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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

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Page 229

MEMBERS PRESENT

Honourable Jim Antoine, Honourable Goo Arlooktoo, Mr. Barnabas, Honourable Charles Dent, Mr. Enuaraq, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Evaloarjuk, Honourable Sam Gargan, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Henry, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Miltenberger, Honourable Kelvin Ng, Mr. Ningark, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Picco, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Roland, Mr. Steen, Honourable Manikot Thompson, 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 the constant recognition of the dignity and aspirations of those whom we serve. Amen.

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Mr. Enuaraq.

First and foremost, I would like to welcome Members back to the continuation of the Fifth Session of the 13th Legislative Assembly. Of course, I also wish you a Happy New Year and much happiness in your future endeavours. The Legislative Assembly will be facing even more challenges than we have had to in the past. Demands on you, as MLAs, will continue to keep you away from your family, home and community. I ask that the people in your communities to please understand this absence and the urgency of the task at hand. It will be an interesting year and one that, if we all put the interests of all residents first, progress on the transition should be realized sooner, than later. This is all we can do as we move to the creation of two new territories within Canada. To that end, I wish you all the best. Orders of the day, Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 14-13(5): Notice of the Budget Address

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise the House that on Thursday, January 22, 1998, I will deliver the Budget Address. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 15-13(5): Mining Layoffs

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, recent layoffs in the mining industry have affected a number of northerners in the North Slave and Kitikmeot.

In response to continued low gold prices and high operating costs, Miramar Mining reduced production from the Con Mine to 600 tonnes per day. This resulted in the elimination of approximately 130 staff and hourly positions. In addition, Echo Bay Mines at the Lupin site has shut down operations, affecting approximately 45 northern employees.

Mr. Speaker, an interdepartmental working committee was formed to coordinate programs and services available to the affected staff at Miramar Con Mine. In addition to the Government of the Northwest Territories, the committee has representation from Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), the City of Yellowknife and the Union representing workers at the mine. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment is continuing to work closely with HRDC to provide a range of services including counselling workshops, and assistance with resume writing, job search and filling out employment insurance applications. The North Slave Career Centre has offered space and equipment for meetings and workshops.

Mr. Speaker, a number of activities have taken place. On December 31st, HRDC conducted two group employment insurance sessions for laid-off employees and over 60 skills profiles have been completed. On January 6th, ECE and HRDC also met with BHP to discuss employment opportunities for laid-off Miramar Con employees. BHP plan to hire new staff in April and June, including mill operators, supervisors, electricians as well as other, semi-skilled workers.

On January 9th, an interagency committee consisting of GNWT and municipal government met with Echo Bay Mines to discuss a strategy for dealing with affected employees in both Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk. Skills profiles, resumes and labour market data are being compiled to assist workers in finding re-employment. Career counselling is being provided

at the career centre in Cambridge Bay and the employment offices in Kugluktuk. Human Resources Development Canada has also assisted workers in applying for employment insurance.

Mr. Speaker, the Mine Training Committee met on January 19th to discuss any further assistance that the committee could provide to affected employees from both the Miramar Con and Lupin Mine sites. The secretary to the committee has met with over 20 Miramar Con staff and provided names and contact numbers for both northern and southern mining operations. Affected employees have also been made aware of open competitions for safety officers and mine training officers with the Workers' Compensation Board.

We would especially like to recognize the support of Human Resources Development Canada throughout this process. By taking a cooperative approach, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment jointly with all our partners, has been able to maximize the services available to workers and their families. We are continuing to work with our partners in the federal and municipal government and in industry to provide

Page 230

any and all assistance possible to the affected workers from both mine sites. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 16-13(5): State of Northern Mining Industry

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the recent drop in the price of gold has precipitated the recent closures of Colomac and Lupin Mines and forced Miramar to cut its production at Con Mine and to subsequently layoff workers. The pressure is also on Giant Mine to narrow the gap between its production costs and its revenues.

While in the short term this news does not bode well for the northern economy, it is encouraging to note that both Giant and Miramar have expressed their commitment to reduce their costs and to continue

operations with the confidence that prices will recover in the medium term.

Both companies have approached the Government of the Northwest Territories to seek our cooperation, and we are determined to do what we can to help stabilize these operations and help them weather this current - and hopefully brief - economic storm. Each of these mines contributes hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in wages and contributes to spending in our economy.

As my colleague, the Honourable Charles Dent has already reported, we are currently in the process of working in partnership with mine management and labour, the federal government, the City of Yellowknife and the Northwest Territories Power Corporation to examine a range of options and opportunities at Miramar's Con Mine. Discussions have also begun with Echo Bay regarding the Lupin Mine, and we will soon be commencing a similar process to respond to the situation at the Giant Mine.

Mr. Speaker, I am optimistic that this work can and will result in some positive initiatives and outcomes. It is important to note in this process, we are not contemplating a hand-out of any long-term subsidies to the northern mining industry. Rather, we are looking at win-win partnerships which can provide a measure of stability to a key economic sector and support to major employers in our region through what we all believe is a short-term downturn.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the cooperation of all parties to date, and I express my confidence that by working together we will ensure northern residents and the northern economy survive this crisis, and are well prepared for when the gold market improves. I look forward to bringing you positive and specific announcements over the weeks and months ahead. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Ministers' statements. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Minister's Statement 17-13(5): Meeting with Minister of DIAND

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure today to inform Members about a meeting held earlier today between Members of Cabinet and the federal Minister

of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Honourable Jane Stewart.

As you are aware, Minister Stewart is in Yellowknife as part of a cross-country tour to talk about the federal government's

followup and reaction to the recommendations by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. As part of the tour, Minister Stewart made time in her schedule to meet with all Members of Cabinet, with the exception of Premier Don Morin who is out of the country on the Team Canada Trade Mission.

Mr. Speaker, at that meeting, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Jim Antoine, expressed our overall support for the federal government's response to the RCAP report. In particular, he expressed support for the statement of reconciliation which is viewed as helpful and meaningful. We agreed that the needs and challenges in the north are unique, but as valuable as those of the aboriginal people in southern Canada. We also agreed on the importance of ensuring that the Government of the Northwest Territories has an active role in the development of the federal government's northern agenda. As well, we agreed that dialogue is necessary to clarify how programs and funding would affect the Northwest Territories and, more specifically, concerns raised by the Minister of Health and Social Services, Kelvin Ng, with respect to healing programs.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to our discussion on the Royal Commission, we also used the opportunity of the meeting with Minister Stewart to talk about two other issues of importance and interest to the people in the Northwest Territories. These include the current state of the mining industry and the ongoing discussion on the creation of two new territories.

Starting with an update on the current status of the mining industry, Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Stephen Kakfwi, acknowledged the cooperation of the federal government departments and in particular the DIAND regional office in addressing some social and economic issues related to recent layoffs that have resulted from the downturn of the gold market. He also sought Minister Stewart's continuing support and cooperation and encouraged her to continue to work as a priority to support the development of the northern minerals industry, both in the short term and in the long term.

On the creation of two new territories, it was my pleasure to once again tell Minister Stewart at how pleased we were with the positive outcome on the discussions at the Nunavut Leaders' Meeting in Iqaluit last week. While we continue to discuss the next steps, we all agree that followup is essential. We agreed that northern involvement continues to play a critical role in the planning process.

On issues relating to the Western Territory, the Minister Responsible for Western Transition, Charles Dent, advised the

Page 231

Minister of DIAND about an increased focus on western issues. Minister Stewart acknowledged that decisions made at the leaders' meeting will impact on the west, particularly with respect to the urgency on contracting back to the Western Territory to meet budget and business planning deadlines for 1999-2000.

Minister Dent also reinforced the GNWT's position that we need to see resolution of transition costs in both Nunavut and the Western Territory. He also informed Minister Stewart that the GNWT will be issuing a followup on our Transition Action Plan which will offer more details on western transition issues. Overall on issues relating to both Nunavut and the Western Territory, we agreed on the urgency to deal with these issues and to help ensure smooth transition between governments in 1999.

Mr. Speaker, we consider this morning's meeting to be yet another in the series of positive and encouraging meetings with Minister Stewart. We are very pleased with our growing relationship with Minister Stewart and most importantly her willingness to listen and to keep the channels of communications open. We truly value the spirit of cooperation and collaboration she brings to the table. Her personal integrity and her manner inspired confidence in all of us that the federal government is as committed as we are to ensuring the future of Canada's north is indeed a bright one.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ministers' statements. Mr. Arlooktoo

Minister's Statement 18-13(5): Nunavut Leaders' Meeting

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to update Members on the Nunavut Leaders Summit held in Iqaluit on January 13 and 14, 1998. The three parties working on the creation of Nunavut attended this important meeting along with the Interim Commissioner and the chairman and commissioners from the Nunavut Implementation Commission. The parties were represented by federal DIAND Minister, the Honourable Jane Stewart, NTI president Jose Kusugak and elected board members along with the Honourable Manitok Thompson, Mr. Levi Barnabas, Mr. Ed Picco and I representing the GNWT.

Mr. Speaker, the parties were very aware of the limited time left before April 1, 1999, and we were able to reach agreement on a number of key issues. We agreed to focus on ensuring that Nunavut would have the basic machinery of government in place on April 1, 1999 and gradually staffing other headquarters' positions over time.

The Interim Commissioner presented an implementation plan that provided the parties with a refined model of the Nunavut government design based on Footprints 2, a staffing plan and the major implementation activities necessary to achieve a functioning government by April 1, 1999.

I am pleased to report that the parties were able to give the Interim Commissioner direction on how to begin the process of implementing a practical public government. Agreement in

principle was reached on the Nunavut government design, with the following particulars:

- The existing health and education boards will be retained, with the respective Nunavut deputy ministers examining the issue of merging these boards into single boards for education and health. In this way, Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut government will be able to consider whether it wants single boards. The existing service and program delivery mechanisms will be maintained until the Nunavut government has an opportunity to consider this question fully.

- Agreement-in-principle to the Interim Commissioner's recommendation for a total of 675.5 headquarters' positions.

- Agreement-in-principle that Nunavut should have a single level trial court system.

- All parties reaffirmed that a seamless transfer of GNWT employees in Nunavut to the government of Nunavut is necessary and will occur through the early conclusion of transfer arrangements.

- I am pleased to report to this Assembly that the GNWT, along with the other parties, continues to support the decentralized model for the Nunavut government so long as adequate federal financing is made available to put this model in place.

- The parties agreed that, to ensure the smooth transition and continuation of the delivery of essential services, the establishment of core headquarters capacity for the Nunavut government is essential. Priority must be given to establishing critical functions of government such as: the Legislative Assembly, Department of Executive Council, finance, justice and human resources. A phased in approach to the build up of the headquarters' capacity will best achieve the decentralization of the model. Moving jobs out to the communities is central to the successful implementation of the new government.

The electoral boundaries for Nunavut were also discussed at the meeting and the parties have agreed to 19 seats for the Nunavut government. It is hoped that a legislative package will soon be introduced to Parliament that will:

- provide for an earlier first election in Nunavut;

- allow the enactment of laws applicable to Nunavut before April 1, 1999; and

- confirm the duplication of NWT laws in Nunavut.

In order to keep this momentum, the three parties will assist the Interim Commissioner in finalizing the details of the implementation plan for approval by the leaders by March 15, 1998. Officials from the GNWT will be actively involved in this process.

Mr. Speaker, the process of establishing Nunavut is well underway. With the active involvement of the three parties and the Interim Commissioner's Office, I am confident that the conclusions reached in Iqaluit will lead to a better and more coordinated effort to make Nunavut a reality.

Page 232

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Ministers' statements.

Minister's Statement 19-13(5): Minister Absent From the House

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

I wish to advise the Members that the Honourable Don Morin will be absent from the House for the remainder of the week to participate in the Team Canada Mission in South America. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Before we go to Members' statements, I would like to read a message from Her Honour, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.

"Dear Mr. Speaker,

I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, the passage of:

Appropriation Act, 1998-99

Loan Authorization Act, 1998-99

During the Fifth Session of the 13th Legislative Assembly.

Yours truly,

Helen Maksagak, Commissioner."

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 43-13(5): Economic Downturn in Yellowknife

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, welcome back. Welcome back Members. These are trying times for Yellowknife's economy, Mr. Speaker. We currently find ourselves in a devastating economic downturn which started with the actions of this government in 1996 when it began a two-year process of eliminating 464 Yellowknife positions. The NWT Construction Association estimates 900 northern construction jobs were lost because this government slashed its budget by \$50 million. We have also seen the shutdown of the Colomac Mine, the Ptarmigan Mine, Echo Bay Lupin Mine which together have taken nearly 700 jobs out of the north. Combine that with Con's New Year's layoff of 130 employees coming less than a month after Giant's layoff of 27 workers and this community

is reeling. Giant and Con are among the top three municipal taxpayers in Yellowknife contributing nearly \$2 million each year to the city. Then there is division looming in only 14 months. Two hundred and eighty six Yellowknife-based government jobs are identified to be eliminated or transferred to Nunavut. On and on the list goes. Enough is enough, Mr. Speaker.

Yellowknife is a large contributor to the northern economy. With only a quarter of the north's population, it accounts for 43 percent of all income and presumably spending and that

benefits other northerners as well. This government needs to focus its attention on rebuilding and supporting the Yellowknife economy. What we need is for Cabinet to send a message to the federal government as a start, in addition to their own program, that the federal government have a responsibility for northern development. Ottawa should provide economic stimulation through incentives such as Ottawa transferring federal employees who work on northern issues to the north. I have spoken on that before, Mr. Speaker. We passed a motion on that just last session. Ottawa should provide money for exploration programs to ensure the long term sustainability of our mines and development of new ones. Ottawa should provide money to upgrade and modernize our mining industry and design a program to rebuild Canada's gold reserve. Ottawa should also develop mining regulations to ensure value-added industries are established in the north. That would be a good start in providing jobs in this community, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 44-13(5): Update on Nunavut Leaders' Meeting

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends) I would like to give the House an update on the Nunavut Leaders Meeting held in Iqaluit last week. With division quickly approaching, the meeting took on an air of more importance. The Interim Commissioner released his plan for the development of Nunavut and the steps involved. I think that my colleagues from Nunavut Caucus, Mr. Picco and Minister Thompson and Minister Arlooktoo would

agree with me that the meeting was successful and productive: the issue on infrastructure and realization that all positions cannot be filled and in place by April 1, 1999; as discussed as well, the decentralization plan and the continued commitments of the same.

The infrastructure, for example, states that the office buildings for decentralization will not be in place by 2000, in some cases, the year 2001. Then decentralization will occur more gradually. My colleague, Mr. Picco and I stated again that we, as Nunavut leaders, have to be clear on this point. I think that it now has general acceptance. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the next meeting after the official staff have a chance to review the Interim Commissioner's plan more carefully, so that we can get down to the task at hand. I would like to thank Minister Stewart, the Nunavut representatives from this House, as well as the other participants and staff who made it a very successful and positive meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 45-13(5): Keewatin Health Care Situation

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and welcome back. Mr. Speaker, on Friday past I had the opportunity to attend a health-related meeting in Rankin Inlet that was arranged by

Page 233

the Rankin Inlet Hamlet Council and also the Keewatin Inuit Association. Also present, Mr. Speaker, were Minister Ng; Minister Thompson; my very good friend, Mr. Todd. Mr. Speaker, approximately six months ago, I called on the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories to conduct a full independent inquiry into the activities and operations of the Keewatin Health Board. Mr. Speaker, this request was refused, hence here we are today with a crisis in our health care industry. Mr. Speaker, the region is full of fear and a health care system that has failed the very people in the Keewatin it was to serve and protect. Mr. Speaker, recently the Northwest Territories Nursing Association conducted a survey regarding the feelings and concerns of

Keewatin nurses. Here are some of the points that were brought up by the nursing staff.

- There is no incentive to stay in the Keewatin in the nursing field.
- There is a lack of honesty and integrity amongst the Keewatin Regional Health Board's senior management.
- There is lack of a recruitment plan, lack of training and opportunities for growth.
- There is basically no support for nurses from the Keewatin Regional Health Board.
- There is a shortage of medical supplies.

The last point of many that were registered is that the KRHB is a dysfunctional and terrifying organization which creates fear, panic and emotional fear in most of its employees.

Mr. Speaker, out of the total number of nursing positions in the Keewatin, today there are approximately 40 percent that are vacant. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, there are good reasons and logical reasons for some of these vacancies. None the less, this is not acceptable. Mr. Speaker, there is another issue that is not visible or not as visible, but equally as important and that being the shortage of social services practitioners. Mr. Speaker, again the number of practitioners. Mr. Speaker, I seek to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Kivallivik is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Do we have any nays? Mr. O'Brien, you have unanimous consent.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, there is another issue that may not be as visible as the nursing shortage, that being the shortage of social service professionals in the Keewatin. The number of vacancies also stands at an alarming 40 percent. Mr. Speaker, another example of the situation in the Keewatin and the seriousness of it is in my own home community of Arviat. Over Christmas the situation was so bad that there was only one nurse on duty in the community of Arviat to service and provide a service for approximately 1,650 residents, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In my other constituency of Baker Lake, things were a little better. They had two

nurses available to service 1,400 residents. Mr. Speaker, this is not reasonable nor safe and certainly not acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, how do we as elected leaders in this Assembly guarantee and provide the level of comfort and care that our

constituents need and deserve. This unfortunate situation would not exist nor be tolerated by our southern neighbours elsewhere in Canada. Where do we go from here, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that before we can correct or diagnose the problem, we must know what caused it. To ensure that once corrected, it does not occur again. We need an independent public inquiry in order to accomplish this. In the meantime, we must address what we can, such as, the shortage of nursing staff, a plan that once the nurses are hired to retain them, keep them in place. We must review their benefits package to see if it is fair and reasonable. We must take steps immediately to replace the chairperson and the CEO with qualified professionals with input from the KIA, MLAs and hamlet councils, and further, Mr. Speaker, we must re-enter negotiations with the Northern Medical Unit to establish an interim contract with the University of Manitoba to provide these services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Can I remind the Members that all Members are entitled to a Member's statement for two and a half minutes. Also, to remind the Members that when you receive unanimous consent, it is to conclude those statements and that going beyond the allotted time and continuing is not using the Member's statement for the purpose it is meant for. Just a reminder. Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 46-13(5): Concerns with Health and Social Services Delivery

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about the delivery of health and social services in the Mackenzie Delta region and throughout the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, I speak about the large turnover of doctors and nurses, question of Medevac services, et cetera, in my region. Our system of health and social services must meet the needs of the people of the north. The services must

be made available to all people, especially those people in need. At the present time, people are trying to cope with a number of relatively serious health issues and problems such as cancer, the Aids epidemic, diabetes and the whole illness that comes from tobacco smoke.

I believe that the best way to determine the effectiveness of our health and social service programs is by talking directly with the people who receive and deliver those programs at the community level. Mr. Speaker, I have been approached by the public from my communities in my riding over the Christmas holidays, and they strongly suggest that a public inquiry be held on this important issue. Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the appropriate Minister a question on this matter at the appropriate time. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 47-13(5): State of the Yellowknife Economy

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome back my fellow MLAs to our

Page 234

capital city and hope that you are refreshed and ready for a long budget session. Mr. Speaker, when we examined the government's budget in this House., the talk always seems to turn to the economy of the Northwest Territories. Yellowknife's economy has been hit especially hard in the last few months with layoffs at both mines plus two years of deficit reduction by this government. My heart goes out to the families affected, and I pledge to do as much as I can to help. I am also encouraged by this government's willingness to work with the employees who have been laid off and also with Miramar and Royal Oak to find ways in which we can help ride out the current low gold prices.

Mr. Speaker, thirty years ago similar sized layoffs at the mines would have devastated this city. There were no other opportunities for the laid-off workers. They would have had to leave town in order to have any chance of supporting their families. Now, Mr. Speaker, there are other opportunities to make a living in this city. The economy has diversified. Yellowknife is no longer a one industry town. There is

no doubt that the economy of Yellowknife is going through a rough time. There will be further adjustments to the GNWT workforce as a result of the creation of Nunavut, and the low price of gold will continue to impact negatively on our economic security.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 48-13(5): Impact of GNWT Reductions on Education

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow Mr. Todd will introduce the last budget of this government before division. Over the past two budget cycles, because of the deficit reduction strategies, many areas of government have been reduced, eliminated or asked to hold the line on forced growth. The Department of Education falls into the latter category. Over the past several weeks, I have met with many teachers, parents and the Iqaluit Education Council. The theme that continues to be brought forward is the adage that our teachers have to do more with less. Some of the areas that need to be addressed include: lack of funding at

the board level to hire extra staff to help alleviate the increased student enrolments and larger class size, the state of the curricula used and the lack of financial resources for the boards of education to implement new programs or to continue the programs now in place. Although the government has involvement with the western Canada protocol allowing teachers access to resources, in many cases the funding allocated to the school boards impedes our teachers' access to those materials.

Mr. Speaker, funding shortfalls severely impact the quality of education programs. The current level of funding given to the boards of education by the Department of Education for both staffing and critical programs is not adequate and must be increased significantly to meet current needs. Fiscal restraint is the reality at this time. However, I feel that it should not be to the detriment of our children's education. Mr. Speaker, later today I will be asking the Minister of Education for more information on this area. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement 49-13(5): Economic Situation in the NWT

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome all my fellow MLAs and other people who accompanied them back to Yellowknife.

--Applause

Also the federal government has a large responsibility in this area. When the fisheries failed, they put hundreds of millions of dollars into it. When farming fails, they do the same thing. Mining industry should be no different. The federal government needs to find ways to help miners and the mines to survive financially and otherwise until gold prices go back up, but Mr. Speaker, all is not doom and gloom.

There are a lot of things to look forward to and I would like to mention just a few. The last time we were here the Finance Minister mentioned public/private partnerships which would help us to build facilities that we may not otherwise be able to build and there could be a lot of opportunities here for businesses. One of those opportunities is to complete the road to resources that I questioned the Premier about, the last

Page 235

time we were here. This would open things up for exploration. Also, we know that a diamond mine is going to open soon here and that another one is likely to open in a few years. This means not only jobs at the mine but a diamond sorting and valuation facility in one of our communities is still a possibility and I am talking sorting for market not just for valuation. Additionally, we know 80 percent of money generated in a diamond industry occurs after diamonds come out of the ground. We need a guaranteed supply of rough diamonds to help establish a diamond secondary industry in the north. With a little help from our governments, a diamond cutting and polishing factory...

MR. SPEAKER:

Time is up.

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

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, with a little help from our governments, a diamond cutting and polishing factory can be a reality in the north. Additionally, last year the Standing Committee of Government Operations recommended several investment initiatives. One of those initiatives was the Aurora Fund and that fund now loans millions of dollars to businesses, large loans up to half a million and over. There was also another investment scheme that we had recommended, something called NORTHIIP and which I have been bugging the Finance Minister about which is an RRSP tax investment, incentive-based investment, for investments in smaller businesses. Hopefully, the Finance Minister will make an announcement soon. In the area of the federal government, we know that the federal government will be starting a National Child Benefit Program which will invest \$500 million into the economy starting in July 1998, which will help poorest people getting over \$300 a child per month. The money that the GNWT saves on income support will go to programs for children in poor families. We have also had a response to the Royal Commission which is something like \$400 million for compensation and programs for those abused in residential schools and programs to assist aboriginal people in taking their rightful place in society. Hopefully, there will be more announcements coming. Mr. Speaker, as I said not all is doom and gloom, and I look forward to the budget speech tomorrow as the Finance Minister has assured us that there will be initiatives and good news. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 50-13(5): Addressing Housing Needs in Wha Ti

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome my colleagues back to continue working on many issues we have in front of us. As you may recall, on December 2, 1997, I brought forward a concern about the housing situation in the Wha Ti. I would like to thank Mr. Arlooktoo for responding to this concern in such a timely matter. On December 16th I flew to Wha Ti with the staff members of the NWT Housing Corporation. We had scheduled with the council to start a process of communication to determine all concerns. This turned into a very good meeting and I feel the objectives were met. All members left feeling a sense of accomplishment and looking forward to solving the major problems that exist. Again, I would like to thank Mr. Arlooktoo and his staff for this very important initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 51-13(5): Responsibilities of Legislators

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker being a Member of the Legislative Assembly requires behaviour that instills trust and confidence by the electors in their elected officials. As legislators elected to govern the Northwest Territories we do our utmost to hear the voices of all people, to provide legislation, policies and services for the good of the people; to promote equality of all our people and to distribute resources fairly and justly. As legislators we will do our best to fulfil our duties to the legislature, the public, our constituents and our colleagues with integrity and honour.

To our constituents we owe our best efforts at effective representation as well as accountability, honesty, fairness and courtesy. To the Legislature we owe our respect, as well as dedication to our role in ensuring the integrity of our government and in earning through our actions the confidence of the people. We will not act, nor condone others in acting in ways which exploit, slander or discriminate against others. We will not act nor condone others in acting in ways which are dishonest or which exploit positions of privilege for personal gain. As legislators we acknowledge a vision and a responsibility to improve

the life of our people and to strive to act in creative ways to overcome the hardships which destroy life and hope and the human frailties which fall upon us all.

Mr. Speaker, for the interest of the public, what I have just spoken are slightly paraphrased excerpts from our Members' handbook entitled Members' Conduct Guidelines. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 52-13(5): Impact of Deficit Reduction Strategies

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over two years ago the people of the constituency that I represent, along with the rest of people of the north were asked to take part in a deficit reduction program to deal with the serious financial situation we are in. The people of my constituency did, and I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that they, like many other

Page 236

northerners, have paid a price; and the community that I represent is in fact showing the effects of what that necessary program cost us.

Over Christmas I spent a lot of time going to a lot of functions and talking to a lot of people. I would just like to briefly touch on some of the issues that are of concern to the people I represent. Not surprisingly, the issue of division is of interest, but mainly from the focus point of ensuring that there is adequate goods and finances and resources available so that there is no loss to program and service levels in the west and in the community that I represent. Like most other northerners, the people I represent are interested in bread and butter issues. They know that there is a need for a strong private sector, and they want to see messages and indications that in fact we can accommodate them and work with them to develop that private sector. There is a very strong concern about the levels of programs in the communities that we in fact can maintain our health services and social services with doctors who start doing things like delivering babies. There is a concern about education, that for the last two years we have not been able to put funding into these areas and there has been a noticeable difference. The

student/teacher ratio is up. There are concerns about adequate resources for textbooks. There has been significant changes in the need for jobs so that our schools which no longer, for instance, have a major investment in vocational training get people ready for trades.

We are now faced with a situation where, while we need tradesman, our schools are not in a position to be the feeder for that particular resource and requirement. Like my other colleagues have mentioned, all is not bleak and I maintain that division will be one of the best things. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to continue my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was in the process of saying I am making the case to the people of Thebacha that in fact division will be one of the best things that has ever happened to the west. At the same time, we are of course wishing nothing but the best to our colleagues in the east, but it is necessary for us to put a clear and positive spin on the situation that we are currently in and that while, as my colleagues have pointed out, there are temporary bumps in the road; the future ahead for us has many, many bright spots. It is up to us to make that very clear, demonstrate it to the people, and in the coming weeks, I hope the budget as well will reflect the need to take that direction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 53-13(5): Fairness in Combating Economic Difficulties

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I start with my Member's statement, I will continue with the tradition I have started by sending greetings back to my wife and all of my children.

--Applause

Mr. Speaker, hard times. Recently we have heard of the difficulty the mining sector faces today. We have heard two of the Ministers speak on this issue and how this government should do all it can to support this sector that is having difficulty. We have heard honourable Members talk about the impact of those difficulties. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that what I am hearing to me, is like good news. Government is finally hearing the people and trying to address the struggling situation that is going on, but Mr. Speaker, I have a concern as well, my concern comes out of the hard times the community of Inuvik has faced, that the region of Inuvik has faced.

Mr. Speaker, for 12 years the community I represent and region of Inuvik has suffered with declining work, with companies pulling out, the oil exploration business and production going down because it was too expensive. I cannot recall ever hearing of, or seeing any financial support, words of wisdom other than what was open to all the people of the territories. So while the Ministers in this government think about the hard times looking at the Northwest Territories right now, especially in the mining sector, I have always spoken about fairness and I say it is time this government looks at the whole of the territories. I represent over 3,000 people and they do not right now see a bright light in the future. Right now it is dim and it does not look promising. So when this government starts to look at what it can do for the people, I express my concerns and I say, remember Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 54-13(5): Deh Cho Leaders' Meeting

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker and good afternoon to all my honourable colleagues and welcome back to the Legislative Assembly.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Minister Dent for his presentation on the western transition and fielding questions on the NWT Power Corporation and the education, culture and employment issues. Also, the active participation

Page 237

of representatives from the departments of Health and Social Services, RWED, MACA and the NWT Housing Corporation provided attending leaders with timely updates of the GNWT initiatives. The meetings were in an excellent forum to advise government on a variety of important Deh Cho issues.

I am pleased to report that the Deh Cho First Nation Leadership have expressed an interest in working with a proposed ministerial envoy from DIAND Minister Jane Stewart to explore the opportunities to advance the Deh Cho in talks with the federal government on governance and land issues.

On January 13th, the Deh Cho leaders received representatives from the Yellowknife Dene First Nations and on January 15th, the meeting was attended by a delegation from the Dogrib Nation. It is very encouraging to see a spirit of cooperation building among leaders and to witness frank discussions between First Nations in their own territories.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Members' statements. At this time I would like to recognize some distinguished visitors seated in the Speaker's gallery.

With us today are the Honourable Mr. Justice Ralph Hudson and Mrs. Jan Hudson. Mr. Justice Hudson is a judge of the Supreme Court of the Yukon Territory and a judge of the Court of Appeal of the Northwest Territories. Welcome to the Assembly.

--Applause

Also here today is Mr. Merrill Wiggington, the Chief Electoral Officer for the province of Prince Edward Island. Mr. Wiggington is in Yellowknife to meet with our Northwest Territories elections' officials. Welcome to the Assembly. Members' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

Member's Statement 55-13(5): Passing of Albert Lafferty

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to speak today about the passing of Albert Lafferty. Albert Lafferty of Fort Good Hope passed away at Stanton Hospital last week at the age of 91. Albert was a Metis who came originally from Fort Nelson, his family moved to Wrigley, then Providence and then in 1920s, by his own admission moved to Good Hope for three months

to work as a clerk under the great grandfather of Ludy Pudluk, of all people. He spoke Cree, French, learned two dialects of Dene and had a very good grasp of English as well. He was generally a self-taught man and was seen by Good Hope as the resident linguist and historian since he was insatiably curious about the meaning of words, the history of place names and the way in which language developed. He had an impeccable memory, Mr.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you. He served out the rest of his career working as a riverboat pilot for Northern Transportation and lived on a pension from that company. Albert was a very quiet and modest person who took a methodical approach to dealing with issues that were on him in a very organized way. The one thing that marked him apart from everyone was his intense appreciation for each and everyone he came across. He spent a great deal of time speaking with people, observing and taking time to assess the positive worth of everyone who lived around him. In a sense of humour apparently a member of the clergy went to visit him a week and a half ago at Stanton and asked him, supposedly to assess Albert's chances of getting past St. Peter. He said, Albert, did you do much charity work in your lifetime? Albert as modest as he was, did not hesitate for a second and told the clergyman, he said, more than you ever will. It is well known that Albert did a tremendous amount of work for people in Good Hope, for individuals who came to him and in his younger life, physically, did a tremendous amount of work and has always said his life-long commitment, even from being a very young man was to help and assist the elders in the daily things that they had to deal with. It has been with him all his life. We have to, of course, on behalf of the family extend their

appreciation for the incredible hospitality and treatment that he received at the Stanton Yellowknife Hospital. The staff who took care of him, the doctors and the nurses.

Albert gave his life to the people of Good Hope. He went there for three months. He spent his whole life there. He gave up his family, his people to live - and

as we say in Good Hope - he came and he must have seen something beautiful amongst us because he stayed for the rest of his life. As a young man he came with hopes and dreams and he must have seen a chance to pursue those in the company of the people of Good Hope. On behalf of the people of Good Hope, I wanted to today record the love and appreciation we have for him and publicly acknowledge the tremendous contribution that he has made in his lifetime to the community and people of Fort Good Hope. Thank you.

--Applause

Page 238

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize some long-term northerners in the gallery with us today, Melody McLeod, Mary Broussard and Ben Macdonald. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

I would like to recognize Pat Thomas with the NWTTA. Welcome again Pat.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Picco.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 49-13(5): Shortage of Education Funding

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement I brought up some education concerns. I have received many letters, phone calls, E-mails over the past few months on this matter and I have spoken about them in this House before. Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister is working diligently to try to address some of these issues - and I am not criticizing the Minister here - I am trying to give some constructive criticism and to articulate some of the concerns I have heard. Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister is concerning the Department of Education. The department had allocated \$350,000 which comes out to be \$26.18 per student for textbooks, materials and in-servicing for the new math program. However, at the end of the day when you add up those students and the amount of money given, it comes out to \$22 per text which is \$4.18 for the other areas. Mr. Speaker, there is also instances where the teachers do not have a curriculum. In one case a teacher has been teaching

for a long time without a curriculum or textbooks, where we have teachers buying the materials themselves out of their own pocket. This is not acceptable. So, I am wondering what the Minister is going to do to address these most serious concerns. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 49-13(5): Shortage of Education Funding

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the introduction of a new curriculum is a partnership between the department and the divisional education councils.

The department certainly does not pretend that it contributes 100 percent of the cost of instituting the new curriculum. We assist the education councils in that. One of the reasons for introducing a new curriculum is that it helps the education councils and partners to deliver a better program at the school level. I would concur with the Member that there have been some problems with the in-servicing this year. The department is planning to recognize that fact, in particular, with the introduction of new curricula by

delaying the start for some and ensuring that when it does come to the in-service programs that they are better supported. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 49-13(5): Shortage of Education Funding

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not know why this happened over the past few years in the Department of Education when it comes to curriculum or text books and I do not pretend to know. Mr. Speaker, I have seen letters that have gone to the Minister and to the department. I have been copied on some of them. In one case, Mr. Speaker, I have a teacher who has been teaching for a long time without a curriculum, without a textbook, has not the resources in place. Although we have the protocol with the western provinces, with the divisional board of education, they do not have the adequate funding to put the resources in place. That is not acceptable, Mr. Speaker, in 1998, to have teachers in the classroom having to go out and buy sets of textbooks. So, I would ask the Minister what he is going to do about this. I know that he agreed that there is problem with in-servicing. There has been problems with the math curriculum, but, my God, Mr. Speaker, it cannot be possible to be in the classroom without a textbook, without the proper resources available. That is my question. What is he going to do about it?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Okay again, just to remind the Members about the language that you are using in this Chamber. You heard, my God. Some people might take offence to it. It is unparliamentary, but I would like to remind the Members that people might take offence to using it in that context. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 49-13(5): Shortage of Education Funding

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak about an individual classroom situation where the teacher might not have the resources that they feel are necessary to do the job. What I think is important, as I mentioned in my first response to the

honourable Member, is that the introduction of a new curriculum is a partnership. It is between the department and the divisional education council. The divisional education council is expected to ensure that the resources that are necessary are provided. As we have discussed many times in this House, the department does not stipulate to the divisional education councils how they spend their money. The money is allocated by way of formula. It is then up to the divisional

Page 239

education councils to determine where it is appropriate to provide the support, whether that is in the teacher/pupil ratio, whether that is in providing extra support to special needs students or whether that is in providing curricula support to a teacher. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 49-13(5): Shortage of Education Funding

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I apologize for my earlier remark. Mr. Speaker, it is very frustrating as a Member to attend a meeting, to have teachers or any other individuals working for this government to come to me with legitimate complaints and the minute it involves schooling or education, we keep saying that that is the most important priority that we have to make sure that our people are educated. If they do not have the resources in place, if they do not have curriculum that seems to be in place, if you do not have the textbooks; how can they do their job? If you are asking people to do more with less, you are going to get less done. Mr. Speaker, my followup question is, the Minister talked about the partnership, if the partnership has not made available the monies to have the resources or the ratio, maybe we should review this formula. Will the Minister look at reviewing the formula that is in place that gives the resources or the monetary amounts to the individual boards of education? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 49-13(5): Shortage of Education Funding

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the formula is reviewed on an annual basis with the directors, the superintendents of all the councils.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 49-13(5): Shortage of Education Funding

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know that the teachers' association, individual teachers, the college, parents have written to the department about these concerns. Mr. Speaker, I am not getting a level of comfort that something should be done and can be done. So I wonder if the Minister would look at these individual cases. I know that I have written him on two of them. I wonder if we can get a response back into this House on the issue of class sizes and also on the issue of the resources available, so that the curriculum can be in place because this is not acceptable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Two questions. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 49-13(5): Shortage of Education Funding

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure how I can respond to the question. I think that the first question that the Member asked has been answered previously. In terms of his second question, I can tell you right now that the pupil/teacher ratio across the Northwest Territories averages 18.2 pupils to one teacher. That is an average across the territories. I am prepared, as the Member knows, to answer all letters that come to my office on a timely basis and answer the questions that I can in this House. If he would care to provide me a bit more detail just exactly what he wants, perhaps in the form of written questions, I would be more than happy to provide that information in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Enuaraq.

Question 50-13(5): Pangnirtung Airport Runway Relocation

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been a very long time since residents of Pangnirtung have been asking to have their airport runway to be relocated because of the safety concerns. Towards the end of November of 1997 the Minister, the territorial Minister of Transportation, had an opportunity to visit Pangnirtung along with federal officials and which I did not have the opportunity to attend. Can the Minister of Transportation update me with what is going on with the planning of relocating the runway in Pangnirtung. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 50-13(5): Pangnirtung Airport Runway Relocation

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we did visit Pangnirtung in November and we were able to travel with a couple of Transport Canada officials from Winnipeg just to look at the situation in a number of communities along with Pangnirtung. Looking at the situation there, they have decided, yes, it is worth looking into the Pangnirtung airport. However, at this point in time there is no real solid commitment in terms of financial resources. This is what the stumbling block here is, in this case. We do not have the money to do the type of work that needs to be done in Pangnirtung to relocate their airport. That is quite a large sum of money we are talking about. However, as a result of the trip with the federal officials, there is ongoing talks between my department and their officials to see what the possibilities are there to look at the airport relocation in Pangnirtung and that is all I can report at this point in time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Enuaraq.

Supplementary To Question 50-13(5): Pangnirtung Airport Runway Relocation

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every time I ask a question about relocating the runway in Pangnirtung, I get the

Page 240

same answers. We are looking into it, we are looking into it. How long would it be, can the Minister tell me, when the actual construction will begin? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 50-13(5): Pangnirtung Airport Runway Relocation

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes the answer is always we are looking into it because that is exactly what we are doing. The price that we are looking at is about \$13 million. This department does not have that kind of dollars at this point in time, and we are looking for other places like the federal government, like the honourable Member had asked me in the previous Assemblies to approach the federal government and that is what we are doing. I do not know when we are going to start, but it looks positive and we are pursuing it as far as we could take it at this point in time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 51-13(5): Addressing Keewatin Health Concerns

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. Following my comments earlier today regarding my Member's statement, I indicated a number of recommendations and issues I thought should be addressed in order to assist with the critical situation regarding the Keewatin Health Board. Mr. Speaker, a number of these comments and recommendations were also echoed and contained in the presentation made by the president of NTI and the president of KIA. My question to the Minister, given the fact that the meeting seemed to end somewhat abruptly and there did not seem to be a lot of closure to it; the recommendations that were made; can the

Minister tell us as to what is the status as of today regarding the recommendations and how he plans to proceed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng. I heard two questions.

Return To Question 51-13(5): Addressing Keewatin Health Concerns

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member was at the meeting, as well. I think maybe there is a difference in understanding what took place. I think I made some commitments publicly. It was aired locally in Rankin Inlet in respect to some of the issues. First of all, I had appointed the deputy chair as an interim chair, Percy Kabloona, up until April 15th. I committed then to opening up the process for the nomination of a permanent chair and that process would be open to all groups and individuals wanting to nominate a potential candidate. I said that we would provide interim management from headquarters' staff here in Yellowknife, during a transition period until such a time as the process for hiring and filling a new CEO's position took place and was completed. Also in respect to the issue of recruitment and retention of nursing staff, I committed to working with the NWT Registered Nurses' Association, NWT Health Care Association and with the department in trying to formulate a recruitment retention plan with some specific resources attached to it that the Finance Minister and myself could possibly put forward for our Cabinet colleagues for consideration by February 15th at the latest. With respect to some of the issues around the northern medical unit, the physician's and specialist's contracts, I said in the interim I had spoken with the acting chair and he was quite receptive with our staff coming over to reopen some of the negotiations to see what services could be provided in a transition period to provide the services while the Keewatin Health Board continued on in their plans in trying to provide those services in the region, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 51-13(5): Addressing Keewatin Health Concerns

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise me as to what is the timeframe that he has allocated to have in place a permanent CEO and chairperson. I know he indicated that the deputy chair is taking over until April. Has he allocated a timeframe as to when he expects full-time permanent replacement for those two critical positions? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 51-13(5): Addressing Keewatin Health Concerns

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in respect to the chairperson first of all, I said that the deputy chair, that is the acting chair now, would be up until at the latest April 15th, and I am in the process of preparing the call letters. I mean, for all intentional purposes it is out now because publicly I have stated that. That it is the process. I will formalize it with letters to the hamlet councils, the trustees and the interested organizations. My intent would be to have that done within a relatively short time period, say four to six weeks maximum, to have a transition period between the new chair and the current interim chair and to have that individual up to speed as soon as possible, the sooner the better obviously. In respect to the CEO position, I mean obviously it would be up to the chairperson and the trustees on the process for the recruitment of that individual. Our staff will provide assistance in that we want to get things up and running as far as the intent and putting out the notices for recruitment so we can have hopefully, some suitable candidates identified for potential interview within the next four to eight weeks. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 51-13(5): Addressing Keewatin Health Concerns

Page 241

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister indicate whether or not negotiations with the Northern Medical Unit are taking place as we speak? If not, when will they be taking place and concluded?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Two questions. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 51-13(5): Addressing Keewatin Health Concerns

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know if negotiations or discussions have taken place as of today. I know it is an intent to do that in a fairly short timeframe. The acting CEO has just got on the ground into Rankin Inlet this past Monday. I have not received the report yet through the department on exactly what actions have taken place. I know first of all, there had to be a human resource review of the staffing situation as that was of a highly critical nature to see what was there and what was required. Subsequent to that, of course, a review of some of the programs and some of the plans that are contemplated and that are in place to see what the needs were before taking further action, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 52-13(5): Interest Relief on BCC Loans

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister for RWED. Clearly around the table today here in the House, we have heard the situation with the economy and the effect on business both large and small. Two months ago, I wrote to the Minister in regard to the BCC and making the suggestion that a possible interest relief be considered for those loans that BCC has with clients who may be considerably above what is currently being charged by the banks, for those clients who are up-to-date on their payments as a gesture that would send a strong message of support to the business community as well as possibly give some small measure of assistance to businesses that, as we all agreed and understand, are under considerable stress due to the downturn in the economy. Could the Minister indicate how he intends to respond to that request? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 52-13(5): Interest Relief on BCC Loans

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We intend to try to respond positively. We need to be sure we understand the implications of making any changes like that. To make sure we look at it as comprehensively as we can. Hopefully, we can make a decision in the next week. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 52-13(5): Interest Relief on BCC Loans

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to commend the Minister for his positive response. I would just ask that once he has something fleshed out, nailed down or formalized to the extent he is comfortable with, would the Minister be willing to share that with the Members across from him and of course at the tail end of the other side over there?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 52-13(5): Interest Relief on BCC Loans

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. We shall try to make sure everyone is aware of the nature of the decision and when a decision is made, we will make sure everybody is fully aware of it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 53-13(5): Inquiry into Health and Social Services Delivery

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng. It is in response to my Member's statement dealing with the concerns of my constituents in regard to the home delivery of health and social services in the Mackenzie Delta. Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister is that in light of the demand in my riding to consider looking at some sort of public inquiry in regard to the whole question of health and social services and the delivery of it in the Mackenzie Delta, will the Minister take that into account and call for a public inquiry?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr Ng.

Return To Question 53-13(5): Inquiry into Health and Social Services Delivery

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 53-13(5): Inquiry into Health and Social Services Delivery

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the Minister's answer, I would like to ask a second question. Can the Minister tell me what action his department will take to improve the delivery of health and social services in the Mackenzie Delta?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 53-13(5): Inquiry into Health and Social Services Delivery

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any high profile or major problems in the Mackenzie Delta. If the honourable Member has some specifics, I will certainly be willing to speak to the chair of the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Service Board who

happened to be in town yesterday and quite frankly, I believe things overall, in the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Board area is running quite well. Like I said, if there are issues out there that I am not aware of, I am certainly prepared to sit down with the Member and discuss them and try to deal with those issues, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 53-13(5): Inquiry into Health and Social Services Delivery

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is good and well to hear that everything is hunky dory in the Mackenzie Delta, but the reason I asked my questions in this House, time and time again, and if he wants to go through the Hansards to see exactly the number of questions raised in regard to the whole question of health and social services issues in the Mackenzie Delta, he can go at it. My question is, when will the Minister act in regard to all these issues that were raised in the past and the demand from my region to call for a public inquiry?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 53-13(5): Inquiry into Health and Social Services Delivery

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe when the honourable Member brought forward issues that I have tried to address them. I know that sometimes the results have not been to his satisfaction in respect to some of the funding initiatives that we cannot fund all programs or quite frankly that the board itself feels that it is doing the right job in putting the dollars where they feel are the most effective. I cannot recall any public inquiry demands from the Mackenzie Delta that the honourable Member speaks of, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 53-13(5): Inquiry into Health and Social Services Delivery

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final supplementary is, well, what will it take for the Mackenzie Delta to call for some sort of inquiry in regard to health service in the Mackenzie Delta by this Minister and his department?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 53-13(5): Inquiry into Health and Social Services Delivery

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess it would take having the necessary reasons for me to call one. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Roland.

Question 54-13(5): Regional Mainframe Changes

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question at this time will be addressed to the Minister

responsible for Public Works and Services, Minister Antoine. I received a letter dated January 20, yesterday, speaking on the government's computing platform and a letter saying that there will be some work ongoing and that mainframe systems and reloading centres are no longer needed, and they will be moving them to Yellowknife. It goes on in the letter that the system is equal to, or maybe a little bit better. I guess my question would be, if the system is not a whole a lot better, why are we going to go through the expense of moving things down into Yellowknife? Why do we not just consider keeping them where they are at? There does not seem to be any savings with this. It talks about employees getting training to continue on working. But why, if there is no real improvement? Why are we doing it? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 54-13(5): Regional Mainframe Changes

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the initiative that the honourable Member is talking about is there is a plan for making some changes to the computer mainframe. In the past the government had some regional mainframes in the regions, and with the upgrade and the improvement in the computer system, the department is looking at establishing just one headquarters computer mainframe. The region will use that as well and just upgrading our equipment mainly. That is what we are doing and training the existing staff that we have to comply to the new equipment that we are installing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary To Question 54-13(5): Regional Mainframe Changes

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reason I am questioning this planned move is whenever we see reductions going on and the concern comes around that this is not the start of centralizing things. Especially with division coming on, although I have no concerns with Whitehorse, we do not want to see the Northwest Territories or the Western Territory turn into a similar situation. Is this the beginning of centralization of more and more items? Is it efficiency because it does not really clearly state it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 54-13(5): Regional Mainframe Changes

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the changes that we are planning to do in Public Works in regard to establishing changing the computer mainframe in Yellowknife, having one here in headquarters, and then the regions will be able to access this mainframe at the headquarters level. It is for efficiency, and it is not intended to centralize the system we have. We are just trying to improve on what we have, so that we have better and faster

equipment. The intention is not the beginning of centralizing the services that Public Works is providing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary To Question 54-13(5): Regional Mainframe Changes

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will there be any loss of the ability to carry on existing services within the regions from making the changes that are proposed here? Will the community of Inuvik, for example, be able to write emergency cheques, and so on, as they do now? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 54-13(5): Regional Mainframe Changes

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Yes, that is the intention. We will just have one central mainframe, and then the regions will continue to do the type of work that they are doing. The regions will continue to get to write the emergency cheques right in the region. So, it is not going to change the way things are going. We are just changing the equipment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. I would like to recognize in the gallery Joanne Barnaby, the director of the Dene Cultural Institute. Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 55-13(5): Coordinated Assistance to Mining Employees

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister for RWED, the Honourable Mr. Kakfwi. My question today is prompted to bring some clarity to statements that were made in the House today in the recent layoffs at the two mines. The Honourable Mr. Dent talked about, and I quote in his statement, we are continuing to work with our partners in the federal government. The point that I wanted to emphasize

here, we are continuing. Mr. Kakfwi, in his statement, talked about we are currently in the process of working in partnership with the mine management and so forth, again, we are currently in the process of working. What I would like is for the Minister to bring some clarity for the employees who are laid off, the present employees, and for the business community. I would like to bring some semblance that there is someone in charge. So my question to the Minister is, who is heading up, and who are we, and is this being coordinated by at least one Minister? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 55-13(5): Coordinated Assistance to Mining Employees

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the issue is related to mines. It is related to economic development, so I would be the lead minister. The senior official, that is leading the work on behalf of the government is Andrew Gamble, the deputy

minister to the Executive since the Department of Finance, the Department of Economic Development, Resources and Wildlife is involved; as well as Education, Culture and Employment. So, I am the lead Minister. The lead deputy minister is Andrew Gamble. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary. Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 55-13(5): Coordinated Assistance to Mining Employees

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that information that Mr. Kakfwi is a lead Minister in this. Can the Minister talk about some of the goals of this committee, what they intend to do, a timeframe and the reporting process to this House and to the business and public of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 55-13(5): Coordinated Assistance to Mining Employees

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, there is immediate work that was undertaken by an official in Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Graham Dargo, along with officials from Education, Culture and Employment dealing with the employees who were given layoff notices at the end of the year. That was a specific initiative that we undertook. This initiative, at the senior management level was started in specific response to Miramar. We have on this group, a working group that is set up with the City of Yellowknife, the union, the company, and federal officials to look at ways in which we can assist that specific mine and deal with the difficulties as I outlined earlier in my statement. The commitment to Members here is that we will, on a daily basis if necessary, on a weekly basis, provide information on the developments and decisions and status of discussions that are held by the different partners in that initiative. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 55-13(5): Coordinated Assistance to Mining Employees

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Much discussion has taken place in my community, Mr. Speaker, particularly to the Giant Mine and arsenic concerns that are raised there. Can the Minister shed some light on what involvement the federal government would play in this particular aspect? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 55-13(5): Coordinated Assistance to Mining Employees

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, in regard to Royal Oak Mines or Giant Mines, we had a meeting with them yesterday, along with the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. They have also

Page 244

expressed a need for some cooperation on our part to help them bridge the period of difficulty they are experiencing because of the drop in gold prices. They have made some suggestions on ways in which we could help them bridge this period of difficulty. There are areas that are a specific responsibility of the federal government, things like reclamation, environmental issues, and the way in which the arsenic issue should be approached. Those are being directed to the federal government. We have made sure that we have given assurance to Royal Oak representatives that the same approach we have taken to dealing with Miramar will be taken with them and try to take a cooperative, multiparty approach, so that everyone involved will have plenty of time to explore ways in which they can help in these rather difficult times for the company. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 56-13(5): Ministers' Meeting with Royal Oak Mines

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today I spoke about the difficult situation that our community, Yellowknife, is in. I made some reference to the gold mining situation. It is not just Yellowknife that is affected when we speak of gold mines. Colomac closed which affects communities in that area. Lupin closed that affects communities on the Arctic coast. Now earlier this week, there were rumours and comments in the press and radio that Giant was trying to seek a meeting with the territorial Cabinet Ministers, and that meeting took place yesterday. Then this morning, a meeting took place with the federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs. As a start, I wonder if Minister Kakfwi could tell us what the results were of their meeting, the territorial Ministers' meeting with the Giant people? He just mentioned that they discussed ways and means of expanding how the territorial and federal governments could help. Could he expand on that for us, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 56-13(5): Ministers' Meeting with Royal Oak Mines

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the case of Miramar, Members will recall that we basically had a meeting very late in the year at which time Miramar indicted to us, in strict confidence, that in order to deal with the drop in gold prices, but also to deal with the fact that they found the rate of the mill work, the load of mill work that they had undertaken a few years previously was proving to be consistently uneconomical, that they were dropping the tonnage, the daily amount of ore that they were going to produce and this would lead to layoff. In the case of Giant they have come to us and simply said we have no intentions of laying off anyone at this time or of closing our operations, but we want you to be aware, here is how much.. this is the required price of gold that we require in order to break even. It is well below the price and so we are now operating at a loss. How long we can operate at a loss is not solely within our control. We give you notice that we need some cooperation from everyone, the City of Yellowknife, the Government of the Northwest Territories, the federal government, the price of gold markets in order to keep it viable, keep it operating and that it serves no one for us to shut down waiting for the price of gold to come back up. Therefore, we need some indication from you that you are prepared to work with us to address some of these options and we simply said we are happy that they have given us this advance notice, this opportunity and that we would be prepared as we are with Miramar on looking at the different options. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary to Question 56-13(5): Ministers' Meeting with Royal Oak Mines

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The meeting this morning with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development's Minister, Jane Stewart; the Minister in their briefing earlier today touched on comments and there were many areas that they naturally would touch base on, but I am wondering if the Minister could tell us if he expanded upon the request for assistance for the mining industry here in the north considering, Mr. Speaker, that DIAND has the responsibility for mining and resources here in the Northwest Territories. They get the royalties. They also get the benefits from employee taxation,

corporation taxation, and so forth. So, it stands to reason that they should be intimately and very aggressively in our northern mining industry. I wonder if the Minister could tell us whether they got a response from the Minister this morning, Jane Stewart, on the request to support the northern mining industry.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 56-13(5): Ministers' Meeting with Royal Oak Mines

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, it is true we met with the Minister this morning. We have informed her of this multiparty cooperative approach we have taken to dealing with the developments of mining in Yellowknife and other parts of the territories. Of course she did not need to be reminded that the federal government collects the royalties, the benefits from mining developments in the north; that she is responsible for lands and resources in the Northwest Territories and as such has some obligation to look at ways in which you could assist in making sure that mining continues and that jobs are not lost because of fluctuating world prices of minerals, particularly gold and that exploration work, the cost of exploration particularly, is very high in the Northwest Territories and that for her contribution in this multiparty initiative she should look at ways in which she could help abstract mines that are currently in production to find the means, perhaps through assistance from the federal government to continue their exploration programs, so that they are not viable for just another two or three years, but further than that, so it makes it worthwhile for the rest of us to continue trying to find ways to make sure they remain operational and viable on the short term. Thank you.

Page 245

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 56-13(5): Ministers' Meeting with Royal Oak Mines

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking about exploration work, I understand that Con has terminated its exploration program because it does not pay for it at the present moment to enter into it, and Giant I am not sure what they are doing at the moment, but these are multimillion dollar programs and in order to keep the mines viable in the long run, and sustainable, they need exploration programs. Will the Minister or did the Minister address the question to the federal Minister to initiate a program for exploration money? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 56-13(5): Ministers' Meeting with Royal Oak Mines

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, Mr. Speaker that was a specific suggestion that we made to the Minister this morning. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 56-13(5): Ministers' Meeting with Royal Oak Mines

MR. OOTES:

Thank you. Now, additionally the federal government has assisted mining industries in the south. I believe, and I am using a hypothetical figure because I have not been able to confirm it. They have provided a \$150 million to industries in northern Ontario, I believe it was, to mining industries to update and modernize their plants. In that case the federal government receives no royalty return because it presumably goes to the provinces. Here in the territories they get all their royalty returns. Will the Minister address that particular question to the DIAND Minister to ask for dollars and assistance to update our mining industry and make them more sustainable for the long run? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 56-13(5): Ministers' Meeting with Royal Oak Mines

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the discussions and suggestions that we made to the Minister this morning did not include that particular element. Although since the Member has raised it, we will consider the suggestion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 57-13(5): GNWT Payroll Tax

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister of Finance concerns the payroll tax. My question, Mr. Speaker is who informs businesses about the requirement of the collection of the payroll tax?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 57-13(5): GNWT Payroll Tax

HON. JOHN TODD:

I do not know the actual name of the person that does that, but the GNWT informs the businessmen.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 57-13(5): GNWT Payroll Tax

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought the Minister knew every person in his department. Of course, I was not talking about the person who collects. I was talking about the people who are in charge of the collection of the tax and maybe the Minister now knowing I am not after the identity, I am after the requirement, who informs the businesses of the requirement of the payroll tax?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 57-13(5): GNWT Payroll Tax

HON. JOHN TODD:

Well, I believe it is the Department of Finance.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 57-13(5): GNWT Payroll Tax

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How does the Department of Finance inform businesses of the collection of payroll taxes?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 57-13(5): GNWT Payroll Tax

HON. JOHN TODD:

I do not have the actual details of how we go about it. Whether we send them a letter or phone them or faxes. I will look into it and get back to my colleague.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 57-13(5): GNWT Payroll Tax

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe its by carrier pigeon. Mr. Speaker, it is a legitimate question and I am not asking it flippantly. Mr. Speaker, I have had a concern and request from some of the businesses in my community and my riding who at the end of the fiscal year have found out that indeed they had not been remitting a payroll tax because they were not informed at the beginning. Those are new companies that have set up in my community. So my question to the Minister is, for those types of businesses, how

Page 246

do they find out about the payroll tax? Do they get it when they file their Workers' Compensation Board licence, for example? Do they get it when they apply for their business licence in the community? Do they get it upon their incorporation in the Northwest Territories? It is a simple question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 57-13(5): GNWT Payroll Tax

HON. JOHN TODD:

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I thought I had given my honourable colleague a simple answer. In other words, I would ask my deputy minister and advise the House. I do not know what he is talking about these pigeons and doves.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko. You did get your final. Mr. Krutko

Question 58-13(5): NWT Health Concerns

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Deputy Premier, Mr. Goo Arlooktoo. It is in regard to the health care crisis that we find ourselves in, in the Northwest Territories. I would like to ask the Deputy Premier if he has discussed the issue in regard to the resignation of the Minister of Health and Social Services in light of the request by KIA and NTI?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Deputy Premier. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 58-13(5): NWT Health Concerns

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware, through news reports that there were calls for the resignation of the Minister, but there are calls for the resignation of Ministers all the time. I must have been asked to resign several times and so have other Ministers

--Laughter

and to tell you the truth in listening to Members and others speak about it and raising questions and in talking to the Minister of Health and Social Services, I really believe that the Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng, has done an excellent job in dealing with a very difficult situation and the government has all the confidence in his abilities in the way he has handled the situation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 58-13(5): NWT Health Concerns

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So you have discussed the question at hand in regard to the call for the resignation of the Minister of Health and Social Services. In light of the health crisis in the territories, have you talked in Cabinet in regard to the possibility of a shuffle?

MR. SPEAKER:

I will ask the Member to perhaps rephrase his question. A Member must not seek information about matters which are secret such as decisions or proceedings of Cabinet. The question is out of order. Supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 58-13(5): NWT Health Concerns

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your earlier answer in regard to my earlier question, that you have discussed the question with the appropriate Ministers and your colleagues in regard to the resignation of the Minister of Health and Social Services. Have you or have you not?

MR. SPEAKER:

Again, I must rule the question out of order. Perhaps you would like to rephrase your questions in regard to informal discussions perhaps? Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 58-13(5): NWT Health Concerns

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In light of the question or allegation by the different aboriginal organizations in regard to KIA and NTI calling for the Minister's resignation, has the Deputy Premier contemplated making a public statement on this matter at any time?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 58-13(5): NWT Health Concerns

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, we have not contemplated making a public statement on it. I go back to my earlier comment that I and the Premier have great confidence in the abilities of Mr. Ng and believe that he has handled a difficult situation regarding health care in all parts of the NWT, including the Keewatin, very professionally. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 58-13(5): NWT Health Concerns

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In light of the allegations made by the instance of the health crisis in the east, has the Deputy Premier been made aware of any other groups or allegations made by any other agencies in regard to the resignation of this particular Minister?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 58-13(5): NWT Health Concerns

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any allegations. I do know that the different health boards in all regions are faced with great demands on their systems compared to the resources that they have and have been working under very difficult conditions with the Minister. I

Page 247

believe despite the fact that there has been difficult situations the system has indeed carried on. I believe that the Minister has put a process in place and in all the regions to deal with these matters.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 59-13(5): Organ Donor Identification

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will change the subject here completely and lighten things up a little bit. My question today is for the Minister of Transportation. It has to do with organ donation.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is lightening it up?

--Laughter

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Over the holidays I had a chance to watch an interesting documentary on the great strides that have been made in the medical profession with being able to transplant organs and it would appear from this documentary that every jurisdiction in Canada makes provision on an individual's driver's licence to offer their consent to donate their organs should they be in some kind of accident. I was wondering why such provision is not made for NWT residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 59-13(5): Organ Donor Identification

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is a very good observation and a very good question. Why do not we have provisions in the driver's licence? I checked this out and what I have been told is that I think our medical facilities in the north do not have the capacity or the capabilities to take organs and preserve them for use in other parts of the country. I think that in other parts of this country there are provisions in the health system to take advantage of those kinds of possibilities, but I think one of the reasons why we do not do that is that we do not have the capabilities of providing that service. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 59-13(5): Organ Donor Identification

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, that might bear further investigation because people in the Northwest Territories do travel extensively so not necessarily would they be in the north should the occasion unfortunately arise where they would be in a position to...I cannot think of...

--Laughter

Also, from anything that I have seen there is a usually a very specialized team that travels to wherever the organ is being made available. It would be a team of doctors who are specialists in that area who would go out, retrieve and come back to where the person is awaiting the organs. Perhaps, the Minister of Transportation could check into that further because it does not seem like a very viable answer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 59-13(5): Organ Donor Identification

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will take this question as notice and then I will ask the department what the possibilities are. I will get back to the honourable Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 60-13(5): Impact of Nunavut Construction Company Layoffs

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Division and it relates to the announcement that we heard recently regarding the layoff of workers with the Nunavut Construction Company. Mr. Speaker, my question is, what impact will this layoff have on the timetable for the construction of the units as it relates to division in Nunavut? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. I am not too clear on who the Minister of Division is. The Deputy Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 60-13(5): Impact of Nunavut Construction Company Layoffs

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government has been informally notified of some layoffs and we have asked the NTI for further clarification. I met with the secretary-treasurer yesterday and asked for an update. I was informed that they too had minimal information. We are waiting at this time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Mr. Picco.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my first written question is for Minister Dent, Minister of Education.

Written Question 2-13(5): Concerns with Lack of Education Funding

1. How will the Department of Education address the concerns with the lack of curricula and the lack of materials to deliver programs?
2. Will the department allocate funds adequately to school boards and division education councils so that they can purchase needed resources and materials, and adjust the formula accordingly?

Page 248

3. Will the department review the availability of standard text books for the NWT schools?
4. Is it true that there is no actual curriculum for Inuktitut at the grade 7-8-9 levels and individual teachers have to unfairly make their own materials?

Written Question 3-13(5): Payroll Tax Information

Written question number two, is to Minister Todd, Minister of Finance.

1. How is the payroll tax collection facilitated through the Department of Finance?

2. How are new businesses starting up notified of the payroll tax collection?

3. Where are the necessary forms kept? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Written questions. Mr. Henry.

Written Question 4-13(5): Federal Mining Subsidies

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My written question is to Minister Kakfwi, Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development.

1. Can the Minister through his department officials ascertain how much in federal dollars of subsidy were contributed to the Anvil Mine in Faro, Yukon?
2. Please provide additional information on that bailout in the areas of other associated costs.
3. Provide other information on other mining ventures that the federal government have financially supported in the past number of years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTIONS FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 8-13(5): Appropriation Act 1998-99

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two notices of motion if I may. I give notice on Friday, January 23, 1998, I will move that Bill 8, Appropriation Act 1998-99, be read for the first time.

Bill 9-13(5): Loan Authorization Act 1998-99

If I may, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, January 23, 1998, I will move that Bill 9, Loan

Authorization Act 1998-99 be read for the first time.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 5-13(5): Deferral of Request for Proposals for Keewatin Fuel Delivery Pipelines.

MR. SPEAKER:

This motion has been called twice and not proceeded with. Motion 5-13(5) is dropped from the order paper. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Item 20, report of committee of the whole. Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there is a meeting of the Ordinary Members' Caucus at 11:00 tomorrow morning.

Orders of the day for Thursday, January 22, 1998:

1. Prayer
2. Budget Address
3. Ministers' Statements
4. Members' Statements
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Replies to Budget Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees

14. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

15. Tabling of Documents

16. Notices of Motion

17. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

Page 249

18. Motions

19. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act, No. 2

- Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act

20. Second Reading of Bills

21. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

22. Report of Committee of the Whole

23. Third Reading of Bills

24. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned to Thursday, January 22, 1998 at 1:30 p.m.

--ADJOURNMENT