy and rewrite the policy so it better reflects 1997 and it works, so we can get 50 to 51 percent aboriginals and long-term northerners into this government's jobs. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Roland.

Page 476

Question 267-13(4): Departmental Progress on
FAS/FAE

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I questioned the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services on the possible impacts of FAE/FAS. His answer to one of my questions states that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment will also be putting funds towards this initiative and early intervention. Mr. Speaker, I think we need to be concerned with how we develop programs. In the past, I have seen many governments, including ours, develop policies and programs that just lightly deal with the problems. It is like building a house and your toolbox is full of little tyke's toys. I think we need to get serious with our problems and FAS/FAE is going to be a major problem in the years to come.

I would like to know from the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, what is the process of his department being involved in this FAS/FAE? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 267-13(4): Departmental
Progress on FAS/FAE

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the Northwest Territories, as in all areas of Canada, there is a growing awareness of the problems caused by FAS/FAE. I know that in the previous Legislature when I travelled across the north with the Special Committee on Health and Social Services, I heard about the magnitude of this problem in all of the communities that I visited. Education, Culture, and Employment is actively working with other jurisdictions in Canada, particularly through the western consortium, which ties together the Yukon, Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, to find ways to increase awareness and to develop preventative measures. The department has set up a strategy to provide professional development for teachers and to provide resource materials for people involved in education, to ensure that they can adequately inform people within the education system of the problems that could develop through the use of alcohol. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 267-13(4): Departmental Progress on FAS/FAE

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister tell us if some of this awareness will be targeted, not only at teachers and people who are in the education system, but to those families who are outside the system? Because a lot of times, although we are trying to educate people, it is those who are at school or involved in those programs. We need to actually touch base with families that do not attend school in some cases. Grandparents, parents, those that have children that are at risk of becoming involved in activities that would possibly cause harm to unborn children. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 267-13(4): Departmental Progress on FAS/FAE

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, much of our program is aimed at young parents or potential young parents, so the health curriculum and the career and

life management curriculum in senior secondary schools, deal explicitly with this problem. As well, to deal with the situation that the Member has identified, the department has identified funding for the development of a public information video related to FAS and FAE in cooperation with the Yellowknife Association for Community Living. We have also identified funding to develop a best practices support document for teachers. Both the video and the support document will be shared with our partners in the social envelope and be made broadly available to workers in the north. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 268-13(4): Drug and Alcohol Counsellor from South

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My line of questioning today will also be along the lines of affirmative action. We all recognize that we have a multitude of pressures on our social programs here and it would make obvious sense to take our aboriginal and long-time northern people and put them to work, as opposed to bringing people in from the south, so that they do not have to rely on this government for their basic needs in life. The Premier indicated in his comments that the affirmative action policy is not what it should be obviously by the statistics, but he also referred to specifics. I would like to ask a specific question of the Minister of Justice, with respect to a recent occurrence in my community, whereby I believe the details go like this. The young offenders' facility required a drug and alcohol counsellor to work with youth who are all northerners. They advertised in the north. They received applications, none of which they deemed to be qualified. They advertised again in the north and again did not have applicants which they considered suitable for the job or did not meet the strictest terms of the criteria in the job description. Ultimately, an individual was hired from Victoria, British Columbia, to come to Hay River to work with northern youth in a young offenders' facility and I understand that there were local people, from my riding, who applied for this job. Aboriginal people, who were qualified, who did not, perhaps, meet the strictest requirements of the job. If the Premier would like to hear specifics, this is one specific situation which alarms me greatly, that there are people, unemployed, qualified to do this work sitting in my community and someone is brought in from Victoria,

British Columbia. I was wondering if the Minister of Justice could respond to that? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Justice, Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 268-13(4): Drug and Alcohol Counsellor from South

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the concern of the honourable Member. She did ask us to check into the matter earlier. I have, I believe, initiated a process to find out what happened in this particular

Page 477

circumstance and I would be glad to pass that on to the honourable Member when we find out. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 268-13(4): Drug and Alcohol Counsellor from South

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the criteria that was listed in the qualifications was that five years experience was required, although this individual would only be spending approximately 20 percent of their time on drug and alcohol counselling and 80 percent on general security duties. There were applicants who had somewhat less than five years experience but still a significant amount of northern experience. Is there any way to make the criteria for these jobs somewhat more flexible so that somebody can apply a little common sense to them, as opposed to the kind of outcome that has resulted in this particular case?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 268-13(4): Drug and Alcohol Counsellor from South

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, of course all circumstances are different. I do not know the specifics of the requirements for this counsellor's position. As I indicated, I will check further into the matter and advise the honourable Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 268-13(4): Drug and Alcohol Counsellor from South

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the Minister's willingness to look into this and I look forward to hearing the answer, but when he does find out the answer to this question and if, in fact, this individual has been hired, what remedy or recourse is there, after the fact, for dealing with a situation like this? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 268-13(4): Drug and Alcohol Counsellor from South

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that there is little recourse, depending on the circumstances, if the position is filled, there has been an offer made to the employee and that offer has been accepted. But it will certainly point out to us, if there are any difficulties, to try to alleviate any future problems, if some less stringent experience requirements can be accommodated so those types of issues can be addressed, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 269-13(4): Premier's Advisory Council on Business

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, one of the major initiatives, the new initiatives of this government, is

the Premier's Advisory Council on Business. We have had very few details on how this Advisory Council on Business has been working. I wonder if the Premier, the Honourable Mr. Morin, can bring us up-to-date on his Advisory Council? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 269-13(4): Premier's Advisory Council on Business

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Advisory Council has met twice. The very first meeting was a meeting where they had the ability to get to know each other and get to talk about issues that are of concern to this government. The second meeting that we have had, we brought in a facilitator to facilitate discussions and it seemed very clear to me that the discussions that these business people were having were similar to the discussions that are held in this House. They seemed to recognize the fact that the social issues and the birth rates in the Northwest Territories are some of the main things that are driving the deficit of this budget. We had scheduled another meeting for January but, due to the fact that I and others were unable to attend, I had cancelled that meeting. Hopefully we will reschedule it for March. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 269-13(4): Premier's Advisory Council on Business

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, it was unfortunate about the accident and I am sure that we all feel sorry about that. Mr. Speaker, one of the main inputs, as Mr. Morin has just said, was that business people would get together, they would discuss with the Premier where the economic situation is going and discuss, not only the economic, but the socio-economic aspects of the Northwest Territories. I wonder if the Premier's Advisory Council had any input into Mr. John Todd's budget brought down by the Government of the Northwest Territories? Were they consulted prior to the budget in their second meeting and what kind of advice, like on the reductions to the capital budget and so on, did they

give to the Premier to pass on to the Finance Minister? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 269-13(4): Premier's Advisory Council on Business

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, the Business Advisory Council did not have a look at the budget prior to it being made public. No one is allowed to do that other than Members of this Legislative Assembly. One of the major concerns they did bring up and they were waiting to get information back from us, as well as the working group on the business incentive policy. They are very concerned about that and how it would affect them doing business in the Northwest Territories. They are also concerned about the perception of the business incentive policy, where everybody in the

Page 478

Northwest Territories is expected to take a certain amount of cut and the perception that some people are laying out is that the business sector is not taking a cut. That is the perception. They were concerned about that and we talked about that a bit and we have to address that concern and that perception. The working group of this Assembly was supposed to table their work in this Assembly and then after that, that is going to be one of the major discussions at the next business advisory group's meeting. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 269-13(4): Premier's Advisory Council on Business

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I did not say that they were going to look at the budget before hand. What I said was did the group, the Advisory Council for the Premier, did they have input, did they give some suggestions to the Premier? I did not say that they were going to look at it. Of course I know that they cannot see the budget before it comes out. That is not what I said. I asked him, did they give input to the Premier, when they sat around did they

say, here is some new revenue initiatives to come up with? That was my question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 269-13(4): Premier's Advisory Council on Business

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not in specific, specific issues, but there was general discussion on financing, for example, for businesses in the Northwest Territories. We had passed the aurora fund, I believe it is called, and business people in general felt that was a very good initiative by this government because they expressed concerns, especially those that are doing business up in the Baffin and Kitikmeot and those areas, of how hard it was to get banks interested in expanding their businesses or get banks interested in starting up small businesses in that area. In general, they did talk about those issues as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 269-13(4): Premier's Advisory Council on Business

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thought that when the Premier came up this initiative, I thought it was a good one. I still support it. I also remember that the Premier said that before each meeting, he would have a copy of the agenda forwarded to the Members so that we could have input on maybe on some of the things that might be discussed or give us an overview of what was discussed. So I wonder if the Premier will be following up on that earlier suggestion of his. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 269-13(4): Premier's Advisory Council on Business

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding that the previous meeting that Mr. Krutko was there representing the committee. I will be happy to share that with the chairman of the committee. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 270-13(4): Inuktitut Translation of JP's Manuals

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Justice, Mr. Ng. I would like to ask him that the manuals that are being used for Justices of the Peace, and I would like to ask him if these manuals are being translated into Inuktitut that will be used by Justices of the Peace in the communities. Is this being done? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 270-13(4): Inuktitut Translation of JP's Manuals

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not certain of that so I will check into it and advise the honourable Member.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 271-13(4): Resource Sector Training Programs

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment. Yesterday, I raised the issue of taking advantage of the training requirements and the possible employment coming down the pipe with all this resource development. There are some factors that will influence the type of development and the magnitude of requirements. I was wondering if the Minister could indicate what some of those factors would be. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for Education, Culture, and Employment. Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 271-13(4): Resource Sector Training Programs

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I assume that the Member is referring to the difficulty that we have in projecting exactly how many jobs may be available in the resource sector in the foreseeable future. Part of that is tied to not knowing how many of the existing operations may close while we are looking at new ones opening up. That is why one of the tasks that I have set for the Mine Training Committee is to take a look at training that is aimed not just at the mines that we know are on the horizon right now, or mines that are operating, but to try to do some crystal ball gazing and provide me with advice for training that will be useful no matter what.

As Members are probably aware, with the existing mines, we have a turnover of about 150 jobs a year. Considering that a new mine, like the BHP one, is looking at approximately 600 jobs for northerners, it is easy to see that if we go after some of those 150 jobs a year, we can have a significant impact on getting more northerners into mining.

Page 479

Going back to the Member's initial question, it is difficult for us to predict exactly how many jobs will be there long term. A lot can happen in terms of prices of gold, prices of oil, which will effect how many mines and how many exploration operations and oil wells are drilled in the north. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 271-13(4): Resource Sector Training Programs

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister elaborate a bit further on the issue such as the drop in the price of gold in terms of its possible impact and its effect on the possible training requirements. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 271-13(4): Resource Sector Training Programs

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that Members in this House will be aware that a local gold mine has approached its suppliers to suggest that they need some relief in their costs in order for them to maintain economic viability. I understand that there is at least one more mine that is probably experiencing difficulty with the current price of gold. All of this will have some effect on future exploration and therefore, the development of further mines. Mining and exploration companies take a look at the whole package, and make a determination as to whether or not they wish to proceed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 271-13(4): Resource Sector Training Programs

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister then, when he puts all these different factors on the scales that he uses to judge the effectiveness of current initiatives, is the Minister optimistic that at the end of the day, that there is still a good potential in the area of mine training and the need for jobs? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 271-13(4): Resource Sector Training Programs

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would think that in the least optimistic scenario we would looking at, in the course of the next 10 years, the same number of jobs that we have right now. I would say that we do not have a representative number of northerners in those jobs and there is still potential for us to get more jobs for more northerners if we embark on significant training programs. If we are more successful in seeing mines open up in the north, we

may see more jobs. The same is true in the oil and gas field and I think what we have to do is be prepared with good training programs. Watch for where the opportunities are, and make sure that we are providing the training when it is needed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 271-13(4): Resource Sector Training Programs

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that one member of the staff from Education, Culture, and Employment has been given a transfer assignment to work with the Minister's committee. Could the Minister indicate as we try to do this and planning in a comprehensive way, is there going to be a requirement for greater assets and resources devoted to this particular very important initiative? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 271-13(4): Resource Sector Training Programs

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to wait for advice from the Mine Training Committee. The individual, Mr. Dan O'Neill, to whom the Member refers was actually selected by members of that Committee. I had no input to their selection. It was a posted competition. During the review and interview process, he was chosen by members of the committee. If it looks like we can gain more jobs by investing more, I will certainly look for the funds in order to make that commitment. I need to wait for advice from the Mine Training Committee to make sure that they agree there is a reasonable chance for success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 272-13(4): Vee Lake Environmental Concerns

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been brought to my attention that Mr. Dave Talbot reported the possibility and suspicion of a spill on Small Lake by Vee Lake. I had a question for the Premier. To see his question, it was reported to Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, and I guess, I understand that he has made a request of the territorial government to also investigate this. I wonder if the Premier could confirm that for me.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 272-13(4): Vee Lake Environmental Concerns

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If it is the same brown spot that was seen out on the lake just the other day, the Department of RWED is investigating that along with the federal government, DIAND. Thank you. They are looking into that.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral question. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 272-13(4): Vee Lake Environmental Concerns

MR. OOTES:

I wonder if the Premier could tell us if he has any further information yet on that or is it still under investigation and he is awaiting a report.

Page 480

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 272-13(4): Vee Lake Environmental Concerns

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that is correct. It is still under investigation as far as my understanding. Our government is awaiting a report. Once we receive that report I would be happy to share that with Members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 273-13(4): Affirmative Action Policy

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier regarding affirmative action and his comments that the affirmative action policy is not working and that they are going to rewrite the policy. I would like to know, he indicated that they were concerned that the policy is not working. Does Cabinet's concern include the concern that the current affirmative action policy is not being properly implemented?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 273-13(4): Affirmative Action Policy

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not exactly sure when the existing affirmative action policy came into effect. I could find that information out for Members as well. But, when that policy came into effect, we had a very, very low level of aboriginal and long term northerners in the employment of this government. So, previous governments have developed an affirmative action policy with the goal of increasing long term northerners and aboriginal peoples employment in the government to 51 percent, I believe it was. Right now as a government we sit approximately 31 to 34 percent of affirmative action employees in government. As you get into senior management, those percentages drop more. So, we acknowledge that the affirmative action policy is not working to the extent that it needs to meet the goal that was set at the very offset. So, it has to be reworked and we have committed to the Legislative Assembly already that we would rework that affirmative action policy with the Members of this Legislative Assembly. Mr. Todd is the lead Minister on that affirmative action issue and reworking that paper. I believe that he has made a commitment already for June of this year to bring a paper forward on the affirmative action. Sorry, Mr. Speaker, that is for this session.

-- Applause

HON. DON MORIN:

So, at that time, the Members will all have an opportunity to make suggestions and recommendations of how we can redevelop that policy for it to work better today, 1997. No, it is about the affirmative action policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Question period is over. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to go back to item 5.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Mackenzie Delta is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 5. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the Chief from Tsiigehtchic, Morris Blake; the Chief from Fort McPherson, William Koe; and also the Chief from Inuvik, James Firth.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Item 7, written questions. Mr. Erasmus.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like unanimous consent to return to item 6.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Yellowknife North is seeking unanimous consent to return to Item 6. Do we have any nays? You do not have unanimous consent. Written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 3-13(4): Chief Julius School Gymnasium

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a reply to a written question asked by Mr. Krutko on January 28, 1997 regarding Chief Julius School gymnasium. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Finance is currently working on our behalf with the insurance company on a final settlement amount. Once we have settled the claim I will inform the Member as to the amount to be recovered. However, Finance advises that the claim is not likely to be settled for a number of months.

The department agreed to fund a standard gymnasium for the new school in Fort McPherson through a contribution agreement to the Beaufort-Delta Divisional Education Council. In turn, the Council signed a contract with the Gwich'in Development Corporation. After the community indicated it wanted a gymnasium to be built with the new school that was larger than would be permitted by departmental capital standards, the Gwich'in Development Corporation agreed to fund the additional costs of building the larger gymnasium within the amount of money being proposed by the department. Tetlit Zheh Construction is the construction arm of the Gwich'in Development Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, it was understood by all parties that the funds allocated for the building of the school were based on the department's capital standards and those items in excess of standards and the agreed amount would be covered by the Gwich'in Development Corporation. Tetlit Zheh Construction was aware of this understanding when it signed the contract. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Mr. Ningark.

Page 481

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition, Petition No. 10-13(4), dealing with the matter of the 10 percent budget cut for the women's program. Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 21 signatures and, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners request, we the undersigned do not want the 10 percent budget cut to the women's program, from the Inuktitut Women's group in Taloyoak. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Petitions. We will take a 15 minute break.

-- Break

MR. SPEAKER:

We are on item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 11: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 4-13(4): Report on the Review of the 1997-98 Main Estimates

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to present the report of the Resource Management Committee on our main estimate review. The Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development would like to compliment the departments in its envelope for identifying such significant reductions while meeting, what may best be described, as difficult budget targets.

During the 1996/97 budget review, the standing committee approved total reductions to the departments in this envelope, of more than \$17 million. For the upcoming 1997/98 fiscal year, proposed reductions are in excess of \$30 million. The net effect on this envelope, over the two year period, will be base reductions totalling over \$47 million and the elimination of more than 245 positions.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the introductory comments of the Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development in our review of the 1997/98 main estimates. I would therefore move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kivallivik, that the report be received and moved into committee of the whole for consideration.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. You will need another seconder. Your seconder is not here, Mr. Krutko, but we still do not have a quorum. Mr. Clerk. The chair recognizes a quorum. Mr. Krutko, your motion.

MR. KRUTKO:

I therefore move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kivallivik, that the report be received and

moved into committee of the whole for consideration.
Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Your motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Thank you. Reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the benefit of the Honourable Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, today I would like to table a picture, Tabled Document No. 41-13(4), depicting the gross inconsistencies in this government's support in programs for seniors living in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Tabling of documents. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a letter addressed to Edward Picco, Tabled Document No. 42-13(4), chairman, Standing Committee on Infrastructure from myself, explaining the role of Ministers in privatization, dated August 6, 1996. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Tabling of documents. Mr. Todd. Tabling of documents.

HON. JOHN TODD:

No. Sorry.

MR. SPEAKER:

Pursuant to section 21 of the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowance Act, I wish to table the audit by the Auditor General of Canada of the financial statements of the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowance Act for the year end, March 31, 1996, Tabled Document No. 43-13(4). Tabling of documents. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my honourable colleagues' indulgence to go back to Members' statements, if I may.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Keewatin Central is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 3, Members' statements.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

Do we have any nays? You have unanimous consent, Mr. Todd.

Member's Statement On More Original Thoughts on Government

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, Members. Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed Mr. Picco's story earlier today about I.C. Clearly and Fiscally Cat. Mr. Speaker, while I have a tremendous amount of respect for Mr. Picco's oratory skills and sense of history, on occasion he has been known to suffer from factual dyslexia, an ailment that causes him to mix up most of the simple facts.

You see, Mr. Speaker, I have also had the same story and the facts are somewhat different than Mr. Picco led the House to believe. Mr. Speaker, there was a man named I.C. Clearly who came from a land, far from the east, with bad clothes, a

Page 482

thick accent and a passion to make a difference to his people. Mr. Speaker, Fiscally Cat was an experienced and wise sage who knew the intricacies of the realm. Fiscally Cat saw, in I.C. Clearly, the potential to do great things and tried to do all he could to assist him. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, often the best intentions go astray.

Fiscally Cat counselled I.C. Clearly with his thick accent and clothing but, finally, despite his substantial efforts, was forced to concede that bad taste was not curable. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the situation only

worsened when I.C. Clearly began to believe his own rhetoric. I.C. Clearly began to listen to the radio to hear his voice. He crafted his speeches in search of the elusive soundbite. I.C. Clearly began to believe that he, and he alone, was capable of bringing sense to the chaos. In his own mind, Mr. Speaker, I.C. Clearly was a martyr who had achieved myth-like status.

Mr. Speaker, to all others, throughout the land, it became clear that his ego had overtaken his sense of reason. Mr. Speaker, the moral of the story is that Fiscally Cat vowed solutions over soundbites. On the other hand, to I.C. Clearly, the solution is secondary to the soundbite. I know this story well, Mr. Speaker, I see clearly.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 9: Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1996-97

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 9, Forgiveness of Debt Act, 1996-97, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the forgiveness of debts under section 25 of the Financial Administration Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Your motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 9 has had second reading and, accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee. Second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 8, Committee Report 2-13(4), Committee Report 3-13(4), Tabled Document 20-13(4), with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

I call the committee of the whole to order. There are a number of items before the committee today which have already been read out. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Madam Chair, that we continue with Bill 8 and Committee Reports 2 and 3, concurrently, and that we consider Aboriginal Affairs.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The committee is agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

We are on page 2-45, program summary for Aboriginal Affairs. Would the Minister, Mr. Antoine, like to call witnesses?

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Okay. I ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to invite Mr. Antoine's witnesses in. Does the committee agree to invite the witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Whitford.

Minister Antoine. For the record could you please introduce your witness.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, and good afternoon. I have with me Peter Bannon. He is director of policy for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Antoine.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

General comments. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on just general comments. Sorry, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, one of the things that we did not touch on in general comments was the offshore claim situation with regards to Makivik. All islands, we know, in Hudson Bay and James Bay, and the Hudson Strait belong to the Northwest Territories Government. There was a concern from our committee when we reviewed this that were ongoing negotiations with the Quebec Government, the Government of Canada, and the Northwest Territories. However, after saying that, I wonder if the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs could just give us an overview on what is happening with the islands in James Bay which are overlapped by the Ontario Government and the Quebec Government as well as the Northwest Territories Government. Do we send people down there to check on the birds, the sanctuary? Are people using those islands? Are there permits and licenses involved? So some comments on that, and what is the fiscal side of things with Fiscally Cat. I see it just as clear as anyone else. So, I appreciate Fiscally Cat.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, there is a Makivik offshore land claims agreement that is underway. When the Northern Quebec and James Bay Agreement was negotiated, just for clarification here, Canada committed to deal with the northern Quebec Inuit offshore claim should the federal claims policy be revised to allow such claims. The federal government has accepted the Inuit of northern Quebec claim of a traditional use and occupancy of the offshore area between a Nunavut settlement area and the coast of Quebec known as the Nunavik Marine region. But, the Nunavik Marine region falls entirely within the Northwest Territories, and in the Nunavut Final Agreement, there is overlapping interest of the people of northern Quebec and the people of the NWT.

Page 483

As a result, during the claims talk there is discussion about how this thing is going to be worked out. Yes, we have people who monitor this claims process. The arrangements have not been resolved yet. On the fiscal matter, it is difficult to get into details of that. The islands are in the N.W.T. area. During the Nunavut Final Agreement, there is agreement that the

land the Makivik Inuit of northern Quebec traditionally use, that part of the country will continue to do so. So, there is an overlap agreement, that is attempted to be sorted out during this Makivik offshore lands claims agreement. Thank you.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. General comments. No further general comments. Does the committee agree to move on to detail? Mr. Erasmus.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Close.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I have been concerned for quite some time that there has not been enough attention being paid to matters in the west concerning land claims and treaty rights and various other matters in the aboriginal affairs area. I am pleased to see that there will be a little more money being put into this area, because, as I say, I have been quite concerned for a period of time, particularly when we see the tens of million of dollars being poured into development in the eastern Arctic for their constitutional development, infrastructure development, and the training, and there is no equivalent to that in the west.

Similarly, there has not been enough work being done in the area of assisting the aboriginal people in the west in defining aboriginal and treaty rights, and in concluding their claims. We do know that the division of the territories and the emergence of Nunavut has come about through a land claim. Similarly, in the west for the aboriginal people over here, the conclusion of land claims would help land claims and treaty land entitlement or whatever type of land agreements that the people in the west do. They will help the aboriginal people to contribute much more significantly economically as well as raising their employment levels. Because employment and I guess, wealth in a way, is directly associated with health and education and social programs and the rest of that, I believe that this government should be doing as much as possible to assist in getting these claims, land agreements, to be finalized as quickly as possible.

There was just a report put out recently by the federal government which indicates that the number one enemy to your health basically, or thereabouts, number one is unemployment. We know that the high rates of unemployment amongst the aboriginal people in the west, in the north, and in this instance, I am speaking about the west, the rates are abominable. Nobody would want to be included in those statistics. No non-aboriginal person would want to be included in such statistics. Madam Chair, similarly non-aboriginal people would not want to be included in the statistics involved in the deplorable state of education amongst the aboriginal people in the west and in the east.

So, as I said, I am very pleased to see that there is an attempt to put more money into this area. I hope that the other Members can also agree with this and perhaps recommend that we put more money in addition to what is being suggested if they so choose. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus. Would you like to respond to those comments Mr. Antoine.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I too have very similar views of the honourable Member in regards to his concerns, but this government here has a position that we do support the land claims that the different aboriginal nations here in the north are attempting to pursue with the federal government. Here again, in the land claims, it is an arrangement that is initiated between the First Nations and the federal government. Once that is initiated, we try to expedite the talks any way we can. In regards to self-government, in the self-government area, it is a little bit of a different arrangement where we are a third party as the Government of the Northwest Territories, to the talks since the main thrust of the self-government talks is to look at the type of jurisdictions that GNWT currently has in the communities in regards to providing programs and services. So, we are directly affected. Therefore, we are directly involved in this area, in a number of different self-government talks that are beginning or initial stages of starting as well.

So the government has developed a policy to be part of this. I think that we are in position to carry on with the negotiations in these different areas. So we are in a position to move ahead. In regards to the additional

dollars that the honourable Member mentioned, it is just for clarification here. I think it was raised earlier on in some of the questioning in the House that the cost, the self-government initiative, is very important to us as a government. We need more resources to participate to protect the interests of the Northwest Territories when self-government talks are going on between federal government and the aboriginal nations that are negotiating. These additional dollars came about by the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs in October 23 putting a paper towards Cabinet requesting additional resources so that we have people in place and money in place to do the work.

Page 484

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. General comments. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In regards to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, I would like to note to the other Members that 1993/94 there was almost four and a half million dollars to this department. Today, it is almost two and a half which is almost half of the original budget five years ago. I think that people have to realize that it is to the benefit of not only the government but the people of the Northwest Territories that we resolve these outstanding issues with the aboriginal community and also, allow the aboriginal organizations to determine what their ambitions are in regards to being self-sufficient through the self-government talks and also the claim settlements in the north, especially in the western territory, where we see interest by mining companies, forestry companies, and other interest groups. But I also have to state that, without certainty being taken care of and clarified, that any investor will not invest in the north until these items have been identified.

In regards to the diamond mine operation that has been set forth, there is nothing that is going to state that everything has been taken care of, because there is still outstanding treaty talks with the Treaty 8 people and also the Treaty 11 negotiations are still under way. So until those negotiations are complete, I would not like to state that it is 100 percent taken care of, which it is not.

I think it is critical for us to have the adequate resources to complete these outstanding issues as soon as possible, but with the limited resources that is

presently in the budget for the Aboriginal Affairs, I do not believe it is adequate to resolve these outstanding issues. I would also like to state that, regardless of what constituency you come from, in remarks by Mr. Erasmus in regards to the social statistics of aboriginal people in regards to the education system, drop outs, the alcohol and drug statistics, and the health statistics of those aboriginal people, which we see.

The problem in southern Canada, with outstanding treaty rights in relation to programs and services, we either deal with those problems now, or eventually they will come back to haunt us later. I think it is critical that we deal with those problems now and have the resources to deal with them in which they had to be adequate. I believe the \$2.3 million that is being asked by this department is not adequate, so I would like to ask the Minister and this government to ensure that there is some attempt made to ensure that there is adequate funding to carry out these other outstanding issues, such as the constitutional process and the self-government talks with the aboriginal groups. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, in response to the honourable Member in regards to adequate funding, the ministry is a small department and the honourable Member made reference to the fact that this department used to have substantially more in the budget in the past. Since about a year ago, the direction from the different standing committees was to take the committee transfer initiative out of this ministry and pass it on to Municipal and Community Affairs, and that we did. At the same time, the Intergovernmental and Constitutional Affairs was also moved out of this ministry and moved into the Department of the Executive. Hence the reduction in the amount of resources and people that we have in this ministry.

This ministry, even though it is small, is a very important ministry and we are dealing with very crucial and sensitive issues that are going to effect all of us in the north and into the future, especially when we are dealing with the development of a new constitution and, at the same time, with representing this government and when we are sitting down with the aboriginal First Nations, when we are discussing

self-government initiatives. So even though this ministry is very small, it is a very crucial one and, hence, the resources that we have there is what we have to work with and as we see that we need more resources, such as we have for the constitutional talks, we are able to secure some funding to carry on the work from the Government of the Northwest Territories, as well as from the feds.

So there is some funding there for carrying out this constitutional development work and, as for having more participation in the self-government talks, we are requesting in the supp that we are going to be needing additional resources as well and as we move along in these processes and we come to situations in the future where we may require additional resources, then we certainly are going to be pursuing that as well into the future. But at the present time, the budget is what we have to work with and that is what we have in the business plan for approval. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Detail, Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to make some...

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

I am sorry. I saw your hand go up and I called your name, but would you mind, Mr. Ningark, actually, was on my list. Thank you very much Mr. Ootes. Sorry for the confusion. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I will be very brief. For the record, Madam Chair, I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of the people of Nunavut for the support assumed by and demonstrated by this government over the past 20 some years when we were preparing for creation of Nunavut. I think we the people of Nunavut, have been very fortunate in some areas. Unlike the west, our area is a little less complex. We have three different regions, Kitikmeot, Keewatin, and Baffin, and basically, we are able to understand each other in our language, slightly different, but basically you can communicate with each other.

Secondly, I have talked to people like Levi Barnabas, Mr. Enuaraq, and other Nunavut Members from other parts of the Nunavut area. I come from the Kitikmeot

region. I was born in Keewatin, but every time you talk to somebody else from another community in the Baffin, you realize that there is someone related to someone from different regions. It really is a small world.

The people of Nunavut, mainly the aboriginal people, from the beginning of time survived on one condition, that we learned to survive by working together. It was the only way. In our camp,

Page 485

when we needed to survive we depended on the other people, because we were living out on the sea. When you are living out on the sea and you have to look for seal holes, one seal will have maybe five or six, maybe ten holes at a time. There is no way for one person, one hunter, to be able to check every hole at the same time, so we need the help of other people to survive and to work together, even though you are from the different camp site. That was part of the survival.

So when we talked about creation of Nunavut, 20 some years ago, we realized that one region will not be able to do things that he wanted to do for their people. Perhaps two regions would be able to work something out, but three regions would even be better to get something from the government in terms of negotiations. We realize that in numbers, the opportunity to succeed is ten times better than if you have one or two people.

Madam Chair, once we divide, I would like to assure the people of the west, all my colleagues, that from the Kitikmeot region, I come from Kitikmeot region, the municipalities of Kitikmeot region want to continue buying services from this area. I am not speaking for the whole of Nunavut, but I am speaking for my region. We will continue to buy services. How much, I have no idea. People from Kitikmeot region have depended upon Yellowknife for medical services. I thank the people of Yellowknife for educational services and the likes and I, as your brother, hope that you will be able to succeed in your endeavour to have your own government in this area, a western government. I have to say that because we will continue to depend on each other. I would like to underline that part. People assume that when we divide, the western government will be the government by itself, the eastern government will be the government by itself. There will be a line drawn between the two. That is only an imaginary line, I am sure, given the constitution of the country, mobility

rights and so on. You can seek jobs here and there. I am sure that we will continue to work closely together, co-operate together and still very much depend on each other. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, first of all I would like to thank the honourable Member, since he has thanked the government for the support over the last 20 years that Nunavut was struggling to become recognized as a territory in itself, so I would like to thank you for those words on behalf of the government. Yes, there is not much I could say about that, of what the honourable Member is saying, except that as we continue for division in 1999, we still have a lot of work ahead of us, and there is very much concern there for how eventually things will work out and, even though we have worked together over the last 20 years, we still have a few more years ahead of us and we certainly would like to continue to work co-operatively towards that division, and the more we work together, I think the easier it will be to have division happen in a very good way. That is all I could add as my comment, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Next I have Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Madam Chair. There are many issues that are facing us as Legislatures in this particular term. They have been ones that have been very difficult to get into and very difficult to tackle.

Deficit being one, division being another one. The constitutional process is another one that is difficult to bring about because it requires a great deal of consultation, a great deal of thought by everyone, to ensure that we do reach a constitution that is palatable to the majority of the population. I did ask the Minister some questions in the House the other day. I would like to refer to some of those again with the viewpoint of clarifying, for the public and myself, some of the approaches that are being taken.

The area that I would like to know a little bit more about from the Minister, is the process. We will be sitting in this House for a number of weeks yet and, after that, we will be available to participate in the

public consultation area. The area of concern I have or the question that I have, rather than concern, is, who will make up the individuals that will be doing the consulting in addition to the MLAs? How will a report be compiled and, following that, will that report come back to the western Caucus for review, for us to have an opportunity to look at it before it goes to public ratification? I did ask the Minister the other day about the ratification process but I am still not clear if the ratification process has been defined yet. I think, before it goes for public consultation, the public wants to know, how will this be ratified. I think it is a very legitimate question.

The Minister stated the other day that they are bringing Partners in a New Beginning back to the table as the document to be discussed. I would hope that he is going to clarify, or the group will clarify for the public, what the other two proposals are, with some very good balanced information. As we know, Partners in a New Beginning received a lot of very, very negative reception and it was not just limited to the community that I live in. It was in a lot of areas. The Globe and Mail editorialized on that and I do not think we can take that lightly. Rightly or wrongly, it has been done. Other publications followed suit, the Edmonton Journal, the Alberta Western Report and, yes, they are very - what could we call them - to the right style of publication. They are not a left, leaning type of publication. Very, very conservative.

My concern is that people will get adequate information when this whole process goes in before the public. Perhaps the Minister could clarify the other area. What were the concerns of the federal government? He addressed the concern that timing is important and their funding but I did not really get an indication from him of the exact concerns that the federal government had.

Then, perhaps the Minister could also address the whole question ... there seems to be a push to put this through and we seem to be under this tremendous time crunch. Now, what is the necessity for that? I guess I am raising this question so that the public can understand the wherefores and why this is receiving such priority. Certain members of the public are of the opinion that, why can we not take a little more time with this? So that we have all been properly... it is not rushed through. It does not look like it is rushed through. We do proper consultation on a timely basis and, does it really matter if we have a new constitution by April 1st, 1999 or April 1st, 2000? So, perhaps the Minister could clarify why is this time schedule here.

Page 486

I think that I would like to digress for a moment on another subject, Madam Chair. That is the division of the territories. I think the government did respond to Footprints 2. There were two areas I was concerned about. The government has addressed one area of employees and that the GNWT employees be assured positions in the new Nunavut government. They did address that in their reply. The second item is, I was very pleased to hear Mr. Ningark's comments with regard to their interest in continuing service relationships with the western government because that is ultimately very, very important for both territories that we be here to be able to supply a service if Nunavut is not yet in the position to supply its own service and that we continue to have relations in certain areas that may be important to carry on with such things as the Power Corporation and Workers' Compensation Board. I realize that this is still subject to discussion, but to me, I appreciated Mr. Ningark's comments. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the honourable Member touched on some very important key areas here in regards to the constitutional development here in the western Arctic. I just want to say that in regards to process and who will make up a consultation team, we do not know right now who is going to make up the consultation team except that the Constitutional Working Group just at the beginning of the week at their meetings directed our executive director, Fred Koe, to put notice out that we are looking for facilitators. We think that the best approach would be to get people who are skilled in facilitating workshop type of arrangements so that we could get maximum use out of any meetings that we have in the community so that we give out the information that we have and the information will include the Partners in a New Beginning package. The one area that is red flagged the most is the one model that is highlighted in the document. We have asked our staff to develop further the other two models that were put in the appendix of that document, so, yes, the contents will be different models. But we would like to look at the principles of the document. I think that up to this point it is safe to say there is a general support for the guiding principles that are in there. A lot of the guiding

principles are things that we have worked out throughout the years so it is acceptable for now.

I think that the majority of the package is acceptable. I think that the only problem that we had was that the one model that we illustrated as a possible model on how aboriginal self-government, inherent right of self-government could be integrated or working along with a public government system. I think that was our example of how it could happen. As the honourable Member indicated that was a big target for a lot of people that saw it as something that they do not support. The reactions that we have heard from public meetings here in Yellowknife and perhaps, in Hay River, and from articles that we have seen in the Globe and Mail and other publications like the Western Report, different commentaries, and so forth that we have seen. It is part of the process. I see it as part of the process. I do not see it as a negative response to what we are doing. I see it as very important to the whole process. Those of us who worked four months last summer in putting this together came to a lot of compromises among ourselves to come out of the package. We understood and realized all along that a package such as that would not be acceptable to everybody. Therefore, there is going to be some reactions. We expected the reactions and they are there. Personally, I was hoping that along with the negative reaction, that there would be suggestions on how we could work. We have seen very little of that. But, hopefully, and we were not prepared to do a very good consultation at that time because of lack of money and resources, but now, we have been able to secure some funding so that we could put a team together to go into the communities.

Just getting back to who will go into the communities along with facilitators, we are hoping that the facilitators would come from the regions or the communities. We know that there are people out there that are familiar with a certain region or are familiar with a community that could do this type of facilitating, so that we could get more out of this tour when we are getting together. So, the formulation of the team is still being worked on. The Constitutional Working Group, we meet whenever it is necessary and we will probably be meeting here fairly shortly and probably next week or so to carry on with the work because we gave instruction to our executive director to maybe beef up and formulate some of the plans more. Once we got that we will notify the Members on the progress of that initiative.

Just something aside, before this meeting today, I had a couple of calls from elders and their suggestion that

whenever there is a tour like this going into the communities, their suggestion is that elders be involved, key elders be involved to give some guidance and some direction into this process. This is just an example of different suggestions that are coming out from people who are very interested in making sure that this constitution is done in the good and proper way.

Yes, we will after consultation into the communities, and feedback that we get from the people, we will then compile a report and revise the document and review the document and the Constitutional Working Group is in partnership with the aboriginal summit leaders. The practice has always been that these meetings are there and Members, MLAs that are not part of the working group, have come in on their own and sat in. That practice is still going to be there. This is in reply to your question about how will it be reviewed, how it will be revised. There is opportunity for participation in that, and it will go to the western Caucus because the western Caucus is one of the partners in this whole initiative.

In regards to ratification, that is going to be in the form of a public plebiscite. Exactly how that is going to be done, we are still developing that and we are seeking suggestions on that as well. I think our main focus right now is the consultation process. We are focusing on that. We still in the back of our minds, have the ratification process that is also formulating at the same time. It is not too clear exactly when and how it is going to happen, but it is going to happen.

In regards to the federal concerns, yes, when our officials were meeting with the federal officials there was give and take, back and forth, different meetings and the federal government's reaction to that was that yes, they would like to see a product that is made-in-the-north. Their concerns are both on policy issues and legal issues as well. The good positive thing about it is that the federal officials will be available throughout the development of the constitutional process so that federal

Page 487

concerns will be clearly understood whenever they arise. I think the federal government's initial reaction was focused on that one model that is in the Partners for New Beginning. The specifics of that is that they regard the voting of aboriginal and non-aboriginal as a serious policy concern. The feds deemed it to be foreign to Canadian values and tradition. In an aboriginal person coming from the north, there is

difference of opinion on that issue because I do not think they took into consideration the other two models that were in the document. Their suggestion is that it may contravene the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and therefore it needs clarification. I think that since this concern first came out, I think that there has been a lot of clarification in this area as more explanation has been provided to the federal officials on this one. We will further clarify this issue as well.

Another concern, also in regards to the contravention of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, is the voting. There again it is based on the one model, which again I said that their analysis is incomplete since they did not really take into consideration the other two models, specifically the voting and assemblies of that one model in the Partners which gives veto to aboriginal over all public government legislation. There again is a need for clarification in there. That also could be dealt with by getting more information out with the two other models that are in the appendix.

The other concern that you have asked is that the negotiation for the negotiating the self-government companion agreement. They are requesting that it be ratified and in place at the same time as the new legislation. With this arrangement, it is an arrangement between the aboriginal leaders and the federal government. On this particular issue here, the GNWT, we are more or less an observer status on that. It is really up to the aboriginal leaders to come up with this self-government companion arrangement. The feds put it as part of the condition. It puts us in an awkward position, but we have let the aboriginal leaders know about this particular condition. They feel that they are in a position where they are dealing with it, and I think it could be resolved.

In regards to this other concern, which is the authority of the territorial government beyond the province, it does not restrict these matters within the territorial governments, and it is hard to. So, this is an area of more a legal issue than anything else and I think that this area here could be dealt with as we go through this whole process.

So, these are some of the concerns that were raised by the federal government and, of course, in our document we talk about the MPs and the Senate, and they are saying that it is not for the NWT Act to decide on these areas. This was their first reaction to our document. I think that when we look at it, we expected some reactions, so we think we can deal with all

these different issues as we go along through this process. So, thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. I just want to remind Members that each time a Member starts to speak or the Minister starts to speak, I reset the timer for 10 minutes and the Minister went over that 10 minute quite considerably this time. I did not want to cut him off, but if Members could just keep your eye on the clock when time is up, flashes, that is it. Mr. ... you are not next on the list.

-- Laughter

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Evaloarjuk.

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Chair. I had a few comments that I forgot along the way but I will pursue certain comments. First of all, regarding the Nunavik Makivik land claims and I would like to express my gratitude for working with them. I have been a member with the land claims process back in the days when it used to be called TFN and we used to work with the Makivik Corporation. I did not quite understand the response to one of the questions concerning the islands just north of northern Quebec. But, I do remember that the leaders of Nunavut, during one of our meetings, indicated, as well as members of the Sanikiluaq area, we all made an agreement that these islands would be accessible for all of the parties to have hunting rights. In particular, those people are true Inuit even though they live in Quebec. They have become part of Quebec in only recent years, as of 1912. They had apparently been redefined in the borders of Quebec from outside of the territories and we agreed that as fellow Inuit we would never sue one another for crossing or overlapping our border rights. That being the case, I would like to appreciate and respect that agreement.

There were other items as well, including the people of Arviat and Baker Lake. These regions are the closest within the border of the other provinces. My question is this, you have Manitoba aboriginal people and you have Saskatchewan aboriginal people, and at that time those groups could not come to an agreement and they were interested in taking action in court. I am wondering what the status is of that situation?

I also want to recognize the people of Sahtu. We had a good working relationship, and if I remember correctly, we were able to make agreements concerning our land claims, and I would like to recognize that importance. So, as far as my two questions go concerning the islands of northern Quebec, what is their status now? My other question is on the status of the other aboriginal groups. What has become of the court cases that were pending from the other aboriginal groups? Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

In regards to honourable Member's questions as far as the Makivik land claims going on, I am told that about 1,975 square kilometres are available for selection by Makivik for the offshore islands. So we are involved in negotiations because all the islands are NWT jurisdiction, with the Nunavut Final Agreement. The honourable Member is right, there is an agreement between the Nunavut Inuit and Nunavik Inuit, so there is an ongoing land claims in that area. So we are monitoring it and there again, it is an arrangement with the federal government and we are participating in that whole discussion and we are honouring the Nunavut Final Agreement in this process.

Once these islands will still be under the NWT and Nunavut jurisdiction during this whole process and hopefully, that is how we are going to try to resolve those issues. That is the position of this government at this time.

In regards to the other question for the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Dene in the northern part of the provinces, they have traditionally used the land in the north, north of 60, now

Page 488

in the Nunavut area. I understand that this issue has been settled out of court and I also know that Josie Kusugak and some Inuit leaders did meet with some of the chiefs from the provinces very recently. I did not know that some of the leaders from Saskatchewan have been asking to meet with this government to put their issues forward. I would just like to say that this issue is still not resolved. I think that we have to resolve these issues and try to work together. So, that is still ahead of us on this one here.

In regards to the Sahtu, once people work together, then they are able to come to an agreement on the

issues that are before us and this is a good example of what happened with the Sahtu area in regards to Nunavut settlement. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. (Translation) We decided for you. (Translation ends) In the general comments, Aboriginal Affairs, we have Mr. Picco and Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to move we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

There is a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion to report progress, please signify. The motion is done please. Opposed. There were Members coming in at the same time and voting. Please signify again. All those in favour of the motion to report progress, please signify again. Down. Opposed. In order to allow the committee to try and resolve some of the items that we are discussing, I will vote against the motion. The motion is defeated. General comments, we have Mr. Picco and Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. After some discussion on both the lands claims settlement area and the mandate of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, we requested yesterday if the Premier would look at amalgamating all funding for aboriginal programs, self-government talks, and devolution under one ministry, but I did not get the Minister's response. Is he looking at that? When will that come into place? So on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Minister.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that motion that came forward yesterday, we still have to look at it and see what it really means. In the type of work that we would be doing and self-government and in land claims, we rely on Justice, rely on MACA, and so forth, so it would be difficult to lump those type of resources together, but perhaps there is a way to

streamline what we are already doing under the jurisdiction that the ministry has. I think I could say that we are looking into it and I think it is a good motion that was passed there and we will try to comply by that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. I have Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Following up on Mr. Ootes' remarks, with respect to the consultation and our efforts to have a new constitution in place for the western Arctic, I do appreciate the Minister's clarification in the House yesterday, that the facilitators that will be going into the communities will be also talking about the other two models. I believe that there has been, as the Minister himself indicated, some not so favourable reaction to the main model that was put forward, but I think that if you look at all three of the models and take certain parts from each one and you blend them, so to speak, that there is something there that I think would be saleable and satisfactory to most of the people in the western Arctic.

Because it would appear, for some, that the model put forward is the recommended one, what it has done, unfortunately, has driven people to the other extreme, which is to say that we want to keep the status quo. The problem with the status quo is that it does not address the most fundamental basic principle of what we are trying to do and that is to bring together aboriginal self-government and public government. The status quo in no way addresses that aspiration. I think that it would be the right approach to make sure that all three models are brought to people's understanding and one in particular, which is the 18 Member model, is one which I think has a tremendous amount of merit and addresses quite a number of concerns that I have heard.

Having said that, the ratification process is another issue which is one that has raised a lot of concern, but I think when people put it into the perspective that safeguards being built into the ratification process do not hurt, because I think that we would have something far from political peace and harmony if there is even a perception that one sector of our population in the west could force an arrangement on another sector and I think that would make for unsettled and unhappy arrangement for many, many

years to come. If the ratification process does have to include safeguards to make sure that the majority of, for example, both aboriginal and non-aboriginal people support the presentation, I do not personally have a problem with that, because we want this to be an arrangement and a bringing together of these two types of government that is going to be workable. Something that is imposed on one side or by one group of people is not going to be workable in the long run. Those are my comments on the constitution and the ratification process. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Did Mr. Minister want to respond? Mr. Minister.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think these are very good comments. I think it only adds to the development of the constitution development with these type of comments. I know the three models that we have there, they all have merits and there has been discussion already that we have to take a look at each one of them and see what is good in each one of them and see whether they could mesh. Ultimately, the idea there is to try to get a constitution together that is reflective of the society and I know it is here today, if that constitution would carry on into the future.

The current status quo, the N.W.T. Act, is something that was developed for us in Ottawa, many years ago and we use it, but it does not really reflect the realities of how the societies and the communities today work. We make our own arrangements. If it is going to be truly a society that is reflective of how the society is in the north and how we would

Page 489

like to see it in the future, it has to be developed by us in the north here together. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Barnabas.

MR. BARNABAS:

I would like to make a motion to report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The motion is on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion, please signify. Keep it up. Against the motion. Motion, this time, is defeated democratically. Thank you. Line by line? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. On page 2-46 of the 1997/98 main estimate activity, summary. Aboriginal Affairs, operations and maintenance. Total operations and maintenance, \$2,377,000. Agreed? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question of Mr. Antoine with regard to timing of the constitutional process, which he did not answer in response to my earlier comments and I wonder if he could clarify that for me? I had a question earlier for Mr. Antoine in regards to why the constitution needed to be processed in the timeframe set by the working group. I wonder if he could clarify that for me?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The Honourable Minister, Mr. Antoine.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I apologize for missing that one response to the honourable Member. He had a whole series of concerns and I was diligently going through the list but I had a note saying that my replies were too long so I might have deleted it. I guess the short answer for the urgency of 1999 is that there will be less incentive for the federal government after 1999 to make constitutional changes. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Does that answer your question, Mr. Ootes? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

I do not understand what the incentive for the federal government would be in any event, Mr. Chairman. I understood that there was concern about trying to achieve a constitution that could be taken through the House of Commons and that usually takes a two-year

timeframe. We are nearing a very narrow gap in that now and I wonder if Mr. Antoine could tell me what is wrong with the possibility, because these are the kinds of questions that are raised publicly, what is wrong with trying to take a little more time to develop the constitution and doing it by April 1st, year 2000, instead of April 1st, 1999?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have had these kinds of discussions, as well. We would like to see that we carry on the course of action that we took to try to have something in place by 1999. I know the window for putting a document forward, so that it will run through the legislative course in Ottawa is very timely. I think that, at this point in time, I am optimistic that if we are able to achieve what we say we want to do with the consultation process and the revision and a ratification by the fall, perhaps we still have enough time to have legislation go through the Parliament in Ottawa before 1999. That is the intention all along.

Yes, there is a lot of unknowns out there. We have a lot of different bodies in the north here that are participants. The different aboriginal regions and the groups along with us here in the Legislative Assembly. The federal government are also now directly involved with us, committed to go through this process with us. These are outside factors of which we have to be aware. At any time, there might be some major problems which may come up that may slow us down.

At the same time, the federal government is going into an election, so there again there are outside factors. We realize these things. The worst case scenario would probably be that we may not have something there by 1999, and then we have to start thinking of different options, maybe what the honourable Member is suggesting here is that, are there other options out there? My answer there is, no, we are pursuing this course of action, and perhaps we should be seriously considering what the honourable Member is saying, that we may not be able to meet the 1999 deadline and we may have to see whether this type of process that is under way could carry on beyond 1999. I hope that we could be able to maintain that course of action and be successful in getting the legislation through Parliament by 1999. However, there is possibilities

out there that it may not happen and we will have to consider other options. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We are dealing with Aboriginal Affairs. We have Mr. Henry and Mr. Barnabas that wanted to speak and we also have Mr. Erasmus. To Aboriginal Affairs. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister has alluded to the letter from the federal government, Indian Affairs, regarding concerns they have with the proposed document, Partners in a New Beginning, the constitutional process to the west, the proposed constitution. Will the Minister be encouraging the group to make adjustments to the document that will go to the public or go to the communities for consideration? Will he be making the adjustments required or suggested by the federal government? Will he be amending the document prior to going out for consultation to conform to what the federal government, wants to address their concerns? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Minister Antoine.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the members of the Constitutional Working Group, at the last meeting, made references to a rolling draft. As the different concerns come up, then those concerns have to be taken into consideration to try to satisfy all of the different parties to this whole document. Yes, since the document was tabled in October, a lot of different reactions have taken place, and a lot of suggestions have also been made on how to alter this document already to-date. All these different suggestions will be brought forward when this document is presented to the public for the consultation process. Thank you.

Page 490

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you. Could the Minister be a little more concise? Will there be any adjustments made to the document before it goes out to the communities for consultation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you. The document, Partners in a New Beginning, is a document that everybody is working off of, and there are suggestions on how to put this document forward. It is a printed document already, but then there is suggestions that, already we are doing some work on beefing up the other two models in there, and I guess once you are doing that you are already altering the package because the content of the package is the information that goes along with the package. I would say, yes, the package is regarded as a rolling draft, that changes are being made as we move along. Yes, the package is going to be a complete package, which is different from the single package and the content in the presentation that is going to be made to the people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister alluded earlier, in response to a question in one of his comments was that there has been some negative feedback to the document. A few people have made negative feedback. I would suggest to the Minister, that is probably the tip of the iceberg and it would be a serious underestimation on his part if he thinks that it is just a few people expressing concerns about some of the conditions laid down in that document.

I have a little concern, when the Minister tells me that more than likely, we will not have a document ready for 1999, when two new territories are created, and I am concerned that we are going to go and rush another process through in a couple of months time and get supposed good feedback and that, and put another document together. I think this document that has been presented has gone a long way towards creating more divisions in the north, especially in the western territory, in that I believe it unnecessarily raised expectations on one side and really dampened or frustrated a lot of hopes on the other side.

I think that these people that I have talked to, no one is against the principle just because it is fact, no one is against the principle of the aboriginal inherent right to self-government. It is a fact, no one is arguing against that. It is how that can be implemented with public government, I think, is the question that has to be addressed. I think the way that it has been proposed already has probably done more damage towards making that a reality in the new western territory, because as I said previously, it has created expectations on, particularly the aboriginal side, that great, now we have this in place and we can combine our self-government and public government and we can come with two votes, and it has created that expectation and I believe that is unrealistic. It is certainly in its present form.

On the non-aboriginal side, there is a feeling that the basic fundamental principle is going to be removed from a constitution, so I think the Constitutional Working Group have a phenomenal amount of work to do to try and recoup that confidence on both sides and I certainly wish them all the success in the world, but again I have very grave concerns about the speed that this process is going to take, and not enough time will go into getting a genuine document that all people can look at. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JAMES ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this constitutional process, I regard it as a continuation of a long process. It did not start when the document was tabled, it has been there for many, many years. As far as I could remember, when I first became involved in politics back in 1972/73, there was talk about it then. Over the years, there has been a lot of different forms and previous Members of the Legislative Assembly and were part of the evolution of a constitution here in the north. Those people know who they are. They are part of the process. It is not something new, it is something that has been going on for many years.

Yes, I agree that people see the guiding principles as something that they could generally support. Perhaps the model that we put forward was too different from our present system that it caused a lot of very negative reactions. That is easy to fix. We have other models. The idea there is to, once you agree with the guiding principles, then how do you integrate

aboriginal self-government with public government? That is the question. That is what we are attempting to do, and if there are different suggestions out there, once you agree with the guiding principles, then bring those suggestions forward, and that was what the goal of the Constitutional Working Group was when we put the document forward. It was a draft document. It is not a final document and from there people would work off it and make suggestions and make the changes.

The honourable Member may be correct when he says that it is the tip of the iceberg and that because we put a model forward that is not acceptable to a lot of people, that we may have done a lot of damage to the process. Perhaps he is right. I am optimistic. I am hoping it is not. I am hoping that there is enough good will out there in the north and I have said this all along, that the people in the north, we have lived together, we are a small population, we live together in the communities and the reality is that we do live together in the communities and that we do work together in the communities and that the desire there is that we are going to continue to work together and live together in communities. Let us see how we could describe it today, so that it will be reflective of how we work together today and into the future. That is the attempt right here. I think people would agree with that.

The document itself is basically a framework of how a society would live together. It is like the parameters of how you live together in communities. We cannot really get into specifics of it then. It is supposed to be something that we could live with today and into the future, and that is the attempt right there, and it is totally different from what is going on in the south. Coming from the north, I like to see something developed in the north by northern people. I think a lot of people would

Page 491

agree with that. I am optimistic that, it is a big chore, yes, we have ahead of us, but I think it could be done and I am committed to see it as far as it is going to go. I think our partners, the aboriginal leaders, who are committed to make it go as far as it could go, I think that they have compromised up to this point quite a bit in their positions, and I think that as we develop this document you are going to see that aboriginal peoples are willing to compromise in trying to make something workable, especially in something as big as the constitution. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Henry, I believe that your allotted time has run out. You had 10 minutes to speak. Your time was up. Sorry about that. Aboriginal Affairs, we have Mr. Levi Barnabas, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. O'Brien, and Mr. Krutko. Mr. Barnabas.

MR. BARNABAS:

I make a motion to report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. There is a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. Do you have a quorum here. I believe we have. All those in favour, please signify again. Opposed. The motion is carried. I will rise and report progress. Thank you, Mr. Minister Antoine and Mr. Bannon.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of committee of the whole.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 8, Appropriation Act 1997/98 and would like to report progress. 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. Barnabas. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, item 22, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, meetings for Monday morning at 9 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Social Programs and at 10:30 of the Ordinary Members' Caucus.

Orders of the day for Monday, February 10, 1997:

1. Prayer

2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bills 10 and 11
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 8, Committee Reports 2-13(4), 3-13(4) and Tabled Document 20-13(4)
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned to Monday, February 10, 1997, at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT