



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
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**HANSARD**

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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

Honourable Jim Antoine, Honourable Goo Arlooktoo, Mr. Barnabas, Honourable Charles Dent, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Evaloarjuk, Honourable Sam Gargan, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Henry, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Miltenberger, Honourable Don Morin, Honourable Kelvin Ng, Mr. Ningark, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Picco, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Roland, Mr. Steen, Honourable Manitok 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. Rabesca. Good afternoon. I would like at this time to thank the Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark, for taking my place yesterday as I attended the funeral in Kakisa. His work has been very much appreciated.

--Applause

Speaker's Ruling

Before we proceed with the orders today, I would like to provide a ruling concerning the tabling of unsigned documents in the House. The chair has the responsibility to ensure compliance with the rules, practices and procedures as established by this, and previous Legislative Assemblies. As Speaker I have to ensure that items such as tabling of documents and petitions adhere to the rules and practices. In carrying out that responsibility Members will recall, yesterday the honourable Member from Hay River tabled a note that was passed to her in the House. This note was unsigned and undated.

Although this matter was not raised as a point of order at the time of tabling, the issue of the tabling of unsigned documents is one of concern to the Chair because it raises fundamental issues with respect to the verification and authentication of facts that may be contained therein. Members may be interested to note that this issue has been the subject of some debate in this House in the past.

With respect to this, I refer Members back to my ruling of March 27, 1995, in the term of the 12th Assembly concerning the tabling of an unsigned letter by the then, honourable Member from Thebacha. That ruling reviewed the rules and precedents concerning this matter and clearly established the requirements and limitations as to the content for petitions and tabled documents in our House. I quote from page 612 of the March 27, 1995 Hansard:

It is my ruling that it is not an acceptable practice to table unsigned letters in this House, so therefore, all letters tabled, whether it be by the government or by Ordinary Members, will have to be forthwith directed from a specific individual or organization, dated and signed.

This ruling was clear and concise with respect to this issue.

It is my ruling that the document tabled yesterday by the honourable Member from Hay River does not meet the requirement to be from a specific individual or organization, dated and signed. Therefore the document is ruled not to be in an acceptable format for tabling and should not have been tabled in this House. I have instructed the Clerk to remove this item from the tabled document list and to amend Hansard to reflect this change. Thank you.

Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Morin.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 27-13(5): Minister Absent From the House

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi will be absent from the House for the remainder of the week to attend the Canadian Council Ministers of the Environment Meeting in St. John's, Newfoundland. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Minister's Statement 28-13(5): Western Transition Planning

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank You Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, last October, I tabled an Action Plan for the Transition to a new Western Territory. I rise today to report progress on measures being taken towards the creation of a strong and stable Western Territory in 1999.

It is critical that all leaders in both the west and Nunavut work together to protect our programs and services by making sure that the Government of Canada pays for the costs of creating two new territories. I am pleased to inform Members that a Western Transition Costs Report on the financial implications

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of division for the Western Territory is almost complete, and will be provided to Members in the near future. I expect that this report will help us to show the federal government that more funding must be made available to ensure a smooth transition in 1999.

On January 21st, I attended a meeting with DIAND Minister Jane Stewart at which western transition issues were raised. Minister Stewart has agreed to another meeting to talk about western transition in more depth. I see this as a very positive sign on the Minister's part, and I look forward to the discussion.

GNWT employees working in the west, particularly those in headquarters, want and deserve information on how division may change their workplace. Any employees who will be affected by downsizing in headquarters as a result of division should have time to plan their futures. I would like to assure Members and the public that we are working to develop a plan that will outline changes in staffing as quickly as possible. The plan will, of course, depend in part on discussions with the Office of the Interim Commissioner on contracts with the western government to provide some services for Nunavut during a transitional period. Representatives at the Nunavut Leaders Summit in Iqaluit earlier this month recognized that any contracting must be worked out in such a way as to allow the GNWT adequate time to make personnel, office space, training and other similar adjustments and arrangements and to recover costs. I was pleased to hear that the parties have committed to working with the Interim Commissioner to finalize an implementation plan by March 15, 1998, and look forward to seeing the details of anticipated contracting between the two new territories.

Members of this Assembly have recognized the importance of securing constitutional changes to ensure the representation of both the west and Nunavut in the Senate and the House of Commons. We have had discussions with the Government of Canada on this matter and expect that legislation will be before Parliament in the near future.

As was stated in the action plan, division will have an impact on the western economy. The plan identifies the need for measures that will help offset these impacts, foster economic stability and keep the confidence of investors and the business community in general. I understand that the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and the Minister of Finance will review the future of economic development activity in the west in light of division, and outline steps we can take to reinforce our western economy. We have made good progress so far in transition planning although a great deal of work remains to be done. Our key to success in the commitment of the Western Caucus to keep western stakeholders informed and involved.

I also cannot emphasize enough the importance of continued cooperation among leaders east and west to ensure that the two new territories are created in an equitable and orderly fashion. I look forward to working with my fellow northerners both within and outside the Assembly in the coming months to meet the challenges that lie ahead. Thank you.

--Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Minister's Statement 29-13(5): Review of Keewatin Operations

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a status report on health and social services in the Keewatin region.

In September, 1997, the Department of Health and Social Services conducted a review of changes proposed by the Keewatin Regional Health Board. This review was initiated in response to concerns from Members of this House and the public.

From last October until two weeks ago, the Department of Health and Social Services worked at arm's length with the staff of the Keewatin Regional

Health Board to help the board staff implement recommendations of the September review.

Two weeks ago, as Members are aware, the board chair and the chief executive officer resigned. Mr. Percy Kabloona, who was serving the board as deputy chair, was immediately appointed acting chair. Mr. Kabloona promptly consulted with all of the board trustees. Following their consultation, the board requested support from the department to bring stability to board operations until such time as a permanent chair and CEO are in place.

Mr. Speaker, we are currently providing help in key areas to the existing board trustees and their staff in order to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of health and social services and thereby regain credibility with Keewatin residents.

The department is providing the following assistance to the board.

- Since January 19, a senior department official has been acting as CEO;
- Last week, our assistant deputy minister was in Rankin Inlet dealing with management and service delivery board staff about staffing issues in general and specifically about how to re-establish the full staff complement;
- The department's manager of human resources travelled to Rankin Inlet with our deputy minister in the middle of January to deal with staffing issues and to assist in establishing an

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effective action plan to recruit and retain professional and support staff for the Keewatin Regional Health Board;

- This week the department has sent several additional people over to Rankin Inlet to work with the board; for example,
- Staff from our financial and management services division are conducting some financial diagnostic analyses aimed at establishing a viable financial management plan;
- The department's nursing consultant travelled to Rankin Inlet this week to talk about professional practise and recruitment strategies;

- Staff are available in Rankin Inlet to assist in rationalizing contract administration for the Keewatin board;

- Finally, we have provided staff to ensure that administrative support systems for the board are working efficiently and effectively.

Mr. Speaker, the acting CEO and Mr. Kabloona have conducted a series of conference calls to the communities who fall within the purview of the Keewatin board. These calls focused on the primary health and social concerns of these communities.

Further, the acting CEO and chair are planning visits to communities to assess the status of health and social service delivery and to address concerns the communities have identified.

The action plan will include:

- First, re-establishing front-line staffing levels, particularly for social workers and nurses.
- Second, stabilizing general practitioner services for the region. As I speak, arrangements for discussions with the Northern Medical Unit are being finalized. These discussions will focus on
  - the needs of Keewatin residents; and
  - determining how the NMU could assist in this area.
- Third, reviewing and supporting administrative processes.
- Finally, recruiting a permanent CEO for the board.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to add that the interim CEO and board chair will work with a joint committee at the staff level with representatives from KIA and each hamlet to ensure that ongoing concerns are being addressed.

Further, for the time being the Department of Health and Social Services will take the lead in managing the Rankin Inlet and Arviat capital projects. I believe that it is critical that KRHB staff remains focused on ongoing community programs and services over the next several months.

Mr. Speaker, some of the most critical issues that the KRHB currently faces are shared with other boards. These include such issues as recruitment and retention of health and social service professionals, physicians, nurses and social workers. As I

mentioned earlier this week, I will table a plan to deal with recruitment and retention across the territories by late February.

As Minister of Health and Social Services, I have the responsibility to ensure that adequate health and social services are provided to all residents of the Northwest Territories.

I have full confidence that the measures laid out today, once implemented in partnership with the board, hamlet council representatives, and the Keewatin Inuit Association will fully restore the stability, credibility and confidence needed to sustain the health and social service system in the Keewatin region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

Member's Statement 105-13(5): Federal Assistance for Diamond Benefits

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to day to speak about federal assistance to assist the territories, particularly the western NWT, which as we know is hurting with layoffs and mine closures and so on. Last Thursday, I spoke about this a bit. I am not talking about asking the federal government to set a precedent as they provide assistance all the time, and also the Member for Yellowknife Centre touched on it yesterday and actually gave the act under which this is done. Under the act, the federal government has provided hundreds of millions of dollars to the fishing industries on the east and west coast, to farmers on the prairies when there is drought, the floods in Manitoba and to help people when they had ice storms in Quebec and Ontario. We need similar relief for the miners who have lost their jobs and also for the mines to ensure that no more mines close. Of course, this will only be until the gold prices go up. Similarly, in the diamond industry, we need federal assistance. We know that 80 percent of the money spent on diamonds is spent after the diamonds are mined. I am talking about a secondary industry, like we want to establish here.

Mr. Speaker, I am talking about detailed sorting for market, cutting and polishing diamonds. We know

that people will come here if there is a proper setting. The mines have also said that they will do more here if we can demonstrate that it makes economic sense. Of course, we are not only talking about taking federal money because the GNWT could and should help here too. For instance, we could train people and

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help move them to jobs, if we have to. Also, aboriginal claimant groups have claims money which they now invest mostly in the south because there is no investment opportunities here, but they do want to invest in the north. They just need the opportunities. For example, an aboriginal consortium of three aboriginal groups want to put up a sorting facility, and they would invest in other parts of the industry as well. Mr. Speaker, what I am talking about fits both sides of the federal Minister's portfolio because the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs is responsible for both aboriginal people and the north. Federal assistance would help aboriginal people realize their potential and would help us end the days of the north going cap-in-hand to the federal government for most of our money. 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 said federal assistance could help the aboriginal people to realize their potential and also help the north end its days of going cap-in-hand to the federal government for most of our money. In fact, it is possible that we may not need any federal money if things are done properly, particularly, if they transfer royalties and the responsibility for land and mining to the north. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement 106-13(5): Proposed Merger of the Bank of Montreal and the Royal Bank

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to rise to speak briefly on the issue of the proposed merger of the Royal Bank and the Bank of Montreal and the possible implications, most of which are probably negative to the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, this is one of the biggest economic news items that has come along in some time, and initial thoughts that I have heard indicate that there is up to 9,000 jobs potentially lost and that the biggest impact will be felt by small jurisdictions and rural communities. Mr. Speaker, in Fort Smith we are very sensitive to any kind of issue that relates to the banks because a few years ago the CIBC pulled up stakes arbitrarily and left us high and dry as a community and it is only because the Bank of Montreal was persuaded to come to town that we do have banking facilities. I want to ensure that, in fact, there is no impact that would cause a loss of those services.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Premier later today if he will, in fact, write to the Prime Minister and to the special committee that is reviewing this proposed merger so that he can raise issues on behalf of all northerners not just Fort Smith. Those communities that have Royal Banks and the Bank of Montreal like Yellowknife, like Iqaluit could possibly face significant job loss if there is a rationalization and a common combining of the banks. We have to ensure that there is no increase in service charges and in consumer costs to pay for this merger. We have to be sure in pursuit of being a global competitor so that like in the mid 80s and earlier 80s where the banks made bad investments down in South America and we, Canadians, had to pick up the price tag that we do not ever repeat that. So, Mr. Speaker, this, I see, is a very critical issue that will affect all northerners and a lot of individual communities. As I indicated, I will be approaching the Premier to, in fact, act on our behalf and write to the Prime Minister. Thank you.

--Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement 107-13(5): Recognition of Igloodik Elementary School Teachers

**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

Qujannamiik (Translation) Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation and to recognize the teacher of Ataguttaaluk School in Igloodik who teach the little ones from kindergarten to grades one to six. There are 254 students, starting from kindergarten classes in the morning and again separately in the afternoon. These teachers work very hard including some of the instructors who are not fully qualified as teachers but do work in their capacity as teachers' aides. There are three classroom assistants as well. They also have three Inuktitut language instructors who teach full-time in the lower grades and as separate subjects by grade six. I will name these teachers, Mary Kunuk, Eunice Uyarak, Susan Tulugardjuk, Mary Ungalaq, Amilia Angiler, Kanguk Akitter, Louise Uyarak, Yvone Kayutak, Pat Qulaut, Joana Quassa and Jeela Padlug. Mr. Speaker, these very special teachers are Inuit and are all women. I would ask the Minister of Education to make arrangements to present a token of recognition for these women. I suggest that this be done by way of a certificate of appreciation for my constituents. I will ask the Minister for his response at the appropriate time. Thank you. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 108-13(5): History of the Pay Equity Issue

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have spoken in this House many times about accountable, transparency and public money spent for the public good. Sometimes when you ask questions in this form, a nerve or two will be hit, yet every Member has the right to ask questions. That is the fundamental aspect of our parliamentary system. I have listened with great interest with questions raised and statements made about the pay equity issue. It would seem that almost a revisionist history of events has taken place. Firstly, pay equity is the question, simply, of equal pay for work of equal value as stated by Mr. Todd. It is nothing more or less. The GNWT was asked almost ten years ago now, to make good on this principle. However, that

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Legislative Assembly and subsequent Assemblies including this one argued it in the courts. We continued to appeal until finally last year we were forced by the last court decision to sit down with the

UNW and negotiate a settlement. Increasingly in this House we have heard that the hoped negotiated settlement will be affordable and consistent with our availability to pay the outstanding amount owed.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of staff and employees who are affected by this case are administration and clerical positions. Because of the GNWT's precarious financial situation the Finance Minister has been guarding his comments, like yesterday on this fact. Mr. Speaker, in a consensus type of government where the boundaries between Cabinet and the Ordinary Members are not well defined sometimes it is difficult to be critical without the feeling of being personal. I find that everyday, Mr. Speaker, but questions must be asked; questions must be raised and questions must be spoken or the government would be a sham. I did not come here to rubber stamp policies or proposals, nor do I support the government's line on pay equity. Hopefully, our government will not try in negotiations to hold the hammer of pay equity, and its cost with the wage and benefits negotiations with our employees. I do not know how much we have to pay. All I know is we have to pay the pay equity bill, that has dragged on for almost ten years. At the end of the day with the lack of available information, we can only hope that both sides, Mr. Speaker, both sides will do the right thing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement 109-13(5): Passing of Johnny Providence

**MR. RABESCA:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, the community of Kakisa put to rest a very loving and respected elder, Johnny Providence. Johnny Providence, who was also known as Uncle Ben, was born on February 22, 1916, in Meander River, Alberta, and passed away on January 21, 1998 in Edmonton. Johnny was the husband of Monique Simba Providence and the father of Andrew Providence. Many people from all over the north and some from Alberta came to Kakisa yesterday to pay their last respects to this kind and wise man. I understand that the hall where the service was held was filled to capacity. The hallways were also filled and some people had to stand outside

as they came to say a final farewell to Johnny Providence. Mr. Speaker, the people of Kakisa should be commended for their efforts on this day and their help with the many people who travelled to this traditional community. A special thanks to Father Joseph Daley, who travelled from Fort Simpson, to conduct the service. We send our deepest and sincerest sympathies to Monique and Andrew Providence and to the people of Kakisa for the loss they have suffered. Mr. Speaker, Johnny was 81 years old at the time that he passed away. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement 110-13(5): Lobbying Effort for Nunavut Act Amendments

**MR. BARNABAS:**

Qujannamiik (Translation) Thank you, I will be speaking in Inuktitut. Mr. Speaker, after the meetings with federal Minister, Jane Stewart, at Iqaluit last month, several topics were discussed. As most Members of this House and the Nunavut public know, the federal government has to bring amendments to the Nunavut Act to the House of Commons in Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, there have been some concerns with the amendments and the reaction of federal MPs. By being proactive we could meet with them to discuss these issues and help with the passage of the amendments in the Commons and Senate. Some constituents and Nunavut residents have asked me about this, and I have discussed it with other Members and other Nunavut Caucus Members. All three parties want Nunavut to be a success and be discussed at the federal level in a positive light. Proactive lobbying could help take this place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement 111-13(5): DIAND's Northern Development Responsibilities

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, I spoke about the concern I have with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Yesterday, also the Premier also

spoke about the need for us here in the territories to control our resources. Mr. Erasmus spoke on it earlier. The Northern Accord is becoming a Holy Grail, Mr. Speaker, and we have been chasing it for years and still have not found it. What is left is dependent upon the federal government to act in our best interests on issues related to mines and resources. Right now that is not happening. We need DIAND Minister Stewart to focus on the economic development of the Northwest Territories and deal with the plight of our gold mines and our need for value-added industries from the diamond mines.

We, here, in the western Arctic have seen the Minister exactly twice since she was appointed. Once for a quick tour through all of the west and last week for a one-day whirlwind visit to Yellowknife. There is no doubt Minister Stewart has a great commitment to the aboriginal community. I agree that is needed. From the feedback I get, she does a great job in that area. I can appreciate that the Indian Affairs side of her portfolio consumes a great deal of her time and attention, but by not spending time tackling the issues such as mining, resources and economic development she ends up displaying a parochial, quote, "we know best what's for you," that irritates those of us who were refused an audience with her. If Minister Stewart does not have the time to work with us to develop sustainable industries, then it is time for DIAND to be split with the northern development part of the portfolio to be made into its own department. After all, that was the private sentiment of former DIAND Minister Ron Irwin, who felt the Indian Affairs

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side of the portfolio was overwhelming. I think we, in the west, deserve a great deal of the Minister's time and attention especially at this time in our economic difficulties. If Minister Stewart is not prepared to give us that time and attention, Ottawa should give us someone who will. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Members' statements. Mrs. Thompson.

Member's Statement 112-13(5): Keewatin Regional Health Board Difficulties

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be speaking in Inuktitut. As for my constituents of Aivilik, I am very thankful today that the Minister of Health

and Social Services has been dealing with these heavy issues within our region. He recently made a Minister's statement regarding the issues that he has been dealing with and I wish to thank the previous Keewatin Regional Health Board members who have worked so hard to keep the board going. Although there has been a lot of problems that have been discussed within the region, I know about the problems that have been raised on the local radio stations and newspapers. They seem to have been criticizing the Minister too heavily and it made the people of the Keewatin region look inadequate and I apologize for this situation. I just wanted to thank the Minister today and I welcome his statements this afternoon.

I also have been receiving similar calls regarding the incident in Rankin Inlet. I guess the hamlet council in Rankin Inlet was chaired by Louis Pilakapsi and Mr. Pilakapsi indicated that their agenda was made perfectly clear. He indicated that he did not want the Minister to step down, he just wanted to rectify the problems that were occurring within the region. Through the local radio, CBC Radio and newspaper; the people just wanted to bring out their concerns and problems. They were just talking about problems and not getting any solutions to the problems. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mrs. Thompson. Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 113-13(5): Lease Commitments Beyond Division

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is in regard to the spending of this government and also previous governments, keeping in mind the deficit in which we found ourselves. We have taken drastic measures to recoup and finally get out of. It has taken a lot of tough decisions and a lot of cuts, especially in the smaller communities, in the delivery of programs and services. I think we have to keep in mind how we ended up in that situation, especially in light of expenditures of the previous governments and the deficit which we came into this government.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in regard to a question that has been on my mind and questions that I have raised in this House in regard to expenditures of the government in putting ourselves in a position of

making long-term commitments and not having the adequate resources in the future to pay for these commitments. I speak, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the regional superintendents having the ability to sign long-term agreements in way of leases and also with regard to how these lease arrangements are made. Yesterday, we heard from the Minister, he made a comment that the regional superintendent made a verbal agreement in August, that a letter of understanding was signed in August and the lease was in place in September. That is fast work in regard to how an individual was able to acquire a written lease within two months, with this government with no review whatsoever on the expenditure of this government and the long-term financial commitments we are making for the new governments in the west and the east after division.

Mr. Speaker, I believe, we have a Financial Administration Act which was supposed to control those types of expenditures and a regime put in place to ensure that adequate spending is done so we do not find ourselves back in the situation we were when we got here in regard to the deficit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize my old ski coach, Ms. Pat Thomas, up there in the gallery, who is there every day of the week and I would like to thank Pat for her commitment and having the patience for sitting here, day in and day out. Thank you, Pat.

--Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Ootes.

**MR. OOTES:**

We should also recognize the patience, diligence and perseverance of Mr. Ben McDonald from the UNW, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 121-13(5): Navigation Aids at Iqaluit Airport

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in questioning the Minister of Transportation concerning a problem with the navigation aids in Iqaluit, the Minister said that navigation aids rest with NAV Canada, so I would like to follow up with some questions on this matter. Are the

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navigation aids at Iqaluit airport the responsibility of NAV Canada? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 121-13(5): Navigation Aids at Iqaluit Airport

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is their responsibility. The Department of Transportation contacted the NAV Canada regional office to ensure that repairs are made. Therefore, I understand that based on that it is the responsibility of NAV Canada to make sure that the navigational aids are operational and in good order. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 121-13(5): Navigation Aids at Iqaluit Airport

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what role does our government Department of Transportation have in responding to problems that navigational aids are redundant, broken or not working properly? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 121-13(5): Navigation Aids at Iqaluit Airport

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the role of the Department of Transportation on this particular occasion in Iqaluit is that as soon as we are aware that this particular navigational aid was not working properly, we contacted NAV Canada to make sure that they were aware of the problem and that there would be a speedy solution to correct the problem. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 121-13(5): Navigation Aids at Iqaluit Airport

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is quite a bit of concern in my community with the airlines, with constituents. I have received more phone calls concerning the problems with the navigational system and the take off and landing approaches of airplanes. I wonder, will the Minister commit to again, reiterating our concerns with NAV Canada to try to get the work done as expediently as possible because yesterday NAV Canada indicated they cannot get at it for a week, two weeks or whatever. It has been going on for about two weeks. Soon it will be almost a month. So, I would ask the Minister will he expediently address this concern again with NAV Canada and have this problem rectified? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 121-13(5): Navigation Aids at Iqaluit Airport

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department has been in contact with NAV Canada on Monday as well as again today to try to get them to repair and test this navigational aid. We were told today that the earliest that they will be able to do the testing, I understand that they have an aircraft that is equipped with this testing equipment that will be available as early as next week. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Question 122-13(5): Official Recognition of Inuit Teachers

**MR. EVALOARJUK:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, further to my Member's statement earlier, I suggested that the Inuit teachers in my community be given a certificate of appreciation or a plaque of honourable mention for the work that they have been carrying out for a long time. Would the Minister consider making arrangements to have official recognition made publicly to the teachers of the Ataguttaaluk School in Igloodik for their dedication to their jobs as instructors of our children by presenting them with a token of appreciation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 122-13(5): Official Recognition of Inuit Teachers

**HON. CHARLES DENT:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, all teachers do important work with our young people and deserve recognition. The government recognizes dedication to service with certificates after five, ten, fifteen years and so on. The Member is suggesting that there be a recognition program outside of that. There may be room for the DEA or the divisional education council to consider their own recognition program. Mr. Speaker, I would be prepared to work with the Member to perhaps cooperatively send a letter to the teachers he has mentioned in his statement thanking them for their service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 123-13(5): Royal and Montreal Bank Merger

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Premier and it is in regard to the proposed merger of the Royal Bank and the Bank of Montreal. I copied the Premier on a letter I sent to the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew outlining the concerns that may effect all northerners, such as there should be no closure of either the Royal Bank or the Bank of Montreal in communities where there is only one bank. We have to be concerned about the impact on communities where, in fact, there are two existing banks and the concern about any increase in the service costs

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and charges to northerners. Would the Premier commit to writing to the Prime Minister to pass on our concerns early, so he is aware, as a special committee undertakes review of the concerns of northerners, that we want to make sure that there is not a negative impact? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Premier.

Return To Oral Question 123-13(5): Royal and Montreal Bank Merger

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Prime Minister of Canada has Paul Martin as his Finance Minister, as lead Minister, on this whole issue of bank mergers between the Royal Bank and the Bank of Montreal. I have already instructed the Finance Minister, John Todd, to write to Paul Martin on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories to raise a concern for northerners on the concern that northerners do have with this proposed merger. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 123-13(5): Royal and Montreal Bank Merger

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Premier for his quick response to this very important issue. Would he also undertake to keep us informed if there are any developments that will have an impact on our constituents? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 123-13(5): Royal and Montreal Bank Merger

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will request the Finance Minister to keep all Members of the Legislative Assembly regularly briefed on this issue as the issue develops. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 124-13(5): Controls on GNWT Lease Arrangements

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance. It is in regard to my opening statement, in regard to keep a toll on expenditures of this government, in light of the issue I was talking about where there is a lease with a new company made in a matter of two months in which there was a verbal agreement in August, then there is a letter of understanding signed in August and there was an eight-year lease for \$9.5 million signed in September. Was there a review process in place in looking at such an arrangement in regard to the Finance Minister and the FMBS and the role it plays in controlling the financial expenditures of this government? Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister is, what controls are in place to ensure that these expenditures are controlled in regard to the public purse?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 124-13(5): Controls on GNWT Lease Arrangements

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I will try to answer the question, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that the arrangement that was made meets all the guidelines as set by this government and the authorities designated to deputy ministers. In fact, upon reading the file there was significant savings to this government over the long-term with respect to the extension of this lease. Whatever took place in the process was in accordance with the rules, policies and regulations of this government.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 124-13(5): Controls on GNWT Lease Arrangements

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the ability of the deputy minister to sign long-term leases, in this case it was an eight-year extension to a new owner, I would like to mention and the cost was \$9.5 million. Without the involvement of the FMBS in such matters, what other type of large expenditures are being made to date by other deputy ministers without some control mechanism in place?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 124-13(5): Controls on GNWT Lease Arrangements

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Mr. Speaker, I said there was a set of rules and regulations and spending authorities that deputy ministers, superintendents, economic development officers, clerks and everybody else has in this government. There is no requirement, in this particular case, for the FMB approval. This was within the rules and regulations and spending authority of that particular deputy and as such, he acted accordingly, put into place a system that saved this government over the long-term money and we applaud him for it.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 124-13(5): Controls on GNWT Lease Arrangements

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to this case, I believe we are talking about a new owner. Which in my mind, we are talking about a new lease arrangement with a new company. I would like to ask the Minister in regard to the Financial Administration Act, which basically has been put in place by this government, and in light of the deficit situation we find ourselves in, I would like to ask in this case, was the

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Financial Administration Act breached in any way by the expenditures of the deputy minister, without having it reviewed by the FMBS or Cabinet on this particular matter?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 124-13(5): Controls on GNWT Lease Arrangements

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Mr. Speaker, the short answer, there was no breach of the Financial Administration Act. The reality is that there was an extension of an existing contractor, who was from the south. My understanding after that, some northerners purchased the building. There was no breach of any administration act that I am aware of. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 124-13(5): Controls on GNWT Lease Arrangements

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to this matter, was the decision to extend the lease made before or after the interest was expressed by the current new owner?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 124-13(5): Controls on GNWT Lease Arrangements

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that Mr. Antoine, later on today will be tabling a full chronology of the events that led to this situation that Mr. Krutko is talking about. It may be prudent at this time for him to wait until such time as that is tabled and he will see clearly, the events that took place. I am fairly confident it will answer all the questions he has raised, either today or in the future. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 125-13(5): Rae-Edzo Municipal Financing

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, my colleague Mr. Rabesca spoke on the frustrations of the shortcomings in the current municipal formula financing and how it detrimentally affects the community of Rae-Edzo. My question will be for the Minister of MACA. Several months ago the hamlet produced a report that showed Rae-Edzo was one of the lowest funded non-tax based municipalities. Over the past several months efforts have been made by members of that community along with Mr. Rabesca to resolve this situation. Apparently, they were told just recently that the work will not be completed until September or October of this year. However, they were reassured by the Minister earlier that it could be resolved fairly quickly. Could the Minister tell us why this item is now being delayed until September or October?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Ms. Thompson.

Return To Question 125-13(5): Rae-Edzo Municipal Financing

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is the Member representing the community of Rae-Edzo? I would like to thank the community of Rae-Edzo for the tour they gave me and also the hospitality they showed me. The MLA of Rae-Edzo has been working very hard with my department. His executive assistant has been coming to my office to deal with this issue. I have directed my department to deal with the funding provision for the Rae-Edzo community. We are dealing with the Member's concerns from yesterday's statements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 125-13(5): Rae-Edzo Municipal Financing

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister tell us if this will not be addressed by her with her officials in the next several days, if she can meet with them to try and resolve this situation? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Ms. Thompson.

Further Return To Question 125-13(5): Rae-Edzo Municipal Financing

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

Yes. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Rabesca.

--Applause

Question 126-13(5): Municipal Funding for Rae-Edzo

**MR. RABESCA:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my honourable colleague for speaking on behalf of my community.

--Applause

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the same Minister regarding the same question that I had asked yesterday. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I gave a Member's statement regarding the frustration of myself and the community of Rae-Edzo for delay tactics that have taken place on the part of MACA over the lack of funding Rae-Edzo is experiencing. Mr. Speaker, today I went to direct my question to the honourable Minister of MACA, Ms. Thompson. It is my understanding that this morning the mayor of Rae-Edzo faxed a letter to you requesting the issue be dealt with and for you to reply prior to the Department of MACA's budget review during the committee of the whole. My question to the Minister is, have you received or reviewed this letter? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Ms. Thompson.

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Return To Question 126-13(5): Municipal Funding for Rae-Edzo

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would to thank the Member for the cooperation we get from him. He is representing his community very well. He always lets us know what the matter is in his community.

--Applause

He is one of the few Members in this House that I truly like to work with.

--Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 127-13(5): Resolute Bay Request for Arena

**MR. BARNABAS:**

Qujannamiik. (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question I would like to direct to the Minister of MACA. When she was visiting the community of Resolute Bay we were requesting an arena facility in our community. I would like an update as to what has been happening with this request? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Ms. Thompson.

Return To Question 127-13(5): Resolute Bay Request for Arena

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

Qujannamiik. (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This request was presented to me by the Member. He has worked with the community regarding the request. They were requesting a canvas type arena. My officials are looking into finding a place or a tent type of facility for the community. I have met with the people of Resolute Bay regarding this, a part of our

plans that we have for the future. We are working with the community. If they would like more information and an update, they are most welcome to get hold of our officials in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 127-13(5): Resolute Bay Request for Arena

**MR. BARNABAS:**

Qujannamiik (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if, perhaps, the Minister of MACA could plan to have this done as soon as possible? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Ms. Thompson.

Further Return To Question 127-13(5): Resolute Bay Request for Arena

**HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The smaller communities are not able to get the larger facilities, so we try to look for ways to find a smaller facility. I will be working with my officials and I will be meeting with my staff as to how we could get this thing going. I will be doing that this week. Thank you. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 128-13(5): Status of Digital Communications Network

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the digital communications highway is a vital link to our future and so are the small businesses including the local service providers. Projects like the proposed digital communications network should not compromise small businesses that are the true driving force of our community. My question is to the Minister of FMBS. When can we expect to receive the proof of concept for the Ardicom system? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 128-13(5): Status of Digital Communications Network

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the proof of concept has been concluded and Ardicom is moving on, getting on with the job and trying to put the systems in place in accordance with the schedule we set with them. It would be fair to say there was a little bit of a delay and I believe, it was somewhere around six to eight weeks behind. I am fairly confident we can move forward aggressively and have most of the communities up and running by April 1, 1999. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 128-13(5): Status of Digital Communications Network

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is, when can we expect to receive a proof of concept? Does the government have this at this time?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

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Further Return To Question 128-13(5): Status of Digital Communications Network

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I believe we already have that, Mr. Speaker. As the anchor tenant if you want, with respect to Ardicom's contract, I believe that has now been completed. I will double check with Mr. Voytilla later on today, but my understanding from discussions with NorthwesTel late last week and others is that we are well underway now. We are optimistic this territorial-wide, integrated digital communication system will bring about the benefits and rewards we are all expecting in the coming years. When my friends, plus the other side, send me hand signals indicating their support, of

course, for this significant initiative, and I applaud them for it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 128-13(5): Status of Digital Communications Network

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Has the Minister considered how we are going to integrate the continued use of a local service providers in the communities?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 128-13(5): Status of Digital Communications Network

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is there have been two meetings, I believe, one or two meetings with the Internet providers at the community level in an effort to try to find some integration of their services with this larger territorial-wide integrated digital communication system. In talking to Mr. Voytilla the other day, I understand there is another meeting coming forward in the coming weeks. Hopefully, at that time we will be able to bring some finality to this issue and try to address some of the concerns the smaller community-based operators are concerned about. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 128-13(5): Status of Digital Communications Network

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister please confirm for us then, that this new Ardicom digital communication network will not be competing with or replacing the local private Internet providers in the communities?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 128-13(5): Status of Digital Communications Network

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I am not in a position to say that. All I know is, the position of this government is to put in a territorial-wide integrated digital communication system that is going to provide things like distance health, distance education and the state of the art communication system to each of those communities. I cannot say today whether they will compete or not. What I will say is, there is a determined effort made by my department and by the Ardicom group to find some room and some integration for the local based Internet providers. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 129-13(5): Transfer of GNWT Employees to Nunavut

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance. It has to do with a CBC report I heard this morning. It was a report on discussions that took place in the House yesterday. I think the point the reporter was trying to make got lost and it has raised a bit of concern in my community. I would ask the Minister of Finance if he could add some clarity to it? It is regarding the number of positions that may transfer to Nunavut over the next year period. So, if the Minister of Finance would give some clarity as to what plans are in place right now and to the limited number of people that may go to Nunavut over the next year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 129-13(5): Transfer of GNWT Employees to Nunavut

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I think it is important, given the current environment within Yellowknife, which has been hardest hit as we all know not only with cuts from this government, but in terms of the

current gold crisis, that when we make comments about who is leaving and who is not leaving, that we do it with a certain amount of care. The numbers quoted yesterday by Mr. Ootes perhaps, I suspect, were taken from our transition plan which has not been accepted to this date by the federal government or the Interim Commissioners' office.

We are currently analyzing the Interim Commissioner's office plan as we speak. This discussion is going on today. One, of course, of the key issues is the impact on jobs and when and how the jobs are going to be moved out of Yellowknife. As much as possible, once we come to a consensus as to what is going to be the staged development of the transfer of responsibilities, once we come to that agreement, we are going to sit down with the staff and work out with them, where is possible, the impact of the reductions to try to accommodate some of that through attrition, try to streamline some of the people who were already here who may not want to move to the new jobs into vacant existing jobs if they are here in Yellowknife.

So, there will be a series of things done in a caring and compassionate way but we are not in a position today to say

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this amount of jobs are going to go at this date because we have not come to a consensus yet on the staged fronts of responsibilities from this government to the new government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 129-13(5): Transfer of GNWT Employees to Nunavut

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From what the Minister pointed out, is it fair to assume that probably some government or some agency will have to provide administrative services to the Nunavut Government. He has indicated he does not know the number of people who will be transferred over. Is it safe to assume that a smaller amount of people would transfer to Nunavut in the next year that had previously been planned? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 129-13(5): Transfer of GNWT Employees to Nunavut

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, as I said, I am not trying to be evasive. I am just trying to be as accurate as I can. Again, I want to go back. To make statements about x amount of jobs that are going to go I think is inaccurate. We do not know at this stage of the game what the final conclusion will be as to the transition plan that all parties can agree to. We are still working as fast as we can on that. In some ways I wish we had it. We tabled a transition plan in October of 1997. I have not had a single response from any of the departments from any of the other parties. To say I am disappointed is the understatement of the year.

What we are now doing is analyzing the Interim Commissioner's report. We have got to reach consensus with all parties with what we think we can do over the next twelve months and what the jobs that will be necessary, the new jobs that will be necessary that were from Yellowknife over to the eastern Arctic. There will be some. There is no doubt about that. There will be, in my opinion for what it is worth, no sort of massive transfer of staff on April 1, 1999.

I am prepared, once we have concluded an agreement by the parties as to what is going to happen, who is going to go and when, to not only provide that to all Members of the House, we have the responsibility and an obligation to provide that to our staff. We are going to work with the staff to try to accommodate, where possible, the needs of those who do not wish to transfer to Nunavut with their jobs, through attrition and through other jobs and vacancies that may occur here in Yellowknife and elsewhere. There will be a considered effort to minimize the disruption to our staff. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Question 130-13(5): Recruitment Plan for Health Professionals

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services and it relates to the Minister's statement

regarding the status report on the situation in the Keewatin.

The Minister indicated that he would have a plan available so that he could table it in this House by the end of the February for the retention, recruitment of doctors, nurses and medical staff. My question to the Minister is, will the Minister commit to have this plan tabled in the House prior to the closing of this session, so that Members will have the opportunity to review and discuss it in the House?

The reason I bring this up, Mr. Speaker, is that it is possible that this House may close prior to the end of February. I would not want to see the report go on the floor the last day of the session. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 130-13(5): Recruitment Plan for Health Professionals

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, I made the commitment to try to have it tabled before the end of February. I will try my best. As soon as it is ready for debate and discussion, and approved by my Cabinet colleagues, I will table it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 130-13(5): Recruitment Plan for Health Professionals

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister speaks of the possible long-term arrangements and the study that would take place to see what our needs are. Can the Minister tell me what plans or what arrangements have been made for the immediate situation regarding health care in the Keewatin as it relates to the lack of doctors and nurses and so on?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 130-13(5): Recruitment Plan for Health Professionals

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in respect to the immediate situation, it is my understanding that there are sufficient health care professionals and access to physician services and specialist services that would be available to service the people in the Keewatin. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 131-13(5): Availability of Staff Housing

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the past few months in the House and in previous Assemblies we have spoken about this concern about the sell-off of staff

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housing. Because of the increased student enrolments, different divisional boards of education have to hire new teachers. Because we have sold off these houses, there are not the proper accommodations available. So, I am wondering if the Minister in charge of staff housing could inform us of what kind of plans he has put in place to alleviate this nearing crisis situation in staff housing with the school boards and teachers in some of our regions in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 131-13(5): Availability of Staff Housing

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect to my colleague that is a fairly generic question. I wonder if he can be very specific as to the communities and as to where the shortage will be? I will be only too happy to respond to him accordingly. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 131-13(5): Availability of Staff Housing

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not want to go into specifics on which community in particular because there are concerns politically in those small communities where people do not have housing and when you have a shortage of social housing and when you are talking about staff housing. I think the Member is fully aware of the concern. I understand that there might have been something on the news today about a concern in the Kitikmeot region. I heard the same concern in the Baffin region. I am asking the Minister now, what he has done to help this serious situation in regard to the shortage of staff housing, not only for our teachers, but also, for our nursing professionals and our medical professionals who, indeed, have brought this up before. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 131-13(5): Availability of Staff Housing

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am not trying to be evasive but first of all I do not respond to the news. Secondly, as I said, if I can get specifics as to what my honourable colleague is talking about, I would be only too happy to respond. We respond on a day-to-day basis, and a week-to-week basis and a month-to-month basis on shortage of housing. If there is a shortage of housing out there and my honourable colleague is specific, we will answer as quickly as we can, but I think we are dealing with it on a day-to-day basis. I have not heard anybody talk about a major crisis. But if there is, I will be only too happy to handle it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 131-13(5): Availability of Staff Housing

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it is a concern and it has come up in this House many times. Then, my supplementary question to the Minister of Finance, the Minister in charge of staff housing, would he address the concerns of the shortage of housing in our communities here in the

Northwest Territories if he received a letter from the president of the NWTTA, the president of the UNW, other interested groups, boards of education, who have continually, I understand, written? I have seen some letters to the effect of the problems with staffing in our communities. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 131-13(5): Availability of Staff Housing

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Mr. Speaker, I want to assure my honourable colleague that where there is a specific problem we will deal with it in a specific way. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 131-13(5): Availability of Staff Housing

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the specific response to a specific way that a specific Minister just mentioned, I would also like to specify, for my final supplementary question, that when he addresses these concerns in the communities as outlined by the boards of education, and by the health boards, et cetera that maybe he would commit to informing the Members of this House so that we will also be specifically informed of what actions have been taken by the Minister? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 131-13(5): Availability of Staff Housing

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Sure, Mr. Speaker, as I said, I am not trying to be flippant. I mean, if there are all these letters and concerns about the lack of housing, there are always concerns about housing or the lack of housing, et cetera. Maybe my honourable colleague would do me the pleasure of being able to table them in the House

this afternoon because he has time to photocopy them. I would be only too happy to respond to them.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Mr. Roland.

Question 132-13(5): Loss of Staff Housing Revenue

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question would be directed to the Minister responsible for FMBS. The housing issue that was brought to light is an issue that has been ongoing for some time in my community. It has significantly

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impacted the revenue of the Inuvik Regional Health Board, and it has been going on for quite some time. It started back quite some time ago when this government took away the capability of the Inuvik Regional Health Board to collect the revenue from its staff who were in staff housing. Since that time, it has not been returned to them, and that amount of revenue has been reduced on top of the reductions that came about. I would like to know if the Minister has had a chance to review this and what will be done in restoring the levels of funding that were lost because of the revenue situation? Thank you.

--Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 132-13(5): Loss of Staff Housing Revenue

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

First of all, unless the information I am getting across my desk, ... I do not see a housing shortage crisis that relates to staff housing. So, let us be clear. If there is adequate proof and if there are letters I have not seen, I challenge my honourable colleagues to table it in this House. That is the first question. You indicated there was a crisis. The second question about reprofiling dollars into the Department of Health. Mr. Speaker, I apologize. Actually, I did not hear the question very well because my hearing aid was off and I do have a problem with my hearing. I wonder if my honourable colleague could ask the

question again so I may be able to answer it in a direct and concise way. I apologize to him. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Mr. Roland, your first question again.

Supplementary to Question 132-13(5): Loss of Staff Housing Revenue

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, maybe the Minister needs to be wearing a helmet the next time he goes out onto the ice surface.

--Applause

**MR. ROLAND:**

Mr. Speaker, my question was not a crises, but it reminded me of the housing situation the Member from Iqaluit bought up with a situation in Inuvik where the health board has lost revenue because the FMBS has removed their ability to collect the rent for staff housing at that time. The funding has not been returned. They have been trying to work it out for quite some time to restore the revenue that was lost because of the housing situation, the change of responsibilities. I am aware that there has been much work done on it, but it has not been resolved. So, I am wondering if the Minister could inform me if this is being resolved? Will it soon be resolved? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 132-13(5): Loss of Staff Housing Revenue

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I apologize to my colleague for being unable to hear him at the time because I had not pushed the hearing aid quite in. It is in now. Mr. Speaker, to ensure that I give my honourable colleague a concise and accurate response to that very important question, I am afraid I will have to reluctantly, and I say reluctantly, have to take it as notice. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Question 133-13(5): Lahm Ridge Tower Lease

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the honourable Mr. Antoine, Minister of DPW, in regard to the Lahm Ridge Tower Building lease. Mr. Speaker, could the Minister tell me if the lease document that was used for the original lease was, in fact, a standard DPW lease document?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister responsible for Public Works and Services, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 133-13(5): Lahm Ridge Tower Lease

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe it is. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 133-13(5): Lahm Ridge Tower Lease

**MR. STEEN:**

Mr. Speaker, would the Minister then table the standard lease document if the terms to renew on the standard lease document are similar to the ones of the original lease?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 133-13(5): Lahm Ridge Tower Lease

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will table a standard document with the provisions that are in there. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Supplementary, Mr. Steen.

Supplementary To Question 133-13(5): Lahm Ridge Tower Lease

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I am trying to get at here is rather than table the actual lease which might be confidential, could the Minister table a standard lease document if, in fact, the standard lease document terms of renewal of the lease are similar to the ones

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that were on the original lease of Lahm Ridge Tower Building?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 133-13(5): Lahm Ridge Tower Lease

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:**

Thank you. Yes.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 134-13(5): Child Tax Benefit

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the Finance Minister's Budget Address, he talked about the child tax credit. Mr. Speaker, we hear in this House about child poverty, about lack of housing and about the lack of food. I could not agree more than I did with the reply to the Budget Address that Mr. Steen put forward with respect to how we are going to ensure this child tax benefit actually gets to the children that we are trying to help. It is going to go to the parents, we know that. My question is to the Minister of Finance. If this is a federal program, is it too late to use these resources in some other fashion to make certain that the children are the direct beneficiaries of these resources? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 134-13(5): Child Tax Benefit

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For clarity purposes, of course, it is a federal/territorial joint tax credit because we include an additional \$2 million, I believe, into that budget. I have some differences with my colleagues about imposing upon parents, the manner in which they should spend a tax benefit that is rightfully theirs because this government has brought in a budget that improves the right for children. I would have some difficulties, quite frankly, imposing the kind of conditions that my colleague has suggested earlier in the last two days. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 134-13(5): Child Tax Benefit

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The kinds of things suggested in Mr. Steen's remarks and what I had thought of previously when I heard of this tax credit were things like a breakfast program, or a hot meal program in the schools or programs whereby the children are the absolute direct beneficiaries of the program as opposed to going to the parents. Now, I understand if you have a differing philosophy on that, but the fact remains true that children are living in poverty, but it is not always necessary for lack of funds. What I am asking is, is there any provision where any of this money could be redirected into other programs that we would be more assured would directly benefit the children of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Further Return To Question 134-13(5): Child Tax Benefit

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

No, Mr. Speaker. The position of myself and my colleagues is that the budget we initially announced in the manner which we see it being disbursed, we would not, at this time, see changing that. I am advised by my colleagues that there are programs out there like Brighter Futures, et cetera, that provide some of the services that my honourable colleagues are asking today and my honourable colleague, Mr. Steen, asked earlier. I would have to say at this time that I would not see us making any major adjustments to this policy and to the manner in which we distribute

the money to the children and to the parents. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 134-13(5): Child Tax Benefit

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Then I would ask the Minister, what about other funds that may be available to provide education? If parents are going to receive more money and have more family income to spend, I think there is a need in the Northwest Territories for education with respect to parenting, providing nutritional foods, a lot of different areas that would benefit children. Are there any other resources available for that type of thing? So, the parents get more money, but now can we assist them in spending it more wisely? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 134-13(5): Child Tax Benefit

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

The Department of Finance certainly is not about to determine how parents should spend their monies given through a tax credit. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. My understanding from talking with some of my colleagues is that there are other educational social programs available to assist parents. Not all parents are incapable of looking after their children. There may be a minority. I do not know. I am really not one to judge how parents spend their money. Our position is that we provide a tax benefit to those who are less fortunate, who desperately need it. The approach, I believe, we should take - and maybe it is a personal one, but it is something I believe - is that ultimately the responsibility for people's children lie with the parents. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 134-13(5): Child Tax Benefit

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will save the debate with the Minister of Finance for how people take care of their children for another day. There are all kinds of indicators in our northern society that children are suffering and need more support and if this government has the ability to provide that, either directly to them or through their parents

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and through education programs, then I would support it. I will save that debate for another day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 135-13(5): DIAND Minister's Attention to the North

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier. It relates to the statement I made earlier regarding the need for the Minister of Northern Affairs to spend more time here in the territories and pay more attention to our needs here in the territories on the economic development side. The Premier was very eloquent on the radio this morning with his statements about that need as well. I wonder if the Premier could tell us if he will address this issue with the Minister of Northern Affairs and pass on the comments. We respect the fact that she does have a heavy commitment and a necessity to do so to the aboriginal affairs portfolio, but there is also a need here in the territories for us to be able to access her and to have her time. Will the Premier address this issue with the Minister of Northern Affairs? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 135-13(5): DIAND Minister's Attention to the North

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government is on record already as saying we are very pleased with the appointment of Jane Stewart as Minister of Indian Affairs. We find her very easy to work with, and so far all the meetings that we have had with her, and I have had several in Ottawa as well as up here, she has paid attention to the Northwest Territories. As far as my understanding, Jane Stewart as the Minister of Indian Affairs, comes from the same direction as this government does. She believes that people should be making their own decisions. She believes in a highly decentralized government. She believes that northerners are capable of making their own decisions, and we will work with her to make sure northerners do start making their own decisions on oil, gas and mineral development in the Northwest Territories. We are working to a common goal of putting northerners in charge of northerners. Hopefully, we can do that in a very short order.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 135-13(5): DIAND Minister's Attention to the North

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not want to leave the impression that I do not think Minister Stewart is doing her job. I think she is, but there is a difficulty facing her because of the tremendous demands on aboriginal affairs, and we also need her time. I wonder if the Minister could tell us his outlook on the northern accord process because that is ultimately, of course, the answer. Can he tell us a bit more about that?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 135-13(5): DIAND Minister's Attention to the North

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have already approached the Minister of Indian Affairs on this issue on devolution, as well as the territorial government taking on more responsibility. Our staff is now working with the Minister's staff, and they have, I believe, hired an outside person to look at evaluating the jobs that are in Ottawa, of transferring those jobs,

for example, of mine and oil and gas to Yellowknife, maybe fisheries to Hay River, jobs that are basically being carried out in Ottawa on behalf of the Northwest Territories. We are looking as a first step of doing that and then moving on to the devolution process. The devolution process is also tied in with our constitutional development in the western Arctic. Basically what northerners will have to sit down and decide amongst ourselves is can we work together; can we respect each other and do that for the common good of all northern people? I believe we have the capability of doing that, Mr. Speaker. Hopefully, we will come to a conclusion soon on how we, as northerners, especially in the western Arctic, can develop a paper that lays out the ground rules on how we can work together and manage our own resources. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 135-13(5): DIAND Minister's Attention to the North

**MR. OOTES:**

Yes, I can appreciate the Minister may wish to tie it to the constitutional development. Could the Minister tell us, because it will take two to three years in the interim, if he will ask the Minister to address the issue of support for the mineral industry, for example, and incentives for mining and exploration work?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 135-13(5): DIAND Minister's Attention to the North

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had met with the Minister prior to Christmas, and I have raised that issue already about support for our mineral industry, oil and gas industry and support in general for development of the Northwest Territories. I also will be, in a very short period, within the next month, signing an MOU with the province of Alberta similar to the one we have signed with the province of Manitoba to get our southern provincial jurisdiction, especially the western jurisdictions, on side with us to help us to convince Ottawa to devolve the rest of the powers to the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 135-13(5): DIAND  
Minister's Attention to the North

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**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you. Just a clarification. Is the Premier stating he is getting the western Premiers to support the territorial position and has he got those Premiers on side?

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 135-13(5): DIAND  
Minister's Attention to the North

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Previously we have had all the Premiers in the western provinces in full support of the territorial government's position on devolution, as well as roads to resources, infrastructure for the north so that we can be part of Canada, we can look at developing as the future frontier in this country. We have had that support. That support has come out mostly, Mr. Speaker, in communiqué from western Premiers' conferences. Now we are looking at the next step of actually signing agreements with Alberta as an MOU so that they will come out, in more stronger words, in support of the Northwest Territories. I feel confident that we will be able to accomplish that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Oral questions. Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 136-13(5): Monitoring Boards of  
Management

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services that is in regard to health boards and some of the situations that are before us today. This government has made a significant commitment to transferring resources,

authorities and responsibilities to health boards, but clearly there have been problems. A number of years ago in my riding, for instance, we had an administrator for a short period of time. There were some problems in Inuvik, Baffin and the Keewatin. The question to the Minister is, there is a concern that the boards themselves may be having some difficulty, but is the Minister satisfied that since this is such a significant shift that, in fact, there is proper monitoring, support, evaluation and training for boards in place from the department to the boards? Are we learning from our mistakes so that we can, in fact, anticipate improvement? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 136-13(5): Monitoring Boards of  
Management

**HON. KELVIN NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I had said last fall, after the issues came up in the Baffin and the Keewatin, we recognized that we needed, as a government, as a ministry, to develop monitoring and evaluation units within the department to work with boards and to continually be monitoring the situations at the board level to ensure that those types of problems did not escalate to the point where they would impact on the services and the programs being delivered by the boards. So yes, we recognize that. We have, as I indicated, now finalized the establishment of that unit, I understand, and it will be an ongoing process in providing supports to boards, as well, in the areas, particularly the way I see it some of the recruitment and retention issues and the supports to the staff at the regional board levels. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I recognize the need and we will continue to make efforts along those lines. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, replies to the budget address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Antoine.

**ITEM 14: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS**

Tabled Document 23-13(5): Lease - Lahm Ridge  
Tower

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:**

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Leasing the Lahm Ridge Tower. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 12-13(5): Approval of Formula Financing Agreement

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, January 30, 1998 I will move the following motion.

Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member from Nahendeh that the Legislative Assembly hereby approves Tabled Document 18-13(5), Formula Financing Agreement. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 17: MOTIONS

Motion 11-13(5): Referral of Tabled Document 19-13(5) Guidelines for Implementing Public/Private Partnerships to Committee of the Whole

**MR. OOTES:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife North, that Tabled Document 19-13(5), Guidelines for Implementing Public/Private Partnerships, be moved into committee of the whole for consideration.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called? All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 8,

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Committee Report 2-13(5), Committee Report 3-13(5), Committee Report 4-13(5), Committee Report 5-13(5), and Tabled Document 15-13(5). With Mr. Steen in the chair.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

I call the committee to order. For consideration in the committee of the whole, we have Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99; Committee Report 2-13(5); Committee Report 3-13(5); Committee Report 4-13(5); Committee Report 5-13(5); Tabled Document 15-13(5) and Tabled Document 19-13(5), P3 guidelines. Mr. Ootes, could you give me some direction on how the committee wishes to proceed?

**MR. OOTES:**

Yes, Mr. Chairman, I move that we consider Tabled Document 15-13(5); followed by Bill 8, Appropriations Act and Committee Report 2-13(5), and when we are considering Bill 8, Appropriations Act that we continue with the Executive offices followed by Financial Management Board Secretariat and Aboriginal Affairs. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Does the committee agree? Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Mr. Chairman, I am slightly confused. I thought yesterday we had gotten to the detail on the Department of the Executive. Is my honourable colleague now saying that we are not going to continue with that, and we are going to leave that in abeyance and go back to some other document?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Mr. Todd, it is my understanding that the committee would open the floor for comments on Budget Address, and then if there are none, we would revert back into Bill 8, Executive offices. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Mr. Chairman, I sat in this House for six years and I tell you, it just changes by the minute. Anyway, Mr. Chairman, fair enough.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd, for your comments, but I believe I have a majority consensus that this is the way we will proceed. After a 15-minute break, we will proceed in that manner. Thank you.

--Break

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

I would like to call the committee back to order. We have before us for consideration Tabled Document 15-13(5) which is the Budget Address for 1998-99. Are there any more general comments on this particular item? Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

My question is in regard to the private partners arrangement that has been tabled in the budget. There has to be some way of monitoring exactly how it is going to play out in regard to having some regulated in such a way we know exactly who is receiving these arrangements and also how the benefits are going to flow directly to the communities, especially in regard to the construction of the school in Fort McPherson where the big push there was to ensure that we have as many jobs generated from such a facility being built and ensuring the monies stay within the geographical region in regard to purchasing of materials, the generation of jobs and looking at a way of training the individuals in the smaller communities where we have high unemployment in the area of taking on apprentice programs when these opportunities come along and going for their journeyman tickets. I would like to ask the Minister in regard to the proposal, is there going to be criteria put there to ensure the communities will benefit to the maximum on any of these projects that take place within the ridings and the communities that these opportunities will happen? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Before I ask the Minister to respond, I would just like to remind Members that we have Tabled Document 19-13(5) which is the P3 guidelines. This particular type of question may also be posed at that time, but as it is mentioned in the

Budget Address, I will put forward the question to the Minister? Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well said, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the P3 policy that we have developed will operate under the same conditions as we operate under now which are conditions like the business incentive policy, like training and employment, like incentives for acquisition of local, both employment and services. I am fairly confident, Mr. Speaker, that at the end of the day, this new initiative will actually bring about more economic benefits for the communities, based upon the fact that the current Business Incentive Program, I am told that 94 percent of the monies we spend under the BIP are northern businesses. So we are optimistic that the P3, while as I have said on a number of occasions is not a panacea for all our economic woes, will in fact merely add to the existing fine policies that this government has put in place to ensure that northerners benefit from its spending. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the whole construction industry I think one area we should concentrate our efforts on in regard to the possibility of looking toward 1,000 new houses and the whole area of the manufacturer industries that we have the potential of in a lot of our smaller communities. I am talking about the riding I represent where we do have timber resources that could be used to make a lot of these products locally and also generate a local industry, especially where we have high unemployment. In regard to the manufacturer businesses that do presently exist in Yellowknife and Hay River that are making door frames, windows, siding for buildings; I think that has to be looked at in context of these new opportunities, not only the P3 but also the whole housing industry has to look at the possibility of bringing down the cost of importing a lot of these goods and manufacturing them locally.

In regard to that area and the spin-offs that will come from that sector, I would like to ask the Minister exactly how does he see that fitting into the overall picture of these new initiatives?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to remind my colleague the \$40 or \$50 million we have assigned to build new housing is in the form of the expanded HAP program and where we are actually providing, if you want, the equity for a number of people who perhaps are not in a position to afford the equity or for that matter afford a conventional long-term mortgage. The conditions that currently exist where we provide expanded EDAP grants will remain in place for this new initiative. My understanding is there are both incentives and encouragements for the utilization of northern manufactured products.

The choice of where people purchase them or how they build their houses will be up to the individual purchaser. While we are putting up, if you want, the front-end equity in the form of a grant, they have also got to seek the long-term debt from mortgage organizations, banks, et cetera. Like the P3, I am confident that this new initiative will accomplish what we want it to. That is to create, to provide if you want, an opportunity of approximately 1,000 houses. We are currently in a shortfall of about 4,500 across the territories. To people who have the capability to afford a long term mortgage or a partial long-term mortgage, it will also provide some economic stimulus in terms of employment and purchasing of goods both northern and southern goods. We will continue to monitor, as we currently do, where the money is spent to try to ensure we get maximum northern benefits from this very important initiative of putting more private housing stock into the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the expenditure of the P3 initiative and also the other initiatives we have such as the housing proposal, will there be a limit on the expenditures of this government in regard to so much percent of the overall budget will be spent in that particular envelope at any one time or will there be a limit on how much we can spend in that particular area because, as you

know the social envelope is still sky rocketing as to exceeding the 60 percent level of the overall budget? Is there going to be a cap on the costs of this program and the cost of the other programs in the budgets so we know there will be an actual percentage or amount allocated at any one time to this particular initiative that we do not exceed that amount?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Do you wish to respond, Mr. Todd?

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. Under the P3, I believe, in my budget speech we had projected we would like to increase our overall capital expenditures for infrastructure to the tune of over and above what we are currently spending, about \$140 million a year, by about another \$100 million in each year. We believe at this stage of the game and looking at the affordability issue in terms of the cost to service that \$100 million that we have the capabilities to do that at this time. So that would be the top end, we would be looking at it, somewhere around \$100 million in P3 projects this year and next year.

On the housing, it is fairly clear we feel that - remember we have to borrow those monies and it means monies that are borrowed that we have to pay back - it is somewhere in the region of \$40 to \$50 million that will meet some of the requirements of the shortage of housing we have for many of our residents across the territories. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the way this program is going to be delivered, what kind of assurances can the communities have that there is going to be some portion of these monies allocated to any particular community or riding? Is there going to be a way that we know for a fact that not one region or one riding is going to be left out in the cold with nothing in that particular riding? Is there some means of ensuring that will be done so it will be of some comfort? In a lot of communities they have not seen any major infrastructure projects for a number of years which has had an effect on all our communities and I think there has to be some assurance made to, not only to ourselves in the House, but to the public

out there that the communities will receive some way of knowing that there will be some percentage of these monies allocated to each of our ridings and communities we represent.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you. I was just looking at my good friend, Mr. Picco, combing his hair. He looks very charming. Mr. Chairman, if I may, as I indicated in my budget speech, what we are having our Ministers and deputy ministers do, as we speak, is to re-examine the current capital budget, which is in the region of \$140 million to see if, in fact, some of these projects could end up being Public/Private Partnerships projects. We are fast-tracking and looking at the long-term five-year capital plan to see what new projects would fall under the category and criteria that we have set under the P3 policy. I am hopeful at the end of the day there will be transparency and equity in terms of where the money is spent. I have made a commitment to the House that I am prepared to table all the P3 projects for public consumption so that everybody sees where the money is going and what projects they are involved with. I am confident that the concerns that my honourable colleague has with respect to fairness and equity will be answered at that time. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Your time is up Mr. Krutko. I recognize Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and good afternoon. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make some comments on the Budget Address as tabled by Mr. Todd. I understand that the food allowance rates have not changed since 1992, despite the changes to the road and our food supply services in many of our communities, over the years. This government is going to make \$1 million available to adjust the rates paid for food within the Income Support Programs, as announced

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by Mr. Todd. He is hoping that this will ensure that communities are placed within their proper food cost zones. These funds will ensure that additional financial support, as envisioned by Mr. Todd, is

available to purchase food for northern families. I understand that a cost breakdown on the \$1 million available based on the food basket itself is only about \$30 per family. I wonder where Mr. Todd, when he was doing his budget address, came up with the figure of \$1 million? Did he prorate it based on the new cost food zones or did he actually look at re-basing the amount and just arbitrarily came up with \$1 million? That it is a concern. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Yes, Mr. Chairman, with my honourable colleague, Mr. Dent, who was the co-sponsor of this additional resource, of course. If I may qualify, there are some fiscal limitations that I have to operate under and, of course, there is no pot of gold, as we would all like, at the end of the rainbow, Mr. Chairman. There were some limitations to what we have to do and where we had to assign it. We looked very closely at where monies were being spent, what the value of the food basket was in some of the communities. Mr. Dent's department is working to try to make the appropriate adjustments. Based on what I felt we had in the budget, I assigned \$1 million to that particular policy initiative with the hope that it would provide some assistance to those most in need. Now, a common concern would be, why did you not provide more? The reality is that, I think I said earlier on, and Mr. Dent said the same thing, in an ideal world we would like to be able to do that, but this is not an ideal world. We are working under still very difficult fiscal conditions. This was a number that we felt we could live with. I felt we could fiscally manage. In some small way both Mr. Dent and myself felt that this would provide some assistance to those most in need, not perfect by any means. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I suppose the Minister is saying then that the \$1 million is an arbitrary amount brought forward because of the lack of monies available. The whole idea behind having an increase in the food allowance, Mr. Chairman, is that nutritional food is critical to disease prevention,

healthy development and children's school performance. That is a direct quote, Mr. Chairman, out of Mr. Todd's own budget address. We have been able to find money for other things in this government which have been recommended for, and against in this House. For example, it was recommended not to do a POL study. We spent a quarter of a million dollars on it. We have another study from this government called the Med-Emerg Report which was \$750,000 that has been slam-dunked and put on a shelf and forgotten except for two recommendations. Two hundred and fifty thousand and 250, to me makes up another \$1 million. So, I would like some type of commitment from the Minister today that he would again look at and readdress the \$1 million put into income support. If we were going to say something, let us demonstrate it with me. I know the Minister, as he said, only had \$1 million but it seems like we can always find other monies from other places for schemes, or programs or ideas that Cabinet, or the Executive or the government as a whole comes up with. I would ask the Minister would he again, hopefully, if there is some slippage in some areas that he would try to rebase the income food allowance support by more than \$1 million?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, I concur with my honourable colleague that in the current situation of those who are less well off, you would like to be able to provide the dollars in an ideal world that would make life a little better for them. We, Mr. Dent and myself, felt that this was a start not necessarily an end, that the department statistics that they are currently working on trying to determine costs in every community. Quite frankly, I would suggest to you that if there was the capability down the road, if our fiscal framework gets in order and if there is an ability to move monies into areas of those in most need, of which I have been an advocate since I started in this job -- and the budgets have reflected that if one carefully analyses not only where the cuts went, but where the spending has gone -- we will do that. It is unfortunate that in tough, difficult times you cannot necessarily answer all the fiscal requirements of your constituency. But I think this is a start. It is clearly a recognition by the government, by Mr. Dent's department, that something has to be done, as we indicated in the speech, nothing has been done since 1992.

I think it is also important to point out that the NWT child benefit will also assist the poor, in which my honourable colleague had a significant role. It was his comments many months ago that raised the concern about low income families and was this government prepared to be sensitive to some policy changes and we responded. I applaud him for his efforts in raising the profile of the NWT child benefit need. Between the Child Benefit Program we have put in place, the additional \$2 million we added to the federal commitment, along with the million dollars in the food basket, I think in some small way this will assist those who are less fortunate in our constituencies and certainly my honourable colleague, Mr. Dent, has made it clear to me that he would be only too pleased to do more and he is studying that at this time. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for his accolades and I also thank the Minister for his commitment to review the amount if fiscal priorities change so that he may be able to rebase it. I would look forward to that and I will be watching it. My second question today on the Budget Address concerns the need to address social housing. The new scheme that has been presented in the budget address is trying to put more people into homeownership. Over the past several months I have been bringing out concerns now that, indeed, we have almost saturated the marketplace with people who actually can afford to sustain a mortgage, but nowhere, Mr. Chairman, nowhere have we looked at addressing the need for new social housing. Now, I had addressed this concern in a letter to the Housing Minister

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several months ago where I actually came up with, I thought, a good idea to look at the building of new social housing.

I am wondering now when the Minister put together his budget address, how come he did not tackle the issue of new social housing? I do not want to keep hearing that the federal government backed out of it four years ago. We are able to fund other things under the P3 Program. Is there a way, for example, that the Minister for Housing, the Minister of Finance,

can say to a private developer we need 30 new social housing units, 2 or 3 bedroom apartments. We will be leasing these from you and doing the same type of deal that he is doing with the P3 for other corporate structures? There must be a way, Mr. Chairman, that we can get people in need into social housing. When we look at the need for housing, Mr. Todd just talked about, of those 4,500 that are needed, I understand that 80 percent of those houses are in the social program area. They are social housing. They are not private housing. What are we going to do about that? Yes, thank you, Mr. Miltenberger, the majority of them are in the east. I thank you for that Mr. Miltenberger. So, that is my question for the Minister, why did he not address it? Is he going to address it? With his fiscal abilities to come up with these wonderful ideas of tax credits, the Aurora Fund and all these other wonderful things, I am sure he could come up with an idea to build new social housing. Then, we can say he was a man.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Your time is up by the way, but I will ask the Minister to respond. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

If life was as easy as Mr. Picco so frequently implies on the other side. Of course, this is the same Member that wanted me to cut the budget and deficit in one year rather than the two that it took us. Can I answer the question or not, Mr. Chairman?

Whether my honourable colleague likes it or not, I live in the world of fiscal pragmatic reality and the federal government has a fiscal and fiduciary responsibility to aboriginal people in the providing of social housing. I have a \$12 million surplus. Where would my colleague like me to take the \$200 million I need to build the social housing needs of the people in the Northwest Territories? We simply do not have the fiscal capability, neither are we responsible for it. The federal government has the responsibility. They cut the budget \$43, \$45 million four or five years ago. My honourable colleague, Mr. Arlooktoo, has spent months trying to negotiate with our federal colleagues in an effort to try to find the kinds of social housing funds that are required to meet the legitimate concerns that my colleague raises. We are trying, and it is not a perfect solution, but this is not a perfect world. We are trying through this initiative of trying to move people out of social housing, who have the capability to service a mortgage out of the social

housing so we can put the people who are desperate for social housing into social housing.

It is only a small measure I agree, it is only a small measure, but it is one small measure that we have to take. On the other hand, some people are accessing private developers. It is happening in my honourable colleague's riding where social income support clients are using a developer's facilities, of course, that comes out of my honourable colleague, Mr. Dent's budget, so in the end it costs the government. We are working hard to try to find some solutions. We are still negotiating hard with our federal counterparts. I think it would be fair to say that we were disappointed that the Royal Commission did not explicitly, as my colleague here says, identify social housing for the Northwest Territories like it identified for on-reserve Indian bands. There was some disappointment there. But the reality is, Mr. Chairman, that the fiscal resources nor the responsibility is simply not there. Now that is not to say that we should not be trying to make some constructive effort to look at creative ways in which to do it. I think that is what we are trying to do. I think we are trying very hard to do that but is not a simple case of realigning resources that we do not have. So, in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would say to my colleague that while our initiatives are not perfect, they are a small way of trying to make some minor dent in a very difficult issue. Discussions are still underway with our federal counterparts as to their responsibility and we are going to continue, myself, Mr. Arlooktoo and Mr. Dent, to look at new and creative ways where we can find some way to alleviate the difficult housing shortage we have on the social housing side. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. I have general comments on the Budget Address, Tabled Document 15-13(5). Mr. Picco, before I recognize you, I would like to remind Members that generally ten minutes is allowed per Member for general comments. I have had ten minutes for you, but if the other Members agree, and I do not have anybody else on the list, we could proceed with further questions. Any objection to proceeding further with this type of...Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Mr. Chairman, we have heard Mr. Picco now at some length yesterday, today and the day before, and I think the day before as well, on the Budget Address. I would suggest we should proceed with the Executive and we would give Mr. Picco an additional new arena

to express his various astute and cogent points of view.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Is that the wishes of the Members? Mr. Morin? Is that the wishes of the Members? Agreed. Thank you. I will then move on to the next item on the agenda which is Bill 8, the Appropriation Act, 1998-99. We left off on Executive offices, activity summary, operations and maintenance, activity summary Cabinet Secretariat, operations and maintenance and total operations and maintenance \$5,607,000 million. But before I proceed, I would like to invite the Minister to take the witness stand. Would you like to bring in witnesses, Mr. Morin?

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, yes.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

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**MR. SPEAKER:**

Would the Sergeant-at-Arms bring in the witnesses? Thank you. For the record, Mr. Morin, would you like to introduce your witness?

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dave Waddell, director of corporate services. Mr. Chairman, I also have two answers from yesterday.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, and welcome to the Committee. Please proceed, Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

I had two answers to questions from yesterday. I promised to give those answers today.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Okay, Mr. Morin. Perhaps we could start that way, but we did leave off with Mr. Krutko who had a question on the floor and I will allow him to repeat his question. Perhaps after Mr. Krutko is finished you could then read out your responses. But since Mr. Krutko is not available to answer questions or to ask the question, perhaps it would be appropriate for the Minister to read out his responses to questions from yesterday.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Response to a question regarding two public utility boards. It is currently proposed that there will be two separate public utility boards established as a result of the creation of two new territories, one for the Western Territory and one for the Nunavut Territory. These boards would form a single panel, when necessary, to address issues surrounding the NWT Power Corporation that affect both territories. Thank you.

As well, vacant positions on the Department of the Executive, the following eight positions are currently vacant within the Executive: Commissioner's office; executive assistant, it is staffed with a casual; regulatory reform, project specialist, staffing is pending; corporate services, data entry and admin clerk, staffing pending; corporate services, director's secretary, staffing pending; Cabinet Secretariat, YK policy advisor, staffing pending; Cabinet Secretariat, Iqaluit, director of corporate affairs, staffing pending; Personnel Secretariat, senior manager on hold; Personnel Secretariat, officer on hold. Once we have the recommendations of the senior management committee, we will staff those last two positions. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Morin. I would like to now return to Mr. Krutko's question. Mr. Krutko, you had a question on the floor, you want to repeat it?

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to know, can the department look at the possibility of finding funds to assist those in my constituency from organizations affected when you deal with bilateral arrangements, say in the case of the Gwich'in and the Inuit who originate from Alaska through the Yukon and into the territories. I would like to know if there is

a possibility of assistance, or funds, or some sort of a contribution arrangement that these groups may be able to seek in regard to intergovernmental affairs to be able to assist organizations such as the ones I represent. So if there is anything in the budget, through O and M or someone within the department who is a salary paid employee if they can assist an organization such as the ones I represent.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Morin do you want to respond?

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our Department of the Executive is very limited in funding. Our funding is specifically for the Women's Secretariat and those meetings that surround that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):**

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Premier tell me if any funds or contribution arrangements have been made between other organizations in regard to the circumpolar conferences that have taken place over the years and has there been any assistance from this government in regard to such conferences?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my personal knowledge, no, but I will look into that to see if there was funding used in the past few years for funding other organizations around the circumpolar world to go to the other regions. I will find out. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Premier assist me or make an attempt to assist with regard to the possibility of opening up links between the different aboriginal people, especially in northern Canada, with regard to the cooperation and coordination of efforts

between the different jurisdictions? I do not think we should be putting up roadblocks or that the aboriginal people who have been here for thousands of years have to abide to one law over the other. We should be opening up the doors, like what we are doing with the international initiatives the Premier has been on, in regard to Team Canada trips; but also, we should be bringing down barriers between aboriginal groups so that they can start working closer together. Is there a possibility or a way that the Minister can help in bringing down these barriers especially between the different jurisdictions, in regard to Alaska, the Yukon and also the Northwest Territories? Can the Premier look at the possibility of taking a serious look at this item and see if there is anything he can do, and this government, to avoid these barriers? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not aware of any barriers that were put up as a government of inter-reaction between for example, the Gwich'in Nation, whether it is in the Yukon, Northwest Territories or Alaska, for example, again, Treaty 8, whether it is in Alberta, BC or Northwest Territories. Most of those inter-reactions are driven

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by the aboriginal organizations. We have always written letters of support to the Prime Minister or whatever, for any aboriginal organization, when requested. We could do that. I would have to get more specific information from the Member and take it on a case by case basis.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe on some of the items, in case the Premier is not aware, is the whole Gwich'in and Porcupine concerns, with regard to the 10-02 lands in Alaska, which basically arise out of that caribou herd, which travels between three jurisdictions. It is one of the main food consumptions of the Gwich'in in the Northwest Territories. So, whatever happens to that herd in Alaska will have a bearing on the people of the Northwest Territories. That is one issue. The other area that can be

possibly looked at, is the economics of trading barriers between the different aboriginal groups in Alaska, and the Yukon, to being able to trade across the boundary between the United States and Canada, the ability of trading gifts or bringing items from Canada into Alaska, which is part of the United States.

There are international agreements in regard to the restriction of certain animal products and restriction in regard to fur items and things like that, which could be possibly looked at by this government. So, when you do meet on these trade missions between Canada and the United States and talk about Free Trade, this could be one of the issues you could assist with, through the Prime Minister of Canada, by making him aware these issues are still a barrier on aboriginal people in Canada. So, when there is a lobbying effort by aboriginal groups as a whole regardless of where they live, their concerns will be taken into account.

So those are some of the items I was talking about that this government can seriously look at in regard to assisting these groups when we talk about bilateral arrangements between the jurisdictions.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chair. You raised a good point. I have raised that issue with the Prime Minister before as well as other Premiers have on the whole issue on Canada signing treaties with other countries and not involving the provincial jurisdictions or the people it affects. So I know that he is committed to involvement of provincial jurisdictions. Also on the whole thing of inter-trade between for example, Yukon and the Northwest Territories. The whole issue of the Porcupine Caribou herd would fall under the Department of RWED as well as economic initiatives under RWED. They must be involved in that already and if they are not, we would encourage them to be involved in that.

When the Minister gets back to town, I will request him to meet with you, Mr. Krutko, so that you can bring him up to steam on those issues or he can let you know what his department is doing on those issues. Okay.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. We are reviewing 1998-1999 main estimates, activity summary, Cabinet Secretariat. I have Mr. Picco, but Mr. Picco has spoken earlier and Mr. Steen has not. Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There appears to be a lack of policy in place whereby this government would respond to a crisis or near crisis situations in the regions and assist boards to resolve issues before they get out of hand. Based on questions I had in the House recently, I have come to the conclusion there is no real policy in place. I am wondering if the Premier would confirm, first of all, that there is no policy in place.

Second, would he consider establishing a policy and perhaps putting in place an emergency response team or quick response team, whatever you want to call it, of managers under Cabinet direction, possibly under the Cabinet Secretariat, whereby this group would move in at a certain time and assist with problems arising in the regions?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chair. One of the problems we do have, Mr. Steen, is the coordination in the region of the regional management. We have tried in the past to have one regional superintendent chair the meeting and then rotate it so the responsibility rotates of the regional issues. That has worked out but not as well as we hoped. It does not justify to have a full-time coordination position like a regional director per se in the region. What I have instructed my secretary to Cabinet to do is to pool the regional managers and that should be happening now. Look at their capabilities and choose one regional manager. He will be the regional chair, whether it be a MACA regional manager or RWED. Wherever they come from, they will be the regional chair. That will provide the secretary to Cabinet with information and advice on regional issues. So, that is my direct line of communication into the regions. That possibly will straighten out the lack of that communication. Every other department has that, but we as Executive do not. It does not justify having a full blown PY. What we would do is choose one regional manager, top up his wage to take on that extra responsibility as chair to coordinate. It also coordinates some other

activities that do not have regional representation such as justice. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Mr. Chairman, I guess what I was looking at was more like, I was not thinking so much of regional managers or regional directors, I was thinking more in the line of a group of managers, so to speak, maybe one from Financial Management Board as far as finance is concerned, maybe one from health, one from education, at the managerial level. What appears to be needed would be the ability to make decisions when they get down there including removing certain board members if it is necessary, thereby establishing again a service of some sort. In other words, I am referring to quite high level of managerial positions that will have the authority and ability to move into troubled areas and on quick notice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know through empowerment and through the transfer of authority to regional boards, education boards, health boards, empowering communities, everyone knew that was what the political will of this House was to do. The political will of the people was to carry that out, get the decision-making closer to home. We all knew too that would not happen without some mistakes made. Even in a highly centralized government, mistakes have been made. So there would be a learning curve. I believe our first utmost responsibility is to make sure those boards do have proper training so there would be less chance of those mistakes. Mr. Steen brings up a very good idea that I would like to look into. I have not given it a lot of thought in that perspective. I would like to look into that idea.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Well on another item, Mr. Chairman, I would like to question the Premier on the Personnel Secretariat. This particular secretariat, would they be the department involved for, say, any fraud or embezzlement going on in any department of the government?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, that would fall under FMBS and FMBS has regional people out there already. Any investigation like that into money or whatever is under FMBS.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wonder how high up the corporate ladder would FMBS be allowed to do investigations or I understand it would be the FMBS that would then, I suppose, involve the RCMP if it was necessary. How far up the corporate ladder does this apply? Does it apply right to deputy minister level?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chair. It would go right to the very top, deputy minister level.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. We are reviewing Cabinet Secretariat on page 2-12. If there are no further comments shall we go line by line? Operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$5,607,000. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I noticed yesterday the Premier had indicated under the area of Personnel Secretariat some of the things being considered was the overall coordination of affirmative action planning and coordinating casual summer student hiring staffing. Considering the fact that it is not too long

now when the students will be coming back to the north and will be requiring jobs to assist them, I was wondering if the Premier could elaborate a little bit on the summer student hiring. We had requested that we have a central hiring agency. Is this what the Minister is indicating through this coordinating casual summer student hiring?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I have told Members in the past, we are looking at the whole role of the Personnel Secretariat and how it could be changed. I had committed to coming back. We do have a senior management committee. We do have recommendations that are going there in the near future. Some of the potential functions for the essential human resource group would be to support human resource planning for the GNWT, provide overall coordination of affirmative action planning, coordinate casual and summer student staff, in support to human resource part of the transition to two territories, provide specialized expertise for the staffing process, coordinate management development and succession training and review the revised policies and procedures as needed. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the things that they are considering, could he elaborate a little bit in the area of the summer student hiring?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The senior management committee, just to elaborate, will review the recommendations and coordinate casual and summer student staffing. It means to me that there would be one place to go so the student could go there and look for a job, and then if there is a job in RWED, transportation or whatever, they could find out through that one spot of coordination. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus are you okay on that?

Committee Motion 4-13(5): Analysis of the Transfer of Human Resource Administration Functions to Departments

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Mr. Chairman, also in the area of personnel, the Standing Committee on Government Operations had been concerned with the dissolution of the Department of Personnel taking away some functions. There was supposed to be financial savings, but we were not absolutely convinced of this because it seems now that there may be just as many or more people working in the personnel area within the various departments. Because of that, the committee has decided we wanted to make a motion that would ask for some analysis. With that, Mr. Chairman,

I move that this Committee recommends that an analysis of the transfer of human resource administration functions to the departments from the Department of Personnel be undertaken to quantify the net results in terms of expenditures and efficiency. This analysis should include the following:

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1. A comparison of the funding required by all departments to administer the human resource function in relation to the funding previously required to operate the Department of Personnel;
2. A list of the responsibilities that were transferred to the Financial Management Board Secretariat from the Department of Personnel;
3. An analysis of the additional funds now being spent by boards and agencies as a result of this change in service delivery;
4. Information as to the present number of employees by department and region required for the human resource function compared to the numbers previously employed by the Department of Personnel. This should include employees at the board and agency level.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Questions. I will ring the bell. Thank you. The question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$5,607,000. Agreed. Do I hear agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Total expenditures, \$5,607,000, Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Page 2-13, Public Utilities Board, operation and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$482,000. Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is the Premier agreeing that I ask the question? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A question I have of the Premier is, I certainly understand that the monies allocated here for the Public Utilities Board are to carry on the functions of the Public Utilities Board until March 31, 1999. This utilities board can continue to be one or either of the two boards that follow. Will it be one of the two boards that follow and where will the funds come to set up the second board for Nunavut? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The funding comes out whatever we negotiate with the federal government, the same as all the rest of the Nunavut funding. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will this second board be set up prior to April 1, 1999?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not know that yet. We cannot make a commitment on that yet.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

It just seems a little strange. I believe there are other departments that are setting up shop well before April 1, 1999. I am wondering if that is the best planning that the Executive has, that they do not know at this stage whether they are going to have a second board set up. I believe they know they are going to have a second board set up, but they do not know when or where the money is coming from. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, the head of the Executive office, Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is all part of the planning and transitional costs and the planning and transition for the creation of two new territories. The Member should be well aware of that. Hopefully, if everything comes into place on the creation of the two new territories, this board will be set up prior to April 1, 1999 and in place. I am not going to sit here and say it will happen guaranteed because I am not too sure of that. We will try our best.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

The Public Utilities Board. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is in regard to the 39 percent increase in O and M. Could you tell us why there is \$100,000 increase in that part of the budget?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There were four positions and we eliminated two positions and we moved the money to contract positions. If they are needed there will be \$39,000 available for contract positions, 39 percent increase.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You said if they are needed. Basically, there are used on an as and when needed basis in regard to when there are public hearings or what is the purpose of these short-term contracts?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is for when there are rate reviews, public hearings, consultants providing advice prior to those rate reviews, issues such as this, such as, on an as-and-when needed basis, instead of having full-time people there. You do not need full-time people. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance. We are

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considering or reviewing, Public Utilities Board. Total operations and maintenance, \$482,000. Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is \$41,000 less in salaries, and I think that the Premier said that would be used if needed for contracts. How many people are employed full-time or part-time in the \$138,000.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Chairman is on contract and there are two full-time employees.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Enuaraq):**

Thank you. Total operations and maintenance, \$482,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Total expenditures \$482,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Flip the page over. Page 2-14, detail of grants and contribution, total grants, \$95,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a question on the NWT Literacy Council. Has this just been stopped altogether, the funding or has it been transferred to another department? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This previous funding was to pay for the dinner for the golf tournament every year, that was what the money was for. Now if the dinner is going to be paid, education can pick it up if they choose.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Total grants, \$95,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Contributions. On page 2-15, total contributions \$463,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Total grants and contributions, \$558,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Page 2-16, Executive offices, active positions and information. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Page 2-17, detail of work performed on behalf of a third party. An information item. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

We will move on to 2-18, agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Going back to page 2-9, Executive offices, program summary. Operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance is \$10,326,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Capital, total expenditures is \$10,326,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

The Minister of Executive offices agrees that consideration of the department estimate is concluded.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Minister, I would like to thank the Premier. Yes, Mr. Minister.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you. I would just like to thank the Members of the Legislative Assembly and I would especially like to thank the staff that worked many hours putting this budget together.

--Applause

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Premier and the witness. Thank you. This committee has previously agreed to do the Financial Management Board Secretariat, I believe, Mr. Todd is prepared to make an opening remark. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As always, it is a pleasure to be here to present the Financial Management Board Secretariat's main estimates. As you know, the secretariat is a central agency that has been shrinking in the past three years as we move towards greater delegation to departments, as we introduce user say/user pay initiatives and as we achieve some administrative streamlining. The secretariat has gone from 230 active positions in 96-97 to 175 for 98-99, a decline of 25 percent. The focus of the secretariat has also changed. It has gone from the role of monitoring and enforcing in an environment of control to one of providing support and advice in an environment of delegation. The FMBS continues to play a key role in the fight against the deficit and in

the division process. It has advanced and supported initiatives in the areas of telecommunications, results measurement, greater public accountability and economic stimulation.

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Mr. Chairman, the FMBS is engaged on our behalf on a number of sensitive and critical areas from pay equity and collective bargaining to affirmative action policy reviews to division implementation planning. The secretariat has achieved most of the objectives set for it. As we get closer and closer to the creation of two new territories, the related work consumes more of our attention and time. I expect that because of its central role, the secretariat will find this even more so than other departments.

Nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, there are a number of jobs that need to get done before April 1, 1999, and those are outlined in the secretariat's business plan and accompanying estimates. Primarily these are:

- to prepare the GNWT in concert with the division secretariat and others for the creation of two new territories, including developing and supporting a budget development process for the first year of the new territories' existence;
- coordinate the implementation of Private/Public Partnerships initiatives; complete the implementation of the digital communications network and further strengthen informatics planning in the government;
- improve the government's public accountability and results measurement capability;
- conclude a new collective agreement with the UNW; implement the new job evaluation structure and a new payroll and human resource information system and complete the reform of our staff housing program;
- and last but certainly not least implement the changes necessary to improve the affirmative action results. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd. I believe the Infrastructure Committee has opening comments. Mr. Henry.

Committee Motion 5-13(5): Resolution of the Public Service Act Amendments Issues

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will read the Standing Committee on Infrastructure's report on the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Public Service Act amendments. Committee members were concerned about the amendments made to the Public Service Act in 1996 and expect to revisit and review the amendments.

I move that the committee recommends that the government vigorously pursue the resolution of issues surrounding the Public Service Act amendments through ongoing and committed dialogue with the union.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Henry.

**MR. HENRY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The current financial information computer system needs to be replaced. Replacement of the computer system is estimated to cost somewhere between \$6 million and \$8 million. There was a proposal to share the existing computer system with the new Government of Nunavut, but the Interim Commissioner indicated that the new territory will pursue its own system. However, the most recent Auditor General's report posed serious questions regarding dual system post-division in terms of compatibility, data integrity and whether time will allow the proposed Nunavut computer system to be operational by division.

On the digital communications network, the committee was concerned that the proposed government server, the digital communications network or DCN, will compete with local private sector servers. Committee members were also concerned with the technical viability of the proposed project. Members understood that the deadline for completion of the proof of concept was November 30, 1997. The committee would like to receive a copy of the proof of concept when completed. The committee is also encouraged that the government is attempting to address concerns expressed by local service providers and anticipates a satisfactory resolution.

On the issue of staff housing, the committee was concerned that there are few housing options available to accommodate transitional staff such as teachers, nurses and doctors. Some professionals

have difficult finding adequate housing or are forced to pay exorbitant rents for existing housing. This may deter other essential service personnel from relocating to some northern communities. The committee requests that the department provide a list of the remaining staff housing units by community and the age and condition descriptions of each of the unsold units. The information provided should indicate where units are not marketable at this time due to title or leasing concerns. Committee members would also like to receive a list of the units that are currently abandoned or otherwise uninhabitable.

On the question of pay equity, committee members were concerned about the costs associated with the ongoing equity negotiations. Members were also concerned with the length of time involved in these discussions and the potential liability of the Government of the Northwest Territories and the committee encourages the government to resolve this issue in a fair and fiscally prudent manner by March of 1998. That concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Before we get into general comments, I would like to ask the Minister if he wishes to bring in a witness.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Do we agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

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**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Yes, proceed. Mr. Minister, for the record would you please introduce your witness.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my immediate right is the deputy minister of the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Lew Voytilla.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. We are reviewing Financial Management Board Secretariat. Are there any general comments from the membership? Mr. Steen.

**MR. STEEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I do not have a general comment, but rather I have a question for the Minister's opening remarks. My question is in regard to the second paragraph which says, "the department has gone from a role of monitoring, enforcing in an environment of control to one of providing support and advice in an environment of delegation." My question would be in regard to investigations of frauds and embezzlements, how do you still retain the ability to investigate if you are in fact going from a role of monitoring and enforcing?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That particular function is still retained by the Financial Management Board Secretariat and that is one of the areas that has not been delegated out. We maintain the responsibility for doing that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have one question in regard to the Minister's opening comments as well. It is in regard to the last page and last, but certainly not least, implemented changes necessary to improve the affirmative action results. Could the Minister indicate what is the status of that particular initiative? The committee has pretty well wrapped up its work and presented a package to the government. My understanding was that there seemed to be an agreement on how to proceed and that the government would, in fact, put out something relatively soon. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In fact we did respond, I believe, almost 100 percent to the recommendations provided by the committee, in which, I believe, my honourable colleague was a member. We have initiated and are initiating the actions that were recommended by the committee and which we agreed upon between ourselves and the Executive. We are in the process of doing most of them as we speak.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the things that I recollect discussing and as we did seem to reach an agreement, was the necessity to put out a document considering that how long this has been in the works, the amount of work that was done, money spent, surveys done of all the staff, that would tie it up in a nice neat package so that we could put on the table a product that people could look at that would summarize the joint efforts of both the government and committees in terms of dealing with this long outstanding issue. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are taking a three-pronged approach. One is we are initiating many of the recommendations made by the committee, and I think I did respond to the committee saying this is what we concur with, and we are going to carry on. Two, we will be preparing a policy paper to reflect the changes, I believe that is what my honourable colleague is saying. Three, we will be tabling, I believe in this session, affirmative action results by departments for my colleagues to review. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate when he anticipates this policy document which, to my mind will be the finalization, the very public finalization of this long outstanding review, for the

people to look at. When does he anticipate it being ready?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, I would hope to try and get it done as quickly as we can. Certainly in an ideal world I would like to do it while session is on. I am not making excuses for it, but my deputy minister and his staff have got a workload that is significant right now with division, formula financing, et cetera. I am optimistic that we can conclude the policy paper which shows the changes in place as a guide to our bureaucracy to operate under, hopefully, by the end of February but certainly if not, April 1, 1998.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. Mr Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just had some questions on the Financial Management Board Secretariat, if that is appropriate at this time? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, earlier in response to the Budget Address I had some concerns with social housing, the lack of social housing and I tried to articulate those. I also brought up in question period today concerns of staff housing and I should note that on page 4 and 5 of the report of the Committee on Infrastructure which I happen to be a member of and the tabled document that is before us, indeed, we had requested that the department - and I should read this out for the record - "the committee was concerned that there were few housing options available to accommodate transitional staff such as teacher, nurses or doctors. Some professionals had difficulty finding adequate housing or are forced to pay exorbitant rents for existing housing."

Some of us may remember the case in Pond Inlet about two months ago as an example. The committee had requested

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that the department provide a listing of the remaining staff housing units by community and the age, condition and descriptions of each of the unsold units and also the ones that were not marketable due to lease problems that we had understood. I wonder if

the Minister for FMBS can update us on the situation regarding staff housing, indeed, if he is trying to make them available in communities for our staff. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I think I have indicated in question period when my honourable colleague asked me the same question that we were dealing with these on a community by community basis and the fact that the Pond Inlet one is a little stale-dated because we have solved that problem, but I am being sincere. I do not quite understand my honourable colleague's line of questioning. I am saying, if he can give me specific areas where there are specific problems I will be only too happy to address them. We have a responsibility to deal with, on an ongoing basis, adequate housing, affordable housing for our staff. One person may define affordable housing one way, another may define it another way so it is very difficult to give him an answer that would satisfy him unless I can be specific.

We are dealing on an ongoing basis with the housing situation. We will provide the House and the committee with a breakdown of the houses that have not been sold. You will recall that we did say, where staff housing that has not been sold and is no longer required, we would then transfer to public housing. We will identify that as well. Again, there may be cases that I do not know about and if there are I will be only too happy to know exactly what they are and we will deal with them in terms of availability and affordability. I think those were the two issues. Again, I repeat, we will give you a summarized breakdown of the request that was asked for in the report Mr. Henry spoke to earlier. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, yes I think I will be able to table some documents in this House, hopefully tomorrow, with regard to the concern for housing. I do know, for example, Mr. Chairman, in the Kitikmeot region as an example, the divisional board of education has called on some particular concerns

they have with housing. Hopefully, we can bring those up tomorrow.

I am finding contradictions in the statement by the Minister. I know that in previous discussions some of our committee members had brought this up and that was that we were going to get out of housing and that was the whole reason for selling staff houses. Yet, the Minister just said again that, indeed, we have to find affordable and quality housing for our staff.

Sometimes I find it difficult to correlate both answers. Are we getting out of staff housing and we are going to leave them to find their own housing or, indeed, are we going to help them find affordable and quality staff housing? Because we did have quality, affordable staff housing in communities, but now we have gone to the position where we have sold them and our staff are having trouble finding suitable housing. That has come through in several different questions and statements in this House before. So, I find it a bit of a contradiction. Maybe the Minister could just clarify that, are we out or are we in or are we half in and half out? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

My honourable colleague knows full well that when I was referring to staff housing it was government owned housing and, in fact, we still provide staff housing to leasing agents all across the territories including in his own riding. We are, in fact, trying to get out of government owned and government supported staff housing. The cost effective housing that was provided before, of course, was highly subsidized and I think that is an important point to bring forward. We are, if I can go back again, I hope my colleague will be able to bring to the House tomorrow specific examples of where we are not meeting the needs and we will address them as we do on a day-to-day basis through the normal course of doing government business. The policy of this government is to find affordable, reasonable housing for our staff and we are doing that. It is not without its bumps and grinds. I mean, that is what government is all about. That is what running a business is all about. That is what life is all about. So, I do not know how else to answer it than how I have. If it is not adequate, then maybe my honourable colleague can ask me specific questions and I can try to answer specific answers.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Indeed, I am aware, of course, that we are leasing housing. I am aware that we have gone to the private marketplace. I was trying to make the inference here that, indeed, between the two areas, Mr. Chairman, that we have stand alone houses owned by this government. We have sold them off. In quite a few cases where our staff people never bought the houses and were left in a position that they did not have suitable housing. That was the point I was trying to make. Following up on this line of questioning, I understand, I think it was two years ago, there was a trial run of a property management service contract let by FMBS to manage staff housing units and other property owned by this government in Rankin Inlet. Now I understand that there may be a move to take that trial pilot project that was done over there and do it in other areas, including my riding. I wonder if the Minister could update us on how we are going to look at privatizing the O and M, the property management of other units, staff housing that we have, in other ridings across the Northwest Territories in general. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think for the record, it is important to respond to the first part of my honourable colleague's question, and that is with respect to those members of the government that did not purchase their housing. It was not that they were not given the opportunity, they just chose not to. I think that is important. As I said on

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a number of occasions, I found it somewhat difficult to comprehend why they did not. Anyway, with respect to the privatization of property management, it was a two-year exercise, I believe, in the Keewatin. Under a group called the Pirusaijit Group, which is a locally owned development corporation, Inuit owned. My understanding, talking to Mr. Voytilla, we are in the final touches of evaluating that. I think it would be fair to say that we are generally pleased with the way it has gone, so far. My desire would be that we would go out, not into Iqaluit, but into the Baffin. It just

would not be, I know you particularly like to talk about your riding, but there are other communities. We would be going forward with the property management tender that would look after the remaining housing stock that the government has in any private sector housing stock that the government leases.

However, we are in discussions with the Interim Commissioner's office with that because we are still trying to come to an agreement on the protocol agreement with respect to contracts that go beyond 1999. So, no decision has been made. My desire would be, as the Minister responsible, to proceed with a property management contract in the Baffin Island. We are still discussing that with the Interim Commissioner. Assuming we can get him on side, we would like to proceed with that. We think there is some value in that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Picco.

**MR. PICCO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, indeed, I do, like every Member here, like bringing up questions and concerns from my riding. Thank you very much. I would also like to add that I would like to see your property management proposal and privatization of property in the Baffin region, as you just stated, because, indeed, the Baffin Island is only x number of communities but the Baffin region includes Resolute Bay, Grise Fiord, Hall Beach and Igloolik, which are not on Baffin Island.

Just for clarification, I would like to see your property management contract that you just talked about being deferred, indeed, until we have a chance in this, as Members of this House, to look at your evaluation and a cost benefit analysis of the property management that was privatized in Rankin Inlet before you try to proceed with doing an RFP or anything else in any other region of the Northwest Territories. So, I would like a commitment from the Minister that, indeed, the Members of this House will have an opportunity to see that analysis. Indeed, to see if it was cost productive. Because sometimes, yes, the private sector can do x number of things great and maybe cheaper, but not in all cases. I would like to see an evaluation of that property management contract before the Minister tries to implement it in my region of the territories. So, I would like to have that commitment from the Minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I am glad my honourable colleague cleared up how many communities there were in the Baffin region. I think I travelled them all in 1976, I am not sure, when I worked in that area and enjoyed it thoroughly. It may be, Mr. Chairman, that we are still working out the protocol agreement. My desire would be to move forward on doing a privatization of the remaining housing. However, I will give Mr. Picco's concerns some consideration and advise him once I have decided what course of action we would take, but I will give his comment due consideration.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. On the list I have Mr. Erasmus and Mr. Krutko. Mr. Erasmus, general comments.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the pay equity issue, the Minister had indicated that he was hoping to include it, I believe he mentioned, in the bargaining sessions with the union. I just got a copy of the union's distribution Eye on the Ledge here, in which Miss Simpson was quoted as saying "we are not going to be discussing the pay equity dispute in the bargaining session scheduled to set terms with a wider collective agreement." So, I was just wondering if the Minister would be kind enough to indicate how this is going to happen? Is it actually going to be in the terms of the wider collective agreement or is this going to be on the side? How will this happen, please?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, we would certainly like to include them both, because, you know, on the pay equity side you have the retroactivity and you have got the ongoing adjustments that have to be made. If we are going to do a collective agreement effective April 1st, we want to maximize the dollars to our female staff that historically have had a pay equity inadequacy. So, all we are saying is, on one side you have retroactivity, on the other side you have the ongoing costs. We would hope that we could come to some agreement

with that. That is one of the reasons. There are a number of others, why we tied them together. I am still optimistic. I have not seen Miss Simpson's Eye on the Ledge or her comments, but our bargaining committee have instructions from me to try to link both issues so that we can get the maximum benefits that are affordable to our staff into their hands as quickly as possible and so that this does not go on and on and on. Our staff have waited for ten years. This is a ten-year issue. Both Mr. Voytilla and myself want to solve it. We want to get money into the hands of our staff that rightly belongs to them that this government can afford. Therefore, we would like to link them both and get on with concluding an agreement.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I am just not clear. Does the Minister mean that the pay equity issue will be tied to the settlement of the new agreement?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, I am not trying to avoid answering my honourable colleague's question, but it is an area right now which is under negotiations with the union. I would ask him if he would just bear with me for another few days and,

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hopefully, it will be a little more explicit down the road. We are sort of in sensitive negotiations with the union on this issue. As I said, my desire as the Minister would be to link them both so we can get as many dollars into the hands of our staff as possible come April 1st, that is affordable for this government and to conclude both a collective agreement that is fair, which we are trying to do, and to once and for all resolve our pay equity issue which is ten-years old, that is affordable. Sensitive negotiations are under way right now. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

**MR. ERASMUS:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on a final note, I guess. We have heard several Members indicate in the last several days this government cannot afford to lower the services and programs we are currently offering and we certainly do not want to lay off any more employees than we have to and we have heard several of our MLAs imploring both sides to be reasonable and to come up with a solution. I am also throwing my voice into the same area and asking both sides to come up with an equitable solution and to, perhaps, compromise so that we can come up with a solution whereby our people in the Northwest Territories do not have to suffer further cutbacks in their services and programs. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Would you care to respond, Mr. Todd?

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, I have been consistent since we started on this course of trying to resolve pay equity. I said that, one, it has to be negotiated, and that would be my preferred approach rather than a third party making the decision. Two, it has to be affordable. Now, I do not know what it takes, right now, to define to my colleagues and their partners, the UNW, what is affordable. I mean they can read balance sheets just the same as we can and the bottom line is if it is not an affordable issue, none of it is imposed upon us and we could be in this situation for years. What I want to do is resolve this thing so that it is affordable, and I will get the support of my colleagues to define what affordability is and to put what is due and affordable into the hands of our employees April 1, 1998. I certainly do not want to be in the position, and I know my Cabinet colleagues and I know my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly do not want to be put in that position that it has to be further layoffs or further cuts to programs and services. That is unacceptable. But to suggest, as has been suggested yesterday in the press, and we are trying to avoid it that our offer is insulting, let us define that and we will define that in the coming weeks. The public will judge whether or not the offer of this government, which we believe is affordable, is insulting or not. I do not believe it is.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. I have Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to just follow up with the questions that were asked in line with the whole question of staff housing in the Northwest Territories. In regard to the publicity, for instance, that Fort McPherson received where a teacher said he was unable to find housing, that there was an outcry in the way he was treated and everything else, and how he just got up and left the community; I think there has been efforts made by the community, the Gwich'in Development Corporation, where they purchased single staff units and made it clear to the teachers in the community that those were in the communities to be preserved for housing for teaching staff. In regard to the other communities where it seems to be a problem, I think there has to be some certainty and comfort given to teachers that they have to know there are facilities in communities that will offer them suitable housing accommodations.

This government has to make an attempt to make them aware these accommodations are in the community in which now they are going to have new landlords. We have to not only assist the teachers, but we have to assist the organizations or groups, people who have made an attempt to purchase government units with the idea they will be available for teaching staff, nurses, whoever comes to the community so they know there are accommodations in these communities. So, in regard to the comments of the Minister, they know they are looking at this issue and they will be tabling a document on it, but I think we have to keep in mind, people have taken over a lot of these assets of this government with the idea they will continue to maintain and offer that service to the public employees in this government, regardless if it is teachers or nurses or whoever it may be.

I think the Minister should keep that in mind when he talks about bringing forth an initiative that people have made the attempt in good will to acquire these facilities with the intent to continue to supply housing for government staff. I would like to ask the Minister in these cases what does he see in regard to enlightening these organizations and groups within the communities that have tried to comfort the cushion and allow housing to be made available to public staff who come to these smaller communities?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, you know when we started this road to the sale of staff housing, I think I said at the time, one key issue I wanted to see was that the people who were currently in the houses were given the first option. Just to reflect a little bit, I think we did that and I think, have done that reasonably well. I was pleased with the uptake. In fact, it had gone actually beyond what I had originally thought.

When we indicated that we would like to sell them to developers, if you want, or individuals within the communities or development corporations, we made it pretty clear in the sale of those assets that were not purchased by our employees that we expected those units to be available at an affordable rate to the staff. I believe that is happening. There may be the odd case where it is not. We had some as you know, Mr. Picco alluded to earlier that we had some problems that in Pond Inlet. I believe we dealt with that and I think it got resolved. We have had some problems in maybe one or two other communities. Maybe there are some problems in Cambridge Bay I do not know about, but at some point we just

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deal with that in the normal course of doing government business.

The policy itself has worked relatively well in terms of homeownership. The policy itself in terms of private developers whether they are locally or regionally based has also worked reasonably well. We did take the steps at the time to encourage the developers and to ensure they were prepared to make this housing available at an affordable price. I think, knowing the development business a little bit, the price is reflective to some extent, the cost of the facility, how you finance it and return on investment. We are very much aware what that is. We have been monitoring some of that to ensure the developers who have purchased the houses are being reasonable and fair. Where there are cases that they are not that are brought to our attention, I will deal with them. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My other question has to do with the whole idea that we have managed to deal with the deficit and everything is rosy. I think we also

have to keep in mind we can be back in that situation just as fast as we got out of it. I think we have to have the ability and the monitoring enforcement continue, especially in regard to the Financial Administration Act that we have put forth, that we have to continue on that road. I think lady luck has been on our side in the matter of the last couple of years in regard to fire season which was one of the major factors that put us in the situation of the deficit, but I think we have to not go off on a spending spree which basically brought us here. We have to have some checks and balances in place to ensure the expenses of this government are controlled and are also being seriously monitored by some agency.

At this time I would like to thank the staff and the people who work in the area of the Financial Management Board and the FMBS because of the hard work they have done to ensure we stayed on track and made departments aware they are accountable. I think we should not let our guard down and allow ourselves to wander off onto another path. So, I would like to ask the Ministers, what assurances do we have of ensuring the accountability to the people we represent and the finances of the government will be kept in tact so we do not find ourselves in the spending spree that happened prior to us getting here, that we do not go back into that mode, that we keep in line and that we do have to monitor the expenses of this government. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well, Mr. Chairman, technically and legally, we still have the Deficit Elimination Act that controls our fiscal behaviour. From a technical, legislative perspective that is important because that is law. It says we have to behave that way. From a management monitoring position, you have myself, as the Finance Minister and chairman of the FMB, who took the long journey of deficit cuts and took the pain and the abuse that would naturally come with it. Understandably so, it would not be prudent in my responsibility to bring us to where we are, from whence we came, to back to where we once were. That sounds OK, does it not? Where we are, from whence we came, to whence we are. So, I think there are enough checks and balances politically, in this House, for example, the careful scrutiny of the budgets. This budget really is the last budget. The way I see it in terms of the whole territory. I do not think there would be much to gain

from going, as my honourable colleague says, on some kind of spending spree. I do not think the system is set up for that. I think his earlier comments today about the Public/Private Partnerships are legitimate concerns, which I have also.

We need to ensure that we watch that very closely. My department is working hard to try not only to reassure myself, but to ultimately reassure my colleagues here that there will be some checks and balances on that side of things. Other than that, I do not anticipate, barring a major disaster or absolute failure in the pay equity resolution, any major blips with respect to our overall fiscal framework. I am confident that if you put the qualifiers in, with respect to pay equity, et cetera, that we will meet the targets we have set for this coming year and bring forward another balanced budget and reduce the accumulated deficit significantly so that two new territories can move forward on a solid fiscal framework with limited, accumulated deficit components to their budgets. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. The ten minute time period is up. I will recognize another Member on the list. Mr. O'Brien. General comments.

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question I have is following in the same vein as Mr. Krutko and others. You speak about the housing situation and affordability as it relates to staff members being able to buy staff units that were available. In some cases these individuals were paying anywhere between \$1,200 to \$1,400 in rent. They have the opportunity to buy the house at a fair market value and their rent goes down to maybe \$400 or \$500 per month through their mortgage payments and so on, and that is actually giving a good break to the employee and the new homeowner. The concern I have is with the people or staffers who do not have the opportunity to buy a house. In my case, there are no houses left in the community and they are still leasing their existing units and paying what they would consider fairly high rents which are anywhere between \$1,300 and \$1,400 per month.

Is there anything that you have looked at, have given any consideration in trying to address this issue? Because we have a situation where we have nurses that are under pressure, they do not feel that their benefits are up to par. We have the same situation

with some other employees and this could be a way of trying to alleviate, I guess, some of the pressures and the stress they are under by trying to reduce the rents for these people. Has that been a consideration, Mr. Minister?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have two responses to my colleague's question. On the nurses

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situation, I concur there is a problem there. The nurse's are slightly different because some of them are living in the nurses station and my honourable colleague, Mr. Ng, reconfirmed what he was already doing, and that was trying to take a hard look at the compensation package for nurses in which the cost of accommodation is a factor. I believe, he has indicated that he would have something ready by the middle of February, I think, was the deadline. I think that it is important we set some deadlines. I believe, hopefully, on that side of it, we can bring some resolve and some relief to the professionals that we desperately need and some of the difficulties that my honourable colleague has alluded to on a number of occasions in the House, with respect to the medical health staff.

On the rest of the staff, actually, the \$40 to \$50 million EDAP Program is targeting not only to people in social housing who can afford to have a mortgage, but it would also target some of our staff that rent private accommodations or are in leased accommodation. We hope that this initiative will encourage, if you want, more private homeownership and, at the end of the day, provide them with an opportunity to own their home and afford, I guess, what I would call a mortgage that does not overburden their fiscal condition. That is kind of where we are hoping to go with it. There may still be some people that slip through the cracks, I do not know. Certainly, it is the intent of EDAP and the intent of my colleague, Mr. Ng, on the health stuff. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. O'Brien.

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one final question. In reference to the new proposal, and I am not looking for detail, just a general overview, we talked about approximately 1,000 new homes that may become available through various processes. One of the comments that you have indicated or made was that there would be a lease option or aspect. Can you give us some general details on exactly how that would work and what the impact would be? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Maybe I was misunderstood, but I guess what I am saying is the EDAP program that we are talking about is really more an expansion of the current program with some refinement to it. With respect to private sector dollars, I am hoping, we can encourage the private sector to put some cost-effective housing into the communities that require it that is affordable.

I know that may be difficult in today's world when you are looking at stand alone facilities, et cetera, but we think there may be some savings on the capital costs in multi-plexes, et cetera. Some of the changes we are going to need, we are hoping that, for example, we could get multi-plexes. You know how you see in the city here, you see a number of people building these condominiumized multi-plexes and selling them for anywhere from \$109,000 to \$125,000 at Yellowknife rates. We are sort of trying to refine the program so that kind of cost-effective housing would be available for people that may wish to purchase them who say cannot afford a three bedroom 1500 or 1400 square foot stand alone facility. I am hoping that there will be some uptake there. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien.

**MR. O'BRIEN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister would this be a rehash or would there be any similarities to this multi-plex proposal or possibility. Would this relate to the old rent supp program that we had in place a number of years ago?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

No, I am sorry, no. It really relates to the ability to build a multi-plex facility. Let us say, hypothetically we have five people in Arviat who have the capability of paying an \$80,000 mortgage, \$90,000 mortgage, and if you put a multi-plex in place that is going to cost \$135,000 each, rather than a stand alone house at a \$185,000 or \$190,000. We roll in with an EDAP grant for those people, they then have an affordable mortgage because they are in a multi-plex type unit where there is some savings in the capital costs. That is what we are looking at right now in an effort to get more houses on the deck, if you want, and to try to accommodate the income level that I think Mr. Picco talked about earlier.

There is a lower income level that we are trying to get at because most of the higher income levels have actually bought the staff housing, got into the EDAP program or mortgaged their own houses, but there is a whole bracket of people in another income who, we believe based on the demographics we have done, could in fact afford a mortgage, but a mortgage of a lower cost housing, if that is the way to put it. That is kind of where we are heading here with this issue.

Again, it is not a panacea for all our woes in housing, but it is just one effort to try and answer what we believe is a need and that is a little bit more cost effective housing for those who are not in the high end of the income bracket to afford a stand alone facility. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. I have on the list of Members who wish to speak at this time. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In reference to the Minister's opening remarks, he mentions some of the issues he would like to proceed with. One of the areas he says is to improve the government's public accountability and results measurement capability. Could the Minister give us an idea as to what this will entail? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Well you know in corporate terms they call it return on investment. I think an easy example or classic example of where I think we have done it reasonably well is in the employment strategy. Where my memory serves me correctly, I believe Mr. Kakfwi was able to demonstrate that he had created with \$9.4 million that we gave them, that they were able to leave of that \$34 million of activity that created

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the equivalent of 1,200 full-time jobs. The return on investment there we were able to quantify that. That is the quantifier that we are looking for. You cannot always get it in government but that is what we are looking for. I think that is an easy one, but there are more complicated ones. On the accountability side, clearly this Assembly and previous ones and certainly this one has made it clear to us and to myself as Finance Minister that there has to be more transparency on how we spend our money and what return we get on it and be accountable for it. We are trying to move toward getting our public accounts out earlier. We are trying to show in some kind of detail form the results of some of our programs that were successes. We are releasing the business plans. We are publishing the contract report. That type of report that the public has access to it.

Where possible this government is going to be so transparent that you will be able to see from one end of it to the other. Really that is what the accountability component of it means. Despite what some people may say, we have come a long way in the last two years in terms of what we provide this House and what we provide the public in terms of how the government spends its money, et cetera. We still have got a ways to go, but we are certainly are heading in that mode. We have nothing to hide. It is just the question of can we get the administrative procedures in place to provide that to you. Those are the kinds of things I mean by accountability and by return on investment. I hope I have answered the question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the Minister could, I think that is very good what he is saying but for example in this budget here, under goals he has the same thing, achieve a level of accountability

acceptable to the public, results reporting and so on and so on. Do you have an example of what might be one of the things, a specific item that you will be doing this year to try and increase the accountability? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Minister

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

There is no one specific thing. There are a variety of initiatives that we are trying to do. Let me give you an obvious example. Mr. Picco has frequently challenged this House, rightly so, on the need for transparency in contract agreements and negotiated RFPs, et cetera. So we brought forward and tabled in the House a document that is available for everybody. Mrs. Groenewegen said the other day there, well we do not have them identify what are RFPs. We said we would do that. That is the kind of thing that we are trying to improve upon. To improve the transparency as much as we can and provide to the public and to yourselves as much information as is legally and physically possible.

I mean that needs to be improved as we go along and we need to move it quicker into the process. We are trying to do that. That would be an obvious one. There are many others I could talk about, but the hour is late as they say and I will leave that for another day. I think that is a good example because it is one everybody had a concern about. I think today, for example, Mr. Antoine tabled the chronology of events with the respect to the ongoing saga of the Lahm Ridge Tower. It is almost like a soap, the affirmative action plan. There a variety of things that we are trying to get into the public domain so it is seen and as they say in politics, seeing is believing. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. Do we have further general comments? Shall we go into detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Detail.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:**

I move to report progress.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

There is a motion to report progress, moved by Mr. Krutko to report progress. The motion is in order and is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. I will rise and report progress. Thank you, Mr. Todd and Mr. Voytilla.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

ITEM 21: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 15-13(5) and Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99 and Committee Reports 03-13(5) and 04-13(5) and would like to report progress with two motions be adopted. Mr. Speaker, I move that report of committee of the whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:**

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

ITEM 23: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**DEPUTY CLERK (Mr. Schauerte):**

Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Nunavut Caucus immediately after adjournment. Meetings for tomorrow, Thursday at 11:00 a.m. of the Ordinary Members' Caucus.

Orders of the day for Thursday, January 29, 1998:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions

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7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act, No. 2
  - Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act
  - Bill 9, Loan Authorization Act, 1998-99
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99
  - Committee Report 2-13(5), Standing Committee on Government Operations, Report on the 1998-99 Main Estimates
  - Committee Report 3-13(5), Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Report on the 1998-99 Main Estimates
  - Committee Report 4-13(5), Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development, Report on the 1998-99 Main Estimates
  - Committee Report 5-13(5), Standing Committee on Social Programs, Report on the 1998-99 Main Estimates

- Tabled Document 15-13(5), 1998-99  
Budget Address

- Tabled Document 19-13(5), Guidelines for  
Implementing Public/ Private Partnerships

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:**

Thank you. This House stands adjourned until  
Thursday, January 29, at 1:30 p.m.

--ADJOURNMENT