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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

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

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Good afternoon. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 53-13(5): Northwest Territories Business Credit Corporation - 1997 Annual Report

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two statements today. Mr. Speaker, later today I will table the Northwest Territories Business Credit Corporation's 1997 Annual Report. The Business Credit Corporation (BCC) is dedicated to assisting economic development in the Northwest Territories and encouraging job opportunities by providing loans and contract security to northern entrepreneurs and businesses. As a provider of loans, the BCC recognizes the diverse needs of its northern clients and tailors financing as much as possible to meet their needs and expectations. The bulk of monies lent to northern businesses remains in the north, creating economic spin offs at the community level.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention some of the highlights during the year. Operationally, the BCC's approved loans grew by \$9 million, which went to 99 northern businesses. This is an increase of 17 percent in the number of loans approved and 14

percent in dollar terms over the previous year. At the same time, administrative expenses decreased by \$47,000 or six percent. Mr. Speaker, the BCC is not only continuing to meet its mandate effectively, but is operating within the fiscal commitments we have promised to the people of the Northwest Territories.

The number of approved loans to level one and level three communities increased from the previous year. In the level one communities, the number of loans to the smaller communities of Fort Smith and Hay River experienced an increase, while Yellowknife experienced a decrease of 40 percent. This indicates commercial banks are handling more of the needs of Yellowknife businesses, freeing up scarce BCC financial resources for smaller communities. While the number of approved loans to level two communities decreased, the amount of the loans increased.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to announce that the BCC has decided to initiate a one time general interest rollback on BCC loans to the rate prevailing on April 1, 1998.

--Applause

This move is in response to the recent economic decline experienced in the Northwest Territories. In keeping with the BCC's mandate, a general rollback of interest rates will assist businesses in maintaining their operations and create an immediate stimulus for the northern economy. In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the members of the board of directors for their guidance, support and commitment throughout the year, and look forward to their continued help and dedication. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ministers' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

Minister's Statement 54-13(5): 1996-97 Annual Report of the Business Development Fund

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Business Development Fund is one of many incentives offered by the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Later today, I will be tabling a copy of the fund's annual report for 1996-97. I am pleased to make this information available to Members of the Legislative Assembly and to note some of the highlights which I feel outline the

department's ongoing commitment to the private sector.

During the 1996-97 fiscal year, the department received 480 applications under this fund. A total of 421, or approximately 88 percent of these applications, resulted in contributions totalling over \$5.5 million. The Business Development Fund was established to assist those businesses most in need, and consistent with previous years, the department has made the greatest number of contributions to level two and level three communities. During the 1996-97 fiscal year, Mr. Speaker, 76 percent or approximately \$4.3 million went to these communities. In keeping with our efforts to promote opportunities for aboriginal businesses, I am also pleased to note that contributions to aboriginal businesses accounted for 82 percent of the total fund or \$4,624,535 with the majority of these approvals going toward business creation projects.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the spirit and enthusiasm of the Northwest Territories business community and extend to them our commitment for ongoing service and assistance. Through the efforts of the business community the economy of the Northwest Territories will continue to grow. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Ng.

Minister's Statement 55-13(5): Strategic Initiatives Fund - Critical Areas

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I informed Members yesterday, the Department of Health and Social Services has recently established a Strategic Initiatives Fund. The fund calls for health and social service boards to initiate reinvestments in the following critical areas:

1. healthy children;
2. mental health;
3. public health;
4. supported living; and
5. human resources.

Our population continues to increase rapidly with children and youth making up approximately half. Mr. Speaker, everyone agrees that our children are our future, so it is critical that our children be healthy. The department supports a number of programs that focus on child health. These programs include early intervention, alcohol and drug counselling, priority access to addictions treatment for pregnant women, promotions to reduce use of tobacco, and services like speech and occupational therapy.

Last week, my honourable colleague, Mr. Dent provided an update on the joint Healthy Children Initiative being developed by Education, Culture and Employment and Health and Social Services. In this fiscal year alone, nearly \$2.3 million has been allocated to communities to enhance programs for young children and families. We know the rate of population growth is coming down slowly, but we also know that current rates of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease indicates more work needs to be done in the areas of sexual and reproductive health.

Mr. Speaker, we need to remind ourselves that solutions in this area are:

1. difficult to achieve;
2. need our leadership; and
3. will not come about through the use of simplistic, or culturally irrelevant family planning initiatives.

Counselling on family planning and reproductive health is currently offered at well women clinics. Also, health centre staff visits new mothers to offer assistance and monitor the health and well being of the baby, mother and family. We continue to work in partnership with the education sector to improve the level of knowledge that young people have about these issues. The Strategic Initiative Fund will allow boards to build upon existing services and to introduce new programs.

The Inuvik Mental Health pilot project brought health and education boards together with communities, to enhance mental health services in communities across the Inuvik region. These organizations pooled their resources to hire mental health counsellors to live and work in every community. While this particular program is now permanent, similar programs could be started or enhanced using the Strategic Initiatives Fund.

Mr. Speaker, one of this government's priorities is to increase people's ability to live independently. Over the past year, there has been a dramatic increase in the availability of home care. In most communities, residents who need help with minor medical and self-care assistance can obtain it in their own home. Supported living also means providing services like day programs, respite care and group homes. Mr. Speaker, for many years people who required 24-hour long-term care were sent to southern institutions due to the lack of services in the north. We have succeeded in bringing many of these individuals home to their communities and families.

While there are people who need a level of care that is available only in an institution, many others would prefer to stay at home with some assistance. Providing a single point of entry into increasingly greater levels of care allows boards to do a better job of identifying the best options for individuals. It also provides for increased coordination in assessing individual needs. The Strategic Initiatives Fund can provide boards with the funding to further develop and evaluate these services over time.

Mr. Speaker, significant work has been ongoing in the human resource area. Next week, I will release a recruitment and retention plan that addresses immediate difficulties in recruiting social workers, nurses and physicians. This plan is part of a broader health and social service human resource plan aimed at developing the people and organizations we need to move our services into the next century.

A working group including the department, boards, the medical associations and the Nurses's Association have been involved in this process. The plan considers innovative approaches, including the following:

1. redefining roles of health and social service

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providers,

2. enhancing skills of northerners, and,
3. developing integrated or primary care models of service delivery.

Boards can implement some of the approaches that are being developed by the working group by accessing this fund.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to sharing with this House the innovative approaches that each board will take. We believe this fund will help boards to shift from dealing exclusively with the crisis on their doorstep to the proactive planning of prevention and promotional strategies. While we know that prevention and early intervention strategies will only pay off in the longer run, the results are well worth our attention and action now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Minister's Statement 56-13(5): Western Arctic Affirmative Action Employment Plan

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform this House that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation has developed an Affirmative Action Employment Plan for the Western Arctic.

--Applause

This plan complements the Corporation's Inuit Employment Plan. The corporation has set aside \$300,000 for salaries, training and development of affirmative action candidates in the Western Arctic. The plan includes identifying four on-the-job training positions in headquarters and the western district offices to develop candidates for positions within the corporation for future management positions in government. In addition, the corporation will sponsor two Aurora College students from the Business Cooperative Education Management Studies Program. The students will be able to combine on-the-job experience with classroom teaching.

Mr. Speaker, last fall the Standing Committee on Social Programs raised with me, the issue of affirmative action employment and development for the Western Arctic. Comments from committee Members led to the decision that an Affirmative Action Employment Plan for the Western Arctic should be developed. After all, the development of affirmative action employees will be every bit as important to the new western government as it will be in Nunavut. Within the next several days, I will be forwarding the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's Western Arctic Affirmative Action Employment Plan to the Standing Committee on Social Programs. I look

forward to a future opportunity to discuss this plan with the committee. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Todd.

Minister's Statement 57-13(5): Update on Formula Financing Discussions

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide Members with an update on the discussions relating to the formula financing arrangements which will be in place for Nunavut and the Western Territory after April 1, 1999. As Members are aware, a process has been underway since last May, to address this issue. The participants on the Special Committee on Financial Arrangements for Nunavut and the Western Territory are senior officials of the federal government, led by Finance Canada; the GNWT, led by our Department of Finance; the office of the Interim Commissioner of Nunavut; the Western Coalition; and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.

The terms of reference for the committee include:

-the determination of the ongoing expenditure bases of each territory, including the incremental costs associated with the creation of two new territories;

-the determination of appropriate funding mechanisms; and

-the assessment of revenue raising capacity of each territory.

A great deal of work has been accomplished since last May, and the list of outstanding issues has been narrowed down significantly. Officials will be meeting next week in Rankin Inlet to discuss these remaining issues at the working group level, in preparation for a meeting of the special committee, which is scheduled to take place by mid March.

At that point, the federal government will have all the information it needs to make a recommendation to the federal Cabinet regarding the critical issues of funding levels and the broad parameters of financing mechanisms. We, therefore, expect the March meeting will be the last special committee meeting prior to the federal government taking the issue of territorial financing to Cabinet. We are confident that

Mr. Martin's commitment to provide one year's notice to northerners on funding levels can be achieved. We recognize, however, there will still be significant work to do to finalize the details and to draft the agreements.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words of appreciation to all the parties involved in this process for the effort that has gone into meeting this deadline, given its importance in terms of providing the time necessary to develop budgets for the 1999-2000 fiscal year. We need to provide certainty to our employees and to establish confidence among all northerners that the creation of two new territories will have a positive economic impact on the north.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated in my Budget Address, I am very optimistic that adequate funding will be available for the two new governments beyond April 1, 1999, and I look forward to advising this House, in the near future, that formula financing arrangements for Nunavut and the Western Territory have been concluded. Thank you.

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--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 220-13(5): Valentine's Greetings to Family in Pelly Bay

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Friday the 13th, and I do not think it would be appropriate to make a Member's statement that I am about to make now. Mr. Speaker, I would like to send a valentine greeting to my family in Pelly Bay. Their names are George, Alex, Vincent, Russel, Louise, Stella, Jonathan, Walter, Ramsey, Georgina, Kevin, Wendy, Gwendoline, Kimberly, Donavon, Matt, Uriash, Patrick and finally, my partner in life, Celine. Thank you.

--Applause.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Member's Statement 221-13(5): Radio Communications Concerns in Hall Beach

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern about the communication system in Hall Beach. For some time now, the community of Hall Beach has been experiencing problems with the local radio system and also problems with receiving CBC Radio in the community.

In remote communities, local radio and CBC Radio are the only types of communication that one has. There is no variety of radio stations in the north, regardless if it is local or CBC, the community should be able to have the one small comfort of the local news. Weather information is very important to residents in the Arctic, as it determines whether or not one can go hunting, camping or fishing. Not having this information could be very dangerous.

I understand CBC is under the direction of the CRTC, which is the federal government's responsibility. However, it concerns me that Hall Beach has not had CBC Radio since December, 1997. These transmissions are out of Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, not from the far south. A technician had come to the community to replace the old equipment with new equipment but they experienced problems with it. The technician indicated he was waiting for a FM receiver but, to date, no receiver has arrived in Hall Beach.

The Mayor of Hall Beach asked the technician to inform him prior to his departure so he could repair the old system for use while they waited for the new equipment, but the technician did not do so. Therefore, some of the local people tried to put the old system back together, but as they are not qualified technicians, they could not repair it. The hamlet council of Hall Beach passed a motion in order to have some resolution to this ongoing problem. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They feel this is not adequate because CBC is a nationwide program and the residents of Hall Beach cannot receive it.

What Hall Beach needs is a qualified technician to repair and install the radio system. This major work needs to be completed in order to have radio communications of any sort. Mr. Speaker, I will be directing my questions to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment regarding this problem later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement 222-13(5): Airlift into Fort Chipewyan

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise today to briefly comment on a competitive northern business. Mr. Speaker, Fort Chipewyan's winter road went out very early this year and they were unable to get in all the necessary fuel and supplies. As a result, my understanding is, the Alberta government went looking for an aircraft company that was capable of providing and bringing in the necessary supplies to Fort Chipewyan. Mr. Joe McBryan, a respected aviator and businessman from Hay River, was using his base of operations in Fort Smith, was chosen to do that task. He is going to be flying in approximately a million litres of fuel and many tonnes of other necessary supplies. I was very pleased when he called to tell me this, and I am very proud to see a northern business can compete on equal footing with Alberta businesses or businesses from any other jurisdiction. I would like to wish him well. Of course, he is going to be spending a lot of time and money doing this in Fort Smith, for which I am grateful, as an MLA for that constituency. He is fulfilling a very important job and, of course, I hope the people of Fort Chipewyan do not have any unnecessary hardship. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Barnabas.

Member's Statement 223-13(5): Education Councils' Concerns With the Keewatin Pilot Project

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give an overview of concerns raised by the Baffin, Kitikmeot, and Keewatin education authorities. Both the Nunavut Implementation Commission model and the Nunavut Education Council's model have been discussed by the existing education councils in Baffin, Keewatin and Kitikmeot and their staff. The decision of

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the GNWT to proceed with the Keewatin pilot project for infrastructure transfer as part of the community empowerment initiative and the procedures used to do this have caused concern among the education councils and have underlined the many implications the GNWT community empowerment model would have for education governance and administration. The education councils take issue with the lack of consultation with both the education councils and DEAs and with the community empowerment model's implications for education governance and administration. This is illustrated by the process in which the infrastructure pilot project was introduced in the Keewatin and implications that program funding transferred may follow infrastructure transfers without due consultation. Two, the incongruence between existing legislation of the GNWT, for example, the Education Council Act, the proposed arrangement and education governance and financing under the GNWT community empowerment initiative. Three, the GNWT's express commitment to community empowerment on the one hand and lack of implementation of the process which will ensure that community members can be well informed and can make decisions about which responsibilities in the communities we will assume and what structures will be in place to guarantee that these responsibilities will be met.

Mr. Speaker, it would seem more questions from the stakeholders on the Keewatin pilot project have been raised. I will ask the Minister about them later today during question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements, Mr. Morin.

Member's Statement 224-13(5): Historical Development of Lutselk'e

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am going to talk about my other community in my riding, the community of Lutselk'e. The people of Lutselk'e have strong ties to the land and water, and strong connections to a traditional lifestyle. More importantly, they respect the land and water and all that inhabit it and share its bounty. Mr. Speaker, when I visit Lutselk'e I cannot help but admire and honour the elders and the trappers who maintain that connection.

Before Treaty 8 was signed, the people of this area lived a nomadic lifestyle. They built canoes out of birch bark. Made fish nets out of roots. They bartered their goods with other families and shared their food with one another. In winter and summer, they followed the caribou in order to eat and feed their families. I know it was a tough life, and one that we who have not lived it, cannot easily understand.

Mr. Speaker, in those days, everyone spoke Chipewyan. Although western medicine had not reached this part of the country until the mid-1900's, our people used natural medicine from the land, built sweat lodges and depended on their midwives to assist women during child birth. Mr. Speaker, these people are proud, proud they are independent, proud of the fact they took care of their families and proud they lived an independent free life. They were spiritual people who paid their respect each year at Fort Reliance to the Old Lady of the Falls. They do that pilgrimage still on a yearly basis, Mr. Speaker.

The next era, was called the Trauma Years. It was a time when European explorers brought many of their products and influence into the north. The missionaries arrived, residential schools tore children away from their parents and culture at a very young age. While Lutselk'e became a fur trading post, the people moved permanently off the land and into the community where welfare became their sole source of income for many, instead of furs.

Mr. Speaker, that is the time when the traditional lifestyle began to crumble. It has been especially hard on the elders. I have heard the elders long to return to their old ways. They still want to pass on their knowledge and their skills to their children and grandchildren. It is not too late, and I am glad to say,

Mr. Speaker, that their strength and determination are paying off. They are teaching our children and they are listening. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, colleagues. It has been tough on the community, Mr. Speaker, but I believe the people of Lutselk'e who have been through a lot, know how to survive. They are showing a great deal of innovation to create a community that is a positive place to live in. They are making progress, Mr. Speaker. The people are working to build a road to Austin Lake to stimulate the tourism industry. It is a beautiful place, ripe for sport fishing, boating and swimming. The people of Lutselk'e have accomplished much in a short time, Mr. Speaker. One young fellow by the name of Floyd Able is working to establish a pool hall and arcade. Antoine Michel and Lawrence Catholique are running an outfitting and tourism operation in a joint venture with the Frontier Fishing Lodge. The Development Corporation is marketing fishing trips to the East Arm of Great Slave Lake. The band owns their own buildings and they run their own health programs. The other day I spoke with the income support worker, Mr. Speaker, and he had three clients for the month of January. That is it. Three people on income support in Lutselk'e.

--Applause

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand up today and recognize the people of Lutselk'e and be able to say that, yes, I am fortunate to have so many friends from there and I am proud that I am here representing them today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 225-13(5): Community Empowerment and Community Training Needs

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the whole area of community empowerment and the needs of the people in the community. Mr. Speaker, we speak about community empowerment allowing

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communities to take on more initiatives. We do not spend much time talking about the needs of the community to take on these initiatives. I am talking, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the human resource development these communities need to ensure that the people who do take on these responsibilities have the adequate resources and the training that goes with those positions. Mr. Speaker, in a lot of our communities we have taken on initiatives with regard to community empowerment such as economic development officers' positions and with regard to the social workers, human resource and also income support positions. These positions are held on a part-time basis or the individuals who took on these responsibilities would like to have the training to take on these additional responsibilities this government hands them.

In the past, basically, most people within the government who had these positions concentrated on one effort. With regard to the communities, more and more responsibilities are given to these different portfolios and the individuals who have to deliver them. Yet, within this government, Mr. Speaker, there is money for the Government of the Northwest Territories' employees to take training to move on in different portfolios they have in regard to accounting, upgrading their skills to allow them to do a better job on behalf of this government.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the communities, it seems like it is the other way. We will give you the funding and the responsibilities but we do not have the money to train you. Mr. Speaker, I would say in light of community empowerment, block funding initiatives and other areas, that it is the responsibility of this government to ensure all people are treated equally, especially when it comes to training programs, regardless of whether it is in regard to human resource development that same aspect should be offered to communities when we empower them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 226-13(5): Arviat Caribou Harvest

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spoke of the request that was put forward of the community of Arviat regarding the harvest as required to provide caribou for the elders and the less fortunate. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House the harvest has been approved and a similar harvest will also take place in Baker Lake. Mr. Speaker, this announcement is very important news for the elders and the less fortunate of Arviat and Baker Lake, as the people rely heavily on caribou and on such a caribou harvest.

With the high price of food in Arviat and Baker Lake, this is an essential part of their diet for the people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Enuaraq.

Member's Statement 227-13(5): Broughton Island Air Terminal Replacement

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, the air terminal at Broughton Island is an ATCO trailer. Mr. Speaker, Broughton Island, a community with a population of 486 would like a proper airport building, not a trailer. The airport terminal building is scheduled to be replaced in the 2001-02 fiscal year. Unfortunately, the community cannot wait that long. There are important immediate needs to be addressed.

A new airport is needed to meet higher building and safety code requirements, accommodate an ever-increasing number of passengers and reduce operation and maintenance costs such as utilities. It would have a longer lifespan than the current trailer. Overall efficiency would also be improved. Replacing the current air terminal building now, will result in operations and maintenance savings and other benefits being realized earlier.

Mr. Speaker, we have to acknowledge the long-term potential of Broughton Island and to look at the big picture. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement 228-13(5): Recruitment and Retention Plan for Health Practitioners

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about the recruitment and retention plan the Minister of Health and Social Services had mentioned earlier. Mr. Speaker, last week I asked questions regarding this recruitment and retention plan. As the Minister had indicated, this plan is to address the immediate difficulties in recruitment of social workers, nurses and physicians as well as to develop people and organizations needed to move our services into the next century.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the department for undertaking this initiative and working with its partners. I know that we must respect the independence of our health boards, however, we cannot afford inconsistent interpretation and perhaps, haphazard implementation of the planning that has gone into this report. Therefore, I would urge the Minister and the department to bring the board chairs and the chief

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executive officers into a central location to review and discuss the report.

Mr. Speaker, the department must also be prepared to travel to board meetings to hold workshops and discuss the report. This would help identify things that can be implemented territorially. It might help to identify cost savings and common concerns.

Mr. Speaker, I reiterate that we must allow the boards to maintain their independence, however, this government must assure our residents that they can have consistent health care across the territories. Getting the board chairs and the chief executive officers to a central location to go over the recruitment and retention plan would help assist us to achieve this consistency. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 229-13(5): Access to GNWT and its Communication Network

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the course of the last couple of years, my colleagues and I have made statements and asked questions regarding the improved high speed communications throughout the Northwest Territories. Also, last year we were informed that the famous green book that listed all the government personnel with their respective phone numbers is not being published. This would save the government money and we now have the Internet to take its place. To me, this is great as long as the residents can utilize this tool. However, we are still not to that state yet.

Mr. Speaker, on our web site, the GNWT directory lists all personnel with e-mail addresses, phone numbers and in some cases fax numbers, which is theoretically better and easier to use than the green book was ever thought of to be. Unfortunately, this great tool still cannot find staff who is working with this government. The reason being, this page has never been updated. I know of staff who relocated a year ago, who have made numerous requests to change this record and are still listed in the old area instead of where they work now. Mr. Speaker, do we have this web page, if we cannot let our residents use it for what it is intended to. This page must be updated on a regular basis or else scrap this page entirely. Our staff is important as well as our residents. They should be able to communicate without problems like not finding the right phone numbers. The directory is supposed to tell which department and how to get in touch with people, not where they were. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 230-13(5): Shortage of Education Resources

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in a return to a written question yesterday, the Minister for Education identified that and I quote from the return: "There is no doubt that the department would like to provide additional funding to our schools, to enable them to purchase more resources, texts and materials." This week, published in a full page ad, the NWTTA and education stakeholders submitted a similar plea. We have raised the concern of schools operating without proper resources within this House. We have asked for more allocations to help alleviate the shortage of staff, yet the same response is that we have no monetary or fiscal resources to help and identify the agreed need. We have heard morale is low in our schools. Educators have to do more with less.

Today, I received a letter from the chair of the Apex Education Counsel, Eva Michael. Ms. Michael states that, children come to school eager to learn, to share and to grow up as citizens of the world. Too often though, our children are burdened by problems too numerous to elaborate. Teachers spend too much time maintaining a semblance of discipline rather than in guiding our children. These problems affect our children's learning. These problems have a negative effect on the morale of school staff. Mr. Speaker, a progressive school encourages learning within a sensitive and caring family oriented atmosphere. A reasonable and manageable class size, fosters learning in a school. Ms. Michael is sending a letter and she states, "we petition the Government of the Northwest Territories to provide our children with adequate resources to achieve their potential. Children are our future and do we deny them that future."

Mr. Speaker, later today I will be asking the Minister of Education, some questions on this matter. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement 231-13(5): Tribute to NTCL and the Hay River Business Community

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am always pleased when I can get up in this House to relate a good news story about my home community. For

years, Mr. Speaker, Hay River has been known as the transportation hub of the north. NTCL and its predecessors have been in operation in northern Canada for over 60 years. Mr. Speaker, Hay River is becoming a transportation hub for barge shipping to the north slope of Alaska. Traditionally, Hay River has been a beehive of frantic activity in the shipping and fishing industry and the associated activity in the summer months with different and somewhat less activity in the winter months. I am pleased to say, as a result of a shipping contract with NATCO Industries of Calgary, the NTCL yard in Hay River has been as busy as it is in the summer. The personnel normally laid off during the winter are all working.

The contract involves the shipping of a modular oil processing plant to British Petroleum, Badami Oil field located on the north slope of Alaska. The business community of Hay River is experiencing economic spin-offs of this project and the 80 NATCO sub-trades and contractors who are in Hay River putting the modules together.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to salute NTCL, a wholly aboriginal owned northern company for proving the viability of the Mackenzie River route to the north slope of Alaska. I would like to publicly commend NATCO of Calgary for giving a small northern community, like Hay River, the opportunity to prove its versatility to meet the technical support needs of a project of this magnitude. Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind everyone of the can do attitude of the Hay River business community. Hay River is open for business. We have the infrastructure and the ability to work with industry to offer innovative solutions to their needs.

Mr. Speaker, we believe this project is just the first of many

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such projects to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement 232-13(5): Discussions Regarding the Request for Proposals Process

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today concerning my questions earlier regarding RFPs. On February 10, 1998, I questioned the Premier and the Finance Minister regarding the RFP process. Yesterday the Finance Minister tabled two documents which I have here before me. In doing so, Mr. Todd stated and I quote from an unedited Hansard, "I would like to table two documents based on the questions raised yesterday by Mr. Ootes, in which he implied no discussions were underway between myself and the Construction Association."

Mr. Speaker, upon review of Hansard, it is clear that I said no such thing, nor did I imply such a thing that there were discussions underway between the Minister and the Construction Association. Further, the two letters tabled by Mr. Todd, are both explicitly about P3 and make no reference to the RFPs. It is clear from the contents of both letters, both Mr. Todd and the Construction Association president, Bill Aho, are interested in working together on the P3 process and delivery. It has nothing to do with the RFPs questions and comments that I made. I want to be clear about this issue on which I spoke about in this House. I want to today state clarification for the record. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Henry.

Member's Statement 233-13(5): Lack of Resources for Education

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our kids are our future. Education is the key. Mr. Speaker, we have all heard these terms many times within in this House. Yet, the current education system does not have the resources to address and deal with the issues of special needs within our school system. Mr. Speaker, I do recognize they are making every effort, however, we are losing too many of our future generations between the cracks of our education system.

The Department of Education in coordination with the Department of Health and Social Services have recognized a need for future support for students within our school system when dealing with those who have special needs. It has been determined we have additional students with special needs given our high incidence of fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol

effects in the north. Mr. Speaker, there has been a psychiatric assessment team from Stanton Regional Hospital established to meet with school administration and staff who are dealing with the special needs students. We have speech and language services within our school system. We have accommodated school environments for students with physical handicaps. The department has initiated early childhood education programs.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on, but the simple fact is, our education system is still not able to address the educational needs of all students within our system. These new programs are good, Mr. Speaker, but many students are not reached soon enough within our education systems to receive the timely help and the support they need.

Every child has a right to an education. Educators across the territories are trying their best to identify and meet these special needs but without the proper financial support, our schools cannot accomplish the mandate of the Department of Education. We all know class sizes are increasing, resources are decreasing and the quality of our education is getting stretched. Are we prepared to accept this, Mr. Speaker? The answer has to be no. We have heard our Minister state in this House. There is no more money. Mr. Speaker, we must not accept this. We must fight for our future generations, especially when they cannot fight for themselves. We have an obligation to create future generations who need to have the education and skills to become independent citizens.

Education is the key. Our kids are the future. Mr. Speaker, these catch phrases have no meaning if we do not act now to support and enhance our education system. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Yellowknife South is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Do we have any nays? Mr. Henry, you have unanimous consent.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, colleagues. Students, parents, educators and this government all have their role to play, but we cannot succeed if we lack the basic resource, and that Mr. Speaker, is money. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Thomas Kudloo from Baker Lake, chairman of the Nunavut Water Board. Thomas is here somewhere. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Pat Thomas of the NWTTA. We missed her. She has not been here for a couple of days. Welcome back, Pat.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

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ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 297-13(5): Update on Nunavut Transition Costs

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Division Planning. In response to my question on February 10th, concerning the decentralized model, the Government of Nunavut and the implementation schedule to put this model in place in the capital and in other communities. The Minister indicated that the Government of the NWT supported the decentralized model recommended by NIC and Footprints 2. The Minister also qualified his answer by saying. The support is there, subject to the dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I believe these one-time costs were outlined in the GNWT's document entitled "Creating Two New Governments, Transition Action Plan." Mr. Speaker, in response to an oral question from the honourable Member from Yellowknife South, Mr. Henry, on January 28th, on the transfer of GNWT employees to Nunavut, the Minister indicated that not one single response for the transition plan had been received to date from any of the parties. My question, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister confirm what importance, rather, the importance that has been paid to this one time transitional funding, necessary to implement the decentralized model? Mr. Speaker, I am asking how it is being addressed. This is the key to putting the decentralized model into place. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for the Division Secretariat, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 297-13(5): Update on Nunavut Transition Costs

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my ministerial speech earlier today, I am cautiously optimistic that in the formulas for the ongoing needs for both Nunavut and the west, we are going to come to an agreement fairly soon with the federal government and the parties and hopefully, a positive announcement within the next two or three months. On the other hand, my honourable colleague talks about the need for additional transitional dollars, in which, within that identification there were monies as it related directly to one-time monies as related to the decentralized model. I understand there is a working committee working with the Interim Commissioner's office and the federal government trying to identify or working toward identifying the additional dollars necessary to ensure that the implementation of a decentralized government happens as quickly and expeditiously as possible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 297-13(5): Update on Nunavut Transition Costs

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not quite sure if I heard the Minister say as to when we would hear the timing.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 297-13(5): Update on Nunavut Transition Costs

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I indicated on the question earlier this week, I think it was asked by Mr. O'Brien with respect to division that the Interim Commissioner's office is going to provide to the working committee which is made up of all partners, NTI, GNWT, federal government, his pre-implementation plan. We are optimistic it will be at the end of March. In that implementation plan it will identify what he believes can be done and within the time it can be done, where it will be done and who will do it. He will also have to identify in there, who is going to pay. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 297-13(5): Update on Nunavut Transition Costs

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following the same line of questioning regarding the setting up of offices in the capital and regional centres, these offices will need furniture and so on. My question to the Minister is, can the Minister confirm exactly whether the budget is for new furniture or furniture that will be moved from A to B?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 297-13(5): Update on Nunavut Transition Costs

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I should do is try and refresh everyone's memory about what our creation of the two territories document was which I tabled in the House in October, 1997. In it we said, in an ideal

world, if Nunavut were to occur April 1, 1999, there would be a requirement for an additional \$136 million to meet all of the fiscal commitments of the transfer. If my memory serves me correctly, it was somewhere in the region of \$7 million identified for furnishings that we identified as costs associated with the decentralized model. In terms of the one-time transition costs to move people, there was \$18 million identified. There were a number of areas in that document which identified what we felt was a shortfall in the original Cabinet document that went to the federal government in March, 1996, in which the federal government approved \$150 million. It is all in that document and in fairness to my colleague, I would suggest that come the end of March, when the Interim Commissioner's office provides his full implementation plan, I am assuming he will have to identify what he is going to do, as I said, when he is going to do it, who is going where and the costs associated with it. Any shortfall that he has within the \$150 million, approved by the federal Cabinet in March, 1996, will have to be made up by the federal government's Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 297-13(5): Update on Nunavut Transition Costs

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MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, more to the meat of my question, whether it is \$7 million or \$10 million, can the Minister advise this House what contracting policies will be in place to ensure that Nunavut based companies will have an opportunity to bid on these contracts for furniture and so on? Will there be a BIP?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 297-13(5): Update on Nunavut Transition Costs

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been trying to say all week that the Interim Commissioner has the

responsibility, both financially and legislatively, for putting into place the new government prior to April 1, 1999, when the new legislators are elected. I would hope he would incorporate policies that would reflect the needs and interests of northern business but I do not know that at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Rabesca.

Question 298-13(5): Liquor Pricing in the NWT

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Finance, the Honourable John Todd. Mr. Speaker, I am quite disturbed with yesterday's report on CBC that as of August, 1998, NorthwesTel will be hiking phone rates by four dollars. This rate will increase again by six, the next year. All this is being done to prepare for the long distance competition. I am not sure I see the logic behind hiking rates and making customers angry just before competition arrives. Mr. Speaker, my concern is that this hike will make our rates some of the highest in Canada. On top of this, we also pay some of the highest rates for petroleum, rent and food. We even pay an extremely high price for things such as cigarettes and alcohol. Mr. Speaker, I understand that as of last Friday, February 17, 1998, the price of beer in bars had jumped to \$30 a case. My question to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker, is, the government going into the boot legging business?

--Laughter

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Finance Minister is, how does the government decide what the price will be for off sales in northern communities where there are bars? Are the prices the same across the NWT or is this at the discretion of the bar owners? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 298-13(5): Liquor Pricing in the NWT

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if my honourable colleague can just give me some clarity on the

question. Was it in relationship to the cost of alcohol across the territories or was it in relationship to the cost of telephones? I was not quite sure, and I wonder if he could help me out? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for North Slave, could you clarify your question?

Supplementary To Question 298-13(5): Liquor Pricing in the NWT

MR. RABESCA:

Mr. Speaker, my concern was the price of all the things I have alluded to such as the phone hikes and the price of alcohol in the Northwest Territories. I am just trying to see how the prices have been levied throughout the territories. Has it been done on the discretion of the owners of the bars or does the hike have something to do with the government pricings? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 298-13(5): Liquor Pricing in the NWT

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the telephone situation, of course, NorthwTel has to go before the CRTC, in any of the requests for telephone hikes. We did make a presentation to them. I believe my honourable colleague, Mr. Arlooktoo did, earlier in the year, indicate some support for some of their position. I think we could probably table in the House and provide my colleague with our submission to the NorthwTel and CRTC hearings in an effort to...

MR. SPEAKER:

The question was not on NorthwTel's hike. It was on the hike of alcohol, I believe. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I missed it, sorry. I thought we were talking about both. My apologies. The price of alcohol, yes.

--Laughter

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the cost of alcohol across the territories, certainly the wholesale price is set by the government in its tax initiatives, et cetera. I am not sure if my colleague is saying, does the private sector add different levels of profit to it in different parts of the country. I do not think it does. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 298-13(5): Liquor Pricing in the NWT

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the NWT is second in Canada when it comes to consuming alcohol. Could the Minister tell me how our liquor prices compare to those in other provinces? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 298-13(5): Liquor Pricing in the NWT

HON. JOHN TODD:

I indicated earlier when my department

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was being reviewed we generate somewhere in the region of about \$16 million or \$17 million on an annual basis on alcohol sales and similar on tobacco sales when we were discussing what is commonly known as the sin taxes. I believe we have a fairly high consumption of alcohol in comparison with other jurisdictions. If my memory serves me correctly, we are sort of sitting second or third in the country on a per capita consumption basis. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Question 299-13(5): Application of Federal Gun Control Legislation

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Justice. Yesterday, in my Member's statement, I referred to the introduction of the controversial gun control law that was legislated last January, 1997. I was of the understanding that this gun control legislation would not affect northerners whose main subsistence is derived from hunting, trapping and fishing activities. On the other hand, it is federal legislation. I am requesting information as to what has progressed since that time. Can the Minister explain what sections, if not all of the legislation, is applied to northerners? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Justice, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 299-13(5): Application of Federal Gun Control Legislation

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The gun control legislation that was brought up by the federal government, Bill C-68, is a concern to us as well. Ever since the legislation came into effect, it has been a concern of the GNWT. We have also contacted people who are concerned about this legislation as well. It is directed to all the northerners and all of Canada. We have heard that if the legislation is going to come into effect in October, 1998, it will become a law in Canada. Thank you. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Supplementary To Question 299-13(5): Application of Federal Gun Control Legislation

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. We were informed that certain sections of the law will not be applied to northerners. I have a strong sense that community people prefer to have their own laws and regulations concerning their own gun control procedures. Is this law applied uniformly across Canada or does this law apply only to hunters who own guns? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 299-13(5): Application of Federal Gun Control Legislation

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said, Bill C-68 is federal legislation and was introduced by the federal government. It is going to be directed to anyone who is a resident of Canada. It is not just directed to the hunters and the people who fish. It is directed toward everyone in Canada equally, and they are treated equally under the law, under this legislation. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Supplementary To Question 299-13(5): Application of Federal Gun Control Legislation

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) I strongly feel it is not right that these people do not know anything about their possible contravention. Can the Minister make sure that the Inuit will be educated about how this will affect so many of them? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 299-13(5): Application of Federal Gun Control Legislation

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, in regard to the question of the Member, I agree with the Member's comments because a lot of people have to be informed about this federal legislation, especially with the safety of the public in regard to guns. I have heard briefly that the federal government has been informing the public in Canada, but we are not really sure exactly what kinds of information they have been distributing to the public. As the GNWT we are against this gun control legislation. We have been trying to lobby so it would not be passed. We will not be involved with promoting gun legislation. Thank you. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. I have been requested by the Member for Kivallivik to recognize some people in the gallery. I hope I pronounce your names right. The first is, Mr. Larry Aknavigak. He is the chairman of the Nunavut Impact Review Board; Bob Lyall, chair of the Nunavut Planning Committee; Thomas Kudloo, the chair of the Nunavut Water Board and some of their staff, Alexandra Thompson, Jon Pierce, John Crump and Phillippe Dipizzo. Welcome to the Assembly.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 300-13(5): Consultation on Keewatin Pilot Project

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as per my Member's statement earlier this afternoon, I would like to ask the Minister if MACA consulted with the education council on the Keewatin pilot project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Ms. Thompson.

Return To Question 300-13(5): Consultation on Keewatin Pilot Project

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HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They were at the regional leadership meetings. They had a representative at the Keewatin Regional Leadership Meeting when the proposal was being presented. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 300-13(5): Consultation on Keewatin Pilot Project

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister meet with the education boards of Nunavut to discuss their concerns? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Thompson.

Further Return To Question 300-13(5): Consultation on Keewatin Pilot Project

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Each department is responsible for consulting with their departments, so I will refer that to Mr. Dent. He may have some details as to whether there has been any consultation between his department and the boards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 300-13(5): Consultation on Keewatin Pilot Project

MR. BARNABAS:

Mr. Speaker, I did not get that answer. The Keewatin pilot project is the responsibility of MACA. I am asking the Minister of MACA, will she meet with the Education Boards of Nunavut to discuss their concerns? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Thompson.

Further Return To Question 300-13(5): Consultation on Keewatin Pilot Project

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have already done that in partnership with Education, Culture and Employment at the senior levels. The department heads and the board chairpersons were here last week to meet with my department which was coordinated by the Education, Culture and Employment Department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 300-13(5): Consultation on Keewatin Pilot Project

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What has MACA done after they heard their concerns? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Thompson.

Further Return To Question 300-13(5): Consultation on Keewatin Pilot Project

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I heard the presentations went really well and that the education boards understood what the initiative was about. We are doing everything we can to assist them in any way if they are not well informed on this issue. I was also talking with Joe Attagutaluk, the board chairperson for Baffin. I will be going to the Baffin to their meeting on behalf of MACA in regard to community empowerment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 301-13(5): Pregnancy and STD Rates Among Teens

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services in regard to his Minister's statement today. Mr. Speaker, the Minister indicated that the rate of the population growth is slowly coming down, but that current rates of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases needs more work. I would like to know if the Minister can indicate what are the current teen rates of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases? Does it indicate higher or lower sexual activity concerning teens in relation to the past? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 301-13(5): Pregnancy and STD Rates Among Teens

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have the specifics on the actual rates per se, but we recognize that it is a problem area which needs to be

addressed. The boards are aware of that as well, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 301-13(5): Pregnancy and STD Rates Among Teens

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have thought the department would know whether the rates are getting higher or lower in relation to the work they are doing. However, could the Minister elaborate on what has been done in the past to lower teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 301-13(5): Pregnancy and STD Rates Among Teens

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, primarily as it stands now, a lot of programs are designed for the schools through the boards. The programs, primarily in the primary schools and the high schools as far as sex education and family education, the intent is to try to get more of the

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health personnel involved. In some of those instances, to integrate some of the programs by having health centre staff involved in delivering some of those programs in the education system, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 301-13(5): Pregnancy and STD Rates Among Teens

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister indicate what they are going to do differently? It seems to me,

from looking at various information that I have seen, the rates are not going down.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 301-13(5): Pregnancy and STD Rates Among Teens

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think primarily, it is trying to put more of an emphasis and focus in that area by allowing, in the example of this Strategic Initiative Fund, to allow some resources to be available. You can dedicate more individuals or programs if it is required as far as literature or that kind of information to be available and accessible. It is more in trying to strengthen the existing programs and create more of a focus on those programs, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 301-13(5): Pregnancy and STD Rates Among Teens

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister had indicated he did not have on hand the knowledge of whether sexual activity is actually increasing or decreasing. Could the Minister undertake to find out that information and to relay that to this House before we leave? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 301-13(5): Pregnancy and STD Rates Among Teens

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will try to have that information by the time our budget comes forward, if it happens to be this month. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 302-13(5): Fiscal Control of Education Boards

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the past couple of months and weeks and even today, we have heard a couple of statements concerning funding for our schools, school boards and education system. I wonder if the Minister of Education could actually outline what type of fiscal controls have been put in place on the boards which keep bringing up these continuing concerns? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 302-13(5): Fiscal Control of Education Boards

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department does not put any kind of fiscal control on the councils that leads to a concern. I suspect the concern is coming from the capping of the formula for the past couple of years and councils have had to absorb any increases in population within the funding that has been provided to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 302-13(5): Fiscal Control of Education Boards

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the concern I was trying to bring out was that the boards, the NWTTA, anyone that is involved in education today, I received a letter, as I said in my statement, from the Apex District Education Authority as to the type of monies that have been allocated by the formula. I am wondering if the Minister will be revisiting that formula in light of these concerns over the past few months in regard to the monetary amounts that have been given or allocated to the groups? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 302-13(5): Fiscal Control of Education Boards

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the formula is, in fact, revisited every single year. The department, working together with directors from all the divisional education councils, reviews the formula before setting it up for the subsequent year. I believe the Member is asking, will we find a way to put more money into the formula? Unless this legislature finds some way to put more money into education, the answer is no. The amount of money in my budget is fixed and unless this legislature decides to change its priorities and, for example, direct me to take money from the seniors' fuel subsidy and make it available to the councils, it would be impossible to do. This is something the Members need to remember. The money has to come from somewhere, and if we are going to talk about increasing funding for councils, then I would be interested to hear the Members' advice as to where it should come from. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 302-13(5): Fiscal Control of Education Boards

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am just an Ordinary Member. I do not have a big bureaucracy working

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for me to give me advice. I do notice, Mr. Speaker, a good initiative of this House, of this government, of the department in this government which is the Strategic Initiatives Fund announced by Mr. Ng today. Someone put money in that fund to help out with the FAS/FAE strategic initiatives for our children. If we could find money for that fund, we should be able to find money for our education boards who have been screaming, as Mr. Henry has done in his statement today and in my statement. My question is, where, Mr. Speaker, where will the Minister find the money to put into that fund? He asked me to find it. I will ask him, where will he find the money? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 302-13(5): Fiscal Control of Education Boards

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Mr. Speaker, I could look in my wallet, but I doubt there would be enough to make a big difference. I do not have the ability to add money to the education budget. I have the ability only to use and allocate the money my department is given. Where am I going to find more money? The answer is, I do not have any way of finding more money. I have not checked my lottery ticket from last night, but I doubt that even that would be enough to deal with the situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 302-13(5): Fiscal Control of Education Boards

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious subject. I am not trying to make light of it, but, indeed, the Department of Health has found money within their budget as identified by Members of this Assembly in areas like healthy children, mental health, public health and so forth. Will the Minister maybe talk to his functionaries within the department to see if they can find some money within the department to address the needs brought forward by the NWTTA, by the Members of this House, by education councils, by parents? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 302-13(5): Fiscal Control of Education Boards

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in fact, the Member is wrong. The money that Mr. Ng was talking

about earlier today did not come from within the department. It came from rebasing. As Members will know, Mr. Ng and I had fought passionately for more funding for things like early childhood intervention and for things like the Northern Employment Strategy where we get more students working. When it comes time to fight for any dollars that are available, you can bet I fight as passionately as anyone for more money for education. We, as a government, have been unable to find any more money to put into the system. We have come to the end of the line. I do not have the flexibility to move monies around except from one program to another within the department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 303-13(5): Additional Funding for Education

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be to the Minister of Education, Mr. Dent, following up on my Member's statement today. Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister has touched on some of the points I wanted him to expand on. He has talked about there being no new money, and we have heard the Minister say this a number of times. I accept the statement that there is no new money. I think it would be beneficial for Members of this House and for the public in general if the Minister will elaborate on how he would go about soliciting additional money or rebasing money from Cabinet for education. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 303-13(5): Additional Funding for Education

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Finance will attest, I badger him daily, sometimes more than once, for additional funds for education. In fact, I wrote him a little note about that earlier this afternoon just after we got into the House. He does not have any more money either, but I keep doing it, because if we do find an extra million dollars,

I will not be far from his mind. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 303-13(5): Additional Funding for Education

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for that. It would be important for the public to know the process of how the Minister would be soliciting additional funds. I have no doubt he holds education as a high priority for the students of the Northwest Territories. My question to the Minister is, has the department looked at the amounts of money they spend in education from kindergarten to Grade 12; looked at that amount of money and compared it to the amount of money they spend on education for adults or students who have not been, for one reason or another, able to take advantage of education in the first 12 years and looked at reusing or reprioritizing some of that money? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 303-13(5): Additional Funding for Education

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HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members should remember that with the first budget I introduced in this House, we talked about that very issue. In fact, adult education took a much bigger reduction than did the K to 12 system. The K to 12 funding was kept as close to prior years as possible and other areas in the budget took much larger decreases. The decrease for adult education funding and the colleges was 25 percent in the 1996-97 budget. It was nowhere near that in the K to 12 system. It was about three percent.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 303-13(5): Additional Funding for Education

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I note today the Minister of Health, Mr. Ng, in his statement, he talked about our children are our future, so it is critical that our children be healthy. I think that is really important. I would also say it is extremely important too that if we do have healthy children, we provide them with an education to get them through. Will the Minister look at, with the limited resources he does have, the opportunities to maybe contribute more funds to the K to 12 years, to look at contributing more funds to that or rebasing, so we can continue the work the Department of Health is doing so we can have educated northerners? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 303-13(5): Additional Funding for Education

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am hoping it is not too long now before we get into the detailed consideration of my budget in committee of the whole. At that time, Members will have the opportunity to question where money could be shifted in the budget and make changes. The balance that we have in the budget reflects the priorities of this House to the best of our ability. Unless we have more money coming into the department, there is no where we can move money around. As I heard the Member's question, he was only referring within my department. If it is within my department, I think the mix is right, Mr. Speaker, but we will have an opportunity to go through that in some detail shortly.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 304-13(5): Responses to Previous Questions

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for Mr. Antoine. I asked several questions earlier in the week regarding the Lahm Ridge Tower and yesterday the Minister stated he would get an answer for me to two

questions. I will read from unedited Hansard, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Antoine said it was Mr. Marceau who had contacted the department to initiate renegotiations of the lease extension. That, of course, eventually led to the eventual sale of the building. My question on Friday, February 6, 1998 was, is this the first contact Mr. Marceau had with the department? Mr. Antoine in his reply stated it was in July that Mr. Marceau contacted the department and he was not aware of any contact for the months before that, but he said he would check into that and get back to me. Then, my question was, has the Minister checked that? He said, he did not have the answer and he would check it out.

My second question yesterday on the same issue was, were departmental officials engaged in discussions in the lease extension and/or the Lahm Ridge Tower with individuals outside of the department other than Mr. Marceau prior to August 3rd of last year? Mr. Antoine stated he would have the department check on those. Does the Minister have an answer for us today, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Antoine. Two questions.

Return To Question 304-13(5): Responses to Previous Questions

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thought I took those questions as notice. I did not actually say it but that was what the intention was because I do not know the details of who talked to whom and when last spring, like in July and August. I would like to take it as notice now and get back to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question has been taken as notice, Mr. Ootes. Oral questions. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Question 305-13(5): Radio Communications in Hall Beach

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Radio communication is an important medium in any community. It provides

news, weather and entertainment to residents. However, Hall Beach has been without radio communication and has been for sometime now. Can the Minister tell me if this problem can be rectified in the near future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
(Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 305-13(5): Radio Communications in Hall Beach

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I understand CBC plans to have someone fly into Hall Beach February 28, 1998, and we hope that the problem will be corrected within a day or two. Education, Culture and Employment is prepared to work with the community and CBC to discuss the situation to see if we can address how these issues should be handled in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 306-13(5): Nunavut Decentralized Government Costs

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MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Division Planning. Mr. Speaker, I have asked a number of questions regarding the decentralized model over the last week or so and unfortunately, I was not able to get information or answers to some of the questions. I understand and believe what the Minister is telling me is that he does not have that information. That in itself, Mr. Speaker, concerns me. My question is regarding the formula financing arrangements which are ongoing. Can the Minister tell me whether or not the decentralized model we are looking at is incorporated in the planning? Are these costs incorporated in what we are arranging right now? What would the total package be in the end and if it will include that? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for the Division Secretariat, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 306-13(5): Nunavut Decentralized Government Costs

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the incremental costs required to fund a decentralized model, the incremental side of things will be included in the formula arrangements. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 306-13(5): Nunavut Decentralized Government Costs

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For clarification, is the Minister saying, the costs that will be required to pay for the various individuals who will be transferring into other communities and so on, these costs are being built into the formula that is being negotiated now? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 306-13(5): Nunavut Decentralized Government Costs

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to have to spend sometime, and I hope my colleague will take this properly with him, to try to explain how the process works. I want to step back a little bit and try to answer the question this way. There is clearly a requirement by the Interim Commissioner to present to all parties a Pre-implementation Strategy to have the new Nunavut government in place for April 1, 1999.

We do not have that information right now, although we are working with the Interim Commissioner on it. That information will be provided to us at the end of March, I think that is what the working committee has indicated. It will, perhaps, clear up a lot of questions my colleague has, and understandably so, in relationship to decentralization for his communities. Whether we all like it or not, we are going to have to

wait until then. I am just as anxious as my colleague from Arviat is to see that document and to see how we are going to move in an orderly way and how a new government will be put in place. Our position being a decentralized model, we support it. Therefore, the ultimate costs for the decentralized model should be reflected in the financial arrangements we make with the federal government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Roland.

Question 307-13(5): Construction of Seniors' Housing

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question at this time will be directed to the Minister responsible for Housing. Mr. Speaker, as we heard, I believe it was yesterday or the day before in this House, seniors' housing and the location is determined by the Department of Health and Social Services. I would like to know from the Minister, in the area of seniors' housing, are there plans or seniors' housing criteria where units are built more for seniors and not just like the average standard home? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 307-13(5): Construction of Seniors' Housing

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I should clarify the Housing Corporation's role in the area of seniors' housing is in the funding for the building of the facilities. There was a decision made by the Government of the NWT that we would put \$3 million aside per year to build seniors' facilities. This is to try to deal with, in a small way, the real need we have across the Northwest Territories for low cost housing for seniors. There is a criterion that the Department of Health and Social Services follows, which I do not have in front of me. As I understand, there is a fairly long waiting list of communities waiting for these facilities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 307-13(5): Construction of Seniors' Housing

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister inform me more in the area of structural criteria, for example, height of counter tops and cupboards? Is there a criterion for seniors' housing? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 307-13(5): Construction of Seniors' Housing

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have to do a bit of research to get those details, but the idea is to maximize the funding we allocate to build the most number of housing units for seniors. These are specially designed housing units. In most cases, I understand they are in four-plex type clusters and there are specially designed to ensure they are as user friendly as possible for seniors. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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Supplementary To Question 307-13(5): Construction of Seniors' Housing

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are those standards or the criteria only in those clusters of seniors housing units which have been discussed between yourself and the Department of Health and Social Services or are they in other units that are supplied through the local housing authority? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 307-13(5): Construction of Seniors' Housing

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My experience with the social housing units we now build has been in the previous year and in the current year, where we have built four-plexes in four communities. Although there is some difference in the details of the design, you do have a basic facility that is standard to all these buildings. How that compares to what has been done in the past, I do not know. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 307-13(5): Construction of Seniors' Housing

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware of a study or a report that was done on seniors' housing. I had been made aware of this by an elder in my community. Could the Minister bring that forward to see if the concerns within the study have been addressed?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 307-13(5): Construction of Seniors' Housing

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The short answer is yes. One of the things we do is continually take suggestions for improvements in the designs. I will find the correspondence on that concern and work with the Minister of Health and Social Services to see if we can address it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. I want to recognize in the gallery a long-time northerner, coauthor of the Northern Man book on Ernie Lyall. He is an educator, teacher and a resident of Iqaluit. Mr. Picco wants me to say this. He is also Ed's good friend, Nick Newbery.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 308-13(5): Training for Community Empowerment

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. It is in regard to my Member's statement on community empowerment initiatives that this government and the communities are carrying out. It seems like there is a real discretion between the way people work within the government and the communities when it comes to training, especially in the different departments. There is a Human Resources Department where it allows employees of those different departments to be able to take different courses and programs to develop their skills in regard to computer training, accounting and areas like that in which they receive credit for taking these programs. My question to the Minister is, with community empowerment coming to the communities over the next couple of years, what is the department doing to have the people in the communities educated and also to ensure that these people are able to carry out the jobs that will be coming to the communities to the fullest and will have the opportunity to take additional training for the additional programs that are being taken on? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Ms. Thompson.

Return To Question 308-13(5): Training for Community Empowerment

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the Community Empowerment Strategy, we do community planning which involves the partners in the communities. It starts from the community. During community planning and visioning, there is also assessing of the community where the strengths may be and where training is needed. I would just like to mention that in 1997-98, RWED received approval for the Northern Employment Strategy, and \$1.5 million was allocated to MACA for training. There has been quite a variety of training initiatives we have taken on. One of them is for community employees in areas such as social services; community works; computer software, completion of human resource assessment; human resource plans; hiring of local community empowerment coordinators, trainers and trainees; community and regional visioning and planning workshops. This is how we have been using that fund. If a specific community wants to train an

individual to help them with their community empowerment within that community, I can work with my partners and see if we can have that individual trained. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 308-13(5): Training for Community Empowerment

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regarding the whole area of ensuring people not only have the education but it is also critical they have the new training requirements and regarding what your findings were when you were assessing people, filing reports and the accounting of taking on more dollars and responsibilities in the communities; I would like to ask the Minister, similar to the departments, there is a section which has a human resource dollar allocation, is there a possibility a community that takes on responsibilities will also be able to negotiate for funds in taking on these responsibilities

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that there is enough money there to train these people?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Thompson.

Further Return To Question 308-13(5): Training for Community Empowerment

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If there is a regional community empowerment team which consists of all superintendents in each region and if a community wants to train somebody, they can write up a proposal to this group. Then this group can give them some money to train this person and we can work with the community. One of the initiatives we have taken with community empowerment is community-based planning which helps communities with their vision, establishing their goals and setting priorities. If it is a priority of that community to train an individual, then that community should come up with a proposal to the regional superintendent's team, called the RICE

teams. From there, we can deal with this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 308-13(5): Training for Community Empowerment

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The concern I have is where communities have to come forth with proposals. We talk about empowering communities, giving them the ability to take over programs and basically run with the programs they have. The question I would like to ask the Minister is, is there a simpler process of when we allow these communities to negotiate these programs and services to deliver in their communities, as part of the process that there are monies in the transfer arrangements which allow the communities to train their own people and knowing that the money will be there to train them, they do not have to keep going back time and time again with proposals?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Thompson.

Further Return To Question 308-13(5): Training for Community Empowerment

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The community can decide what they want to do with the Community Empowerment Fund. They can also hire a community empowerment person who can look after all the proposals and see what the community wants to present to the RICE teams at the regional level. We can hire staff in the community to deal with community empowerment. There is money to do that. I have to know which community would like that because I do not know which community he is talking about. We do have community empowerment coordinators in our regions. The community decides how they want to use that money. If they want to hire a community empowerment person, we can allow them to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 308-13(5): Training for Community Empowerment

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The point I am trying to make is similar to what is happening in the area of division where people are being trained in the west in different departments so when division takes place, these people are there and they can fill in these positions which we are training them now to take over. The same thing occurs in the land claim agreements where they also negotiate an implementation agreement which identifies training dollars which are going to be required to have those people trained to take on those positions. What I am asking the Minister is, these two avenues have already been done where people are trained. They are there, so when they take over something these people can fill these positions and there are monies there to train them so we do not have to keep putting in proposals. You take over something and then you train somebody after the fact. Let us have these people trained before we allow these responsibilities to go to the community. Can the Minister tell me if her department is doing anything to ensure the communities have the adequate funds to have these people trained before the fact of taking over these responsibilities?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ms. Thompson.

Further Return To Question 308-13(5): Training for Community Empowerment

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is exactly what we are trying to do by assessing the communities to see where their strengths are. The Member is referring to Inuit employment plans. The east has to provide training to Inuit individuals. Under the Nunavut agreement, there is an agreement with the federal government that 50 percent of Inuit will have to be employed. That is why there is that funding to train Inuit people to help manage the Nunavut government. In the west we also have community empowerment people who can assist and assess the communities to see what training they need. This is what we have been doing. I brought forward a document which lists what is happening in each community. If the Member would like me to look into a specific community to assist him, I will do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. We still have six Members who wanted to ask questions, including Members who did not ask questions. The Members are asking questions and continuing with supplementaries with preambles. I would remind the Members to please organize your questions. Once your preamble is over, you have three questions asked without continuously making preambles. You are denying other Members the opportunity to exercise their own political aspirations. I would also like to recognize in the gallery, Mr. Tom Wilson. Mr. Wilson is the counsellor of the village of Fort Simpson. Welcome to the Assembly. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committee on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Kakfwi, I believe you have two documents. Go ahead.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

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Tabled Document 45-13(5): Business Development Fund 1996-97 Annual Report

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table two documents today. The first one is entitled Business Development Fund, 1996-97 Annual Report.

Tabled Document 46-13(5): Business Credit Corporation 1997 Annual Report

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

The second document I wish to table today is entitled Business Credit Corporation, 1997 Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99, Committee Report 02-13(5), Committee Report 03-13(5), Committee Report 04-13(5), Committee Report 05-13(5), Tabled Document 15-13(5) and Tabled

Document 19-13(5) with Mrs. Groenewegen in the Chair.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

I would like to call committee of the whole to order. We have a number of items before us on our agenda today. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Barnabas.

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The committee wishes to consider Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99; Committee Report 02-13(5) and Committee Report 03-13(5) and continue with MACA and the Department of Public Works. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Is the committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

We will resume committee of the whole after a 15-minute break. I would encourage all Members to be back in 15 minutes. Thank you.

--Break

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

I would like to call the committee to order. We are dealing with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. I would like to direct your attention to the main estimates book page 4-19, and I would like to ask the Minister if she would like to go to the witness table and bring in her witnesses? Is the committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Agreed, thank you. Mr. Sergeant-At-Arms. Madam Minister, for the record, could you please introduce your witnesses?

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. To my left is Ms. Penny Ballantyne, deputy minister for MACA and to my right is Mr. Vern Christensen, assistant deputy minister for MACA and also Chris Keeley, director of finance for MACA. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. We are on community operations, total region \$5.817 million. Mr. Enuaraq.

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Are we on page 4-19 Madam Chairperson?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Yes, that is correct.

MR. ENUARAQ:

Madam Chairperson, I have no questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, my question is in regard to block funding of these particular tax-based communities. Madam Chairperson, I would like clarification from the department on this particular block funding. Is it strictly for municipal projects?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I am advised that yes, they are for capital projects under municipal finance. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

A further clarification, Madam Chairperson. This would not include health centres or hospitals?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. No, it would not. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Madam Chairperson, are these unconditional or conditional funds?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I will refer that to my assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Christensen.

MR. CHRISTENSEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The funding provided is unconditional to the municipality. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Christensen. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, if it is unconditional, I presume then, the municipalities would not be required to have any agreements or approvals in place from their councils as to which projects would be built?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Christensen.

MR. CHRISTENSEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The municipality would be required to expend those funds consistent with the municipal legislation that governs their normal operations which would include the striking of a budget and securing council approval by administration before funds would be expended on any project. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Christensen. Anything further, Mr. Steen?

MR. STEEN:

Madam Chairperson, thank you. I believe I heard the Minister say yesterday that at the present time, only tax-based municipalities have the opportunity for block funding. How does this fit into the program of community empowerment when we talk about block funding communities including hamlets?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It is correct that we have just block funded the tax-based communities, towns and villages. That is why we are trying to come up with a proposal to see how it would work in the hamlets with the Keewatin pilot project. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Does the department have any idea when they are going to have this policy or make a decision on how they are going to do this in the hamlets or with the Keewatin pilot project?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It is one of the issues that are being dealt with through the municipal financing review. We should have something by the fall to be discussed. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It leaves about six months to implement after this fall?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I will be referring the question to the deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Ms. Ballantyne.

MS. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, at this point, we are still working on the concept of block funding because it would be a very different arrangement in a non-tax-based municipality. There are a number of issues that need to be worked out. We are doing that in two ways: one, through the model that we are developing with the Keewatin pilot project and secondly, through the municipal financing and review. It is probably too early for us to tell, whether or not those models would be ready for implementation any time after the fall. It really remains to be seen at this point. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Ballantyne. Mr. Barnabas.

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to know how these funds are allocated? The reason I am asking, most of these small communities are getting more funds than larger communities. I would like to know how these funds are allocated? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have explained to the Infrastructure Committee that it is through the capital planning process and is according to the needs of the community. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Barnabas.

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. For example, the reason why I ask this question is, I will mention Jean-Marie River. It has a population of 60 and it is getting \$100,000 and a population of 652 in Arctic Bay is only getting \$60,000 for its sewage improvement. One of the questions I have is, why is there a huge difference? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Mr. Christensen.

MR. CHRISTENSEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The reason why some of the smaller communities may appear to be receiving more funding for capital projects reflects the fact that, historically, we have been improving municipal infrastructure for the larger communities before we have tended to improve the infrastructure for the smaller communities. We are at a stage now with some of the infrastructure in communities where some of the smaller community improvements in those communities can be funded through our plan. Generally, it reflects the infrastructure across the communities. The larger ones have been generally addressed and the smaller ones, in terms of basic improvements, are now getting their turn to have

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their water and sewer systems improved, roads and that sort of thing. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Christensen. Municipal and community affairs, community operations, total region \$5,817,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In regard to a statement that was made yesterday in regard to the

committee of the whole, where larger communities raise significantly more revenues than the non-tax-based communities, can the Minister tell me exactly how much revenue these communities generate?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yesterday, we were asked to get detail on Fort Simpson. We have the detail on just Fort Simpson and not all the tax-based communities. My assistant deputy minister will provide those amounts.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Christensen.

MR. CHRISTENSEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. For the village of Fort Simpson for the fiscal year 1996, the audited financial statement indicates that for municipal tax revenue the municipality received \$355,549 for grants in lieu of property taxes received by the municipality. The amount was \$308,825 for a total revenue of \$664,374 which represented approximately 33.2 percent of the general operating revenue for the municipality which was \$2,001,588 on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories. The village also collected a school tax of \$88,368 and remitted that amount to the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Christensen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In regard to the monies that the communities generate, there is a statement that was made yesterday which was in the budget and was just a small percentage of the overall revenues which are going to be spent on these projects. What is the percentage based on? What is the total cost of these projects?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The budget shows \$1.525 million and the communities basically put in their own revenues. Therefore, what is the amount of revenue communities are going to put into these initiatives, if this is what the Government of the Northwest Territories' allocation is?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Madam Minister.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Sorry for the slowness, but we have to go through all the papers. I believe my assistant deputy minister has the information.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Christensen.

MR. CHRISTENSEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. For capital projects in the tax-based municipalities, which have the most ability to contribute a category, except Fort Simpson which is in a medium ability to contribute a category under our municipal assistance policy...projects that are considered basic projects require that the community pays 30 percent of the capital cost for the first \$100,000 and 20 percent of the cost for the next \$900,000, and 10 percent for any expenditure for a project over that amount. For projects that are in the additional category, they are required to pay 100 percent of the first \$100,000 and 75 percent of any amount over that. Those calculations are built into the determination of the amount they would receive under the block funding.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Christensen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Is there a chance we can get copies of what you read out, so we can see exactly how these percentages are broken down?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I will give that to my deputy minister.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Ms. Ballantyne.

MS. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We can certainly provide the Member with a copy. I would just like to point out that, the policy is a published GNWT policy and is in the GNWT Policy Manual, but we certainly can provide a copy of that specific policy to the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Ballantyne. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Clarification. You mentioned that Fort Simpson is classified as a medium classification. What were the other classifications?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Least and most ability to contribute. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I heard the word medium and now you are telling me there is a least to contribute. I thought there was a higher tax-based municipality that fits into it.

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CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. That is the least, medium and most ability to contribute under our policies. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yesterday the department was going to give us information where they were going to talk to the hamlet of Fort Simpson in regard to their capital projects. Does the department have that information now?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, we do.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Can they present the capital projects to us now verbally so at least we have some idea what these capital projects are?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If we read it, it is a very long list. Could we provide a copy to your clerk and then he can distribute it? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Is there a chance we can have this circulated now, so we can see exactly what these expenditures are before we move on?

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

What is the wish of the committee? Would you like to have this information circulated or would you like to continue on? To have the material circulated? Call a

break? Thank you. The Deputy Clerk will provide a copy to the Members. Anything further, Mr. Krutko?

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. One of the questions we were asking yesterday was in regard to this block funding arrangement and to some sort of mechanism. Is there some policy or formula that is in place, so that the accountability of this funding is made somewhere? In a tax-based community, they may find themselves in some financial difficulties where they have to come back to the government or government has to go back into the community and administer the program on behalf of the community because of misuse of funds. Can the Minister tell me if there are any checks and balances in place to ensure that these funds are contractual arrangements where there are legal documents in place? Where, basically, the department and the community sign these documents, they are legally binding so they know where they stand financially and also the accountability for those funds?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The block funding agreements are developed in accordance with authority established by the Municipal Operating Assistance Policy and the Municipal Assistance Policy. The GNWT standards and criteria are used to determine the projects that are considered part of the block funding, so these are legally binding. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. That is 10 minutes. Municipal operations, total region, \$5,817,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Contributions, Inuvik Region, total region, \$2,517,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Contributions, Baffin Region, total region \$2,377,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Contributions, Keewatin Region, total region \$3,596,000. Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Can the Minister explain, regional block funding areas, Keewatin, \$319,000 and what is that money being used for? How has that money been spent?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I believe Ms. Ballantyne has the information in front of her.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Ms. Ballantyne.

MS. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This was introduced in last year's budget for MACA. We now block fund communities for roads, sidewalks, site development, open play space and capital programs. This is the same as what was presented in last year's budget. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Ballantyne. Before we move on with another question from Mr. Krutko, on behalf of the Premier, I would like to recognize one of his constituents in the gallery. Mr. Dave McNab, the past president of the NWT Metis Nation who makes his home in Fort Resolution and also serves on the Deninoo Community Council.

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--Applause

Welcome to the committee. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Are any of these funds being used for the Keewatin pilot project?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. No. It is not. This is not part of it. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Could the Minister point out where those funds are in the budget? I thought this was where it would fall under.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. There is no capital budget for the Keewatin pilot project because it is being talked about. There is nothing to implement to the Keewatin pilot project up to this date because they are just coming up with the proposal now. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Community operations, contributions Keewatin region, total region \$3.596 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Contributions Kitikmeot, total region, \$702,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Regional block funding, various Kitikmeot, \$292,000. Could you explain the use of those funds? Is that similar to the regional block funding for the Keewatin? What is the purpose or the usage of those funds?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It is exactly the same thing for roads, side walks, site development, open play space and capital programs. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Community operations. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Could the Minister tell me if this type of arrangement is carried out in all regions?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Madam Minister.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, it is in all regions across the NWT.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. Thompson. I have Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I just want an explanation on the tandem dump truck for Gjoa Haven. What is this, a gravel truck? How big is it? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Madam Minister.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have here that the existing dump truck in the hamlet was purchased in 1989. It is used primarily for small gravel hauling and snow removal projects. Recent evaluations showed the truck was in a very poor condition, and there had to be a replacement made for the growing community of Gjoa Haven. This is for the single-axel dump truck with a new tandem truck. I am not sure I know what I am talking about, but it is a dump truck. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Ningark, is that all for you? Thank you. Community Operations, contributions Kitikmeot, total region, \$702,000, total contributions, \$16.530 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Agreed. Total activity, \$24.551 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Community Development, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$1.520 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Regional Operations, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$64.865 million. Agreed? Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Could the Minister explain what the grants and contributions for \$56 million is for and exactly what the grants pertain to?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. One of the examples would be the Northern Employment Strategy or self-government negotiating where we sit at the same table as observers. Grant in lieu of taxes, municipal operating assistance, settlement operating assistance, those are just some examples. Thank you, Madam

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Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Madam Minister. The Deputy Clerk is advising me. These are listed under details of grants and contributions. I have Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, I would like to question the Minister a little on the regional staff. I understand the Inuvik region has 19 staff. I am beginning to have a feeling, Madam Chairperson, that it is taking the departments longer to evaluate or come to a decision as to what is happening in the communities. Is there enough staff in the region to actually monitor the communities and what effects it is having in the communities?

I can give two examples that I believe in the past would not have been the case; for instance, the hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk running into problems with federal Fisheries. I am not sure whether or not the department was really on the ball there in assisting the community all the way through the planning of this project. I think the department was not even aware that federal Fisheries was involved or getting involved.

Also, the response from the department in regard to preparing Paulatuk for the impact of potential mining, in particular, the exploration activity that is taking place now, I am beginning to get the feeling that the department is understaffed and just has too many programs going. I do not know how to address this to the Minister. Perhaps if she just responded as to whether or not she feels the staff can keep up with the responsibilities that have been directed toward them. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to thank the Member for his observation. I know that he has experience as a SAO, and he is aware that there is a big difference from the time he was a SAO up to now. We appreciate his concern. We have had a high turnover of staff and we could certainly use more resources. I know the staff is doing their best with what we have at the regional level. We do have very good staff out there who are working very hard, and we appreciate them for all the work they do, but we have had a very high turnover. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I believe the response from the Minister is a fair response because almost every time you pick up a newspaper, you see an advertisement for a municipal affairs officer or someone in a regional officer position. The department is obviously advertising for these positions. Out of 19 positions, for instance, in the Inuvik region, how many on an ongoing basis are actually filled?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I am advised we now have only three vacancies in the Inuvik region. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, I would like to ask the department, for instance, when the government has been transferring responsibilities from one department to the other, for example, emergency services; do they get the full staff who was actually employed under Transportation? Previously, I believe it was called Safety and Public Services. Did all that staff actually get transferred to MACA?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I believe my deputy minister has more detail on that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Ms. Ballantyne.

MS. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, if my memory serves me correctly, I believe that the regional responsibilities came to us with all of the staff who was available in SAPS. My recollection, and I could stand to be corrected on this, is that there was some downsizing that occurred in SAPS before we were transferred. There were one or two positions that may have been eliminated from the fire safety division, but I could stand to be corrected on that. If there were any, it would have been of that magnitude. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I have on the list, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On grants and contributions, maybe some clarification because on page 4-28, you are calling for grants and contributions, \$56.273 million with other operations and maintenance, \$2.842 million, but when we go to the detail, total grants and contributions, \$63.516 million. Am I missing something here? The numbers do not seem to add up when you throw in your salaries and wages on page 4-28.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister. We are on page 4-28.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can you give us a few minutes? I have to consult with my staff. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will give the director of finance a chance to speak. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Keeley

MR. KEELEY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The number for

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grants and contributions under regional operations would only represent the grants and contributions that are actually in the region. The total number under detail of grants and contributions would represent all grants and contributions, including headquarters. That is why the two totals would not agree. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Regional operations, operations and maintenance. Total operations and maintenance. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Further to that, where would you find headquarters? Would it be in its own area? Looking at this as a document for the first time, I would add up the totals and if you added your wages and salaries to the total grants and contributions operations and maintenance that is listed here, my assumption would be, \$69.266 million. You say that is because it is registering a couple of other things, but I see a potential difference of almost \$6 million. That is a fair chunk of money. That is a difference in where we see this. Where would we see the other funding come in, as total somewhere in here?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I am advised by the Clerk when we turn back to page 4-11, for example, under operations and maintenance, grants and contributions, we have \$6.782 million for community operations. I am advised to point that out. Going back to regional operations, Madam Minister.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will refer that to Mr. Chris Keeley.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Keeley.

MR. KEELEY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is correct. That is where the total grants and contributions for headquarters show up. It is on page 4-11. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance. I have Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I had indicated a few days ago in some questions I had with the Minister, I am quite concerned about the community development aspect and the fact that we are into devolving programs and services to the communities. A lot of the people who are trying to implement devolution at the community level could use some concentrated training which would occur at the college level.

Committee Motion 12-13(5): That MACA Coordinate a Comprehensive Community Development Training Program

Mr. Chairman, at this time I would like to move that this committee recommends that the Department of Municipal and Committee Affairs take the lead role in coordinating with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and other affected GNWT departments, the development of a concentrated and Comprehensive Community Development Training Program for delivery by September 1, 1998;

And further, that this be a certificate or diploma program of one to two years in duration aimed at adequately preparing community residents for the successful management and delivery of programs and services designated under the community empowerment initiative. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The motion is written, circulated and translated into Inuktitut. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I am making this motion is because many of the committees and Members have made statements and recommendations that the community empowerment initiative be accompanied with proper training for community people so they can be properly prepared

to take over programs and services from the government to ensure programs and services are still delivered on a consistent basis. The people will not suffer because programs and services are not being delivered by the government any longer but by the municipalities or groups within the municipality. Mr. Chairman, currently, there are short training programs, workshops, that type of thing, but those are not sufficient to properly train people to take on administrative duties and to write proposals, reports, that type of thing. We are consistently asking the communities to take on more endeavours, community wellness, community justice, you name it, they are expected to take it over. In fact, Mr. Krutko brought up another area just the other day, where people have to go for assistance. We need people that are trained so that these types of things can be implemented properly. Income support is coming under fire for not being done properly. I believe proper training would assist community people in implementing these types of programs without burning them out. At least it would certainly assist them so they can do things more consistently and at a higher level. Mr. Chairman, I believe that what is needed is a concentrated course that is supplied by Aurora College in the west and Arctic College in the east so that people can go and get a certificate or a diploma in community development. That would enable them to go back home and have the proper tools to work for the municipalities or other organizations that are implementing programs and services. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. To the motion. Do we have anyone who wishes to speak to the motion? Mr. Steen. Thank you.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am under the impression that this motion is particularly aimed at the SAOs and assistant SAOs, finance officers of the hamlets or the communities. I am going to need some clarification on that, Mr. Chairman. If it is aimed at the public in general to prepare them, then the other question I would have is, are we talking about training the politicians in the communities? They are the ones who are putting this stuff in place. They are the ones asking for this community empowerment. Are we talking about training these guys so they know what they are asking for? I do not quite get the drift of the motion, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. I will ask the mover of the motion, Mr. Erasmus. Speak to the motion, please, Mr. Erasmus.

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MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These courses would be offered in the west because we are in the west, by Aurora College and they would be open to people who wish to take the course. If politicians wish to take the course, then they can. Primarily, it would be open to the general public. I do not know how many politicians would be able to take a year or two years off from their political duties to go to school. That is what I envision, a course that people would have to take for a full year or a year and a half or two years, so you can get a complete certificate. Not a two week or even six week workshop every six months or something. Of course, those types of smaller training courses do help, but this is not sufficient for people we are expecting to take over community justice and all these other initiatives without proper training and where the money is, how to write reports and proposals. In general, how to administer these programs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Obviously the intent of the motion is very good. It probably is needed. My concern on this particular motion though is, obviously, there is going to be some revenue required to implement this program if the government was to take it on. My main concern is we have already overloaded MACA with responsibilities and duties to take the lead role on everything. We are getting indications staff burnout is one of the major contributions to the high turnover. In that regard, whether I could support the motion, I do not know if I could support MACA taking on more duties without somehow identifying funding for more staff. I am told that I cannot increase the budget, I can only reduce it. I do not know how I am going to address this concern I have, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. This motion is in the form of a recommendation to the department. To the motion. I have Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Mr. Chairman, like my colleague from Nunakput, I agree that the intent of the motion is a good one. I, as well, have some questions. For instance, how does this motion relate to management studies' programs that are currently in place and the new cooperative studies program, for instance, delivered in Aurora College in Fort Smith? I am not sure how this would relate or overlap with courses that are funded through MACA for municipal administrators and lands officers in this other kind of very specific community training. As well, I am not sure where the money would come from. Being as this is just a recommendation, I have a bit more flexibility, but I do have those questions and I am sure they will have to be addressed at some point anyway to ensure there is no duplication or overlap. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I hear no direct question to the mover of the motion, so we will recognize it. Mr. Erasmus, you were indicating you wanted to respond. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The intent of this motion is that MACA would coordinate the development of the program. It would not be that much of an effort. It is not the intent that MACA would develop the courses. What I envision, is, they would get other departments that, perhaps, would have a course which is relevant to their particular area, to get them to throw in some dollars and MACA throw in some dollars. Then, what you do is simply contract with someone to develop the particular courses, such as here. We might have the college do some. We might have the Dene Cultural Institute develop some as they have been developing and delivering some courses. Obviously, there are courses which currently exist. You could use some of the contents of those, but I do not think you would take a whole course from here, another course there, and just slap it all together and say it is community development. You want to develop something that is more particular to community development, adapt them, add more stuff, that type of thing.

Mr. Chairman, as I say, I do not envision this would be that much more work for the department as it would be more of a coordinating role. Having people

take this type of a course would certainly assist the department in the future, when they negotiate and complete community empowerment, there are actually trained people in the communities to implement those programs and services. If I remember correctly, I believe, Mr. Steen was one of the people asking for more training last year, as well as several other Members who had spoken on the issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. In order to avoid a long-winded debate, I will allow the mover of the motion in the end for a final argument. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This falls in line with questions I was asking the Minister earlier today. We are allowing communities to take on responsibility through community empowerment, but we also have to find the mechanism to develop educational programs we deliver through Arctic College and take into account there are certain sectors out there, especially in the communities, that have to be looked at to develop skills of the people in the communities to take on these jobs when they get back.

If they complete these courses and different programs through Arctic College, business studies, social programs, nursing programs, the college, MACA and other departments, when they develop these educational programs, have to keep in mind these community empowerment initiatives that we are giving to the communities. There has to be a human resource development strategy so those people who want to go back and get involved in these community programs that are devolved for the communities have an opportunity to get themselves ready through some training programs. Once they conclude those programs, they can go back to their communities and feel comfortable in doing their jobs.

The big concern you hear from the communities is they want to hire local people to take on these jobs, but they do not meet the job description or requirements for those particular jobs. They may be lacking in certain areas, but if we can develop the program to ensure it covers most of those bases, those people who may have a background in accounting or in social program delivery will also have a program. As Mr. Erasmus mentioned, for income support, where they do not really have the

experience of evaluating people in the right way, they can ensure those people who do come in know there is someone who has the training requirements. What kind of training requirements are they going to need? What goals are they setting for themselves so when they do take on an educational program, they have a goal at the end. What are you going to do once you have the certificate? Where are you going to fit into the community infrastructure? I do support this initiative. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Question has been called. Do we have a quorum? Yes, we do. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Regional operations, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$64.865 million. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the area of water/sewer subsidy services and programs and in the previous year, we went through a number of issues, and I brought it up as well, in the area of these subsidies and the changes in the program that happened because of the yardstick of efficiency methods used in how communities were treated. A lot of this was implemented because of the water meters. I would like to know, since the changes in the program, what has been occurring in the communities in this area? For example, with your handout that you gave, Fort Simpson, for example, the water/sewage account deficit recovery, is that one of the things in it because you listed there are problems with consumption. Everybody is saving much more than people counted on when they put the program into effect. What have we been finding in communities when it comes to the Water/Sewer Subsidy Program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will refer that to Mr. Vern Christensen.

MR. CHRISTENSEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department staff has been keeping in close contact with community governments on the implementation of the

Water/Sewer Subsidy Program. Generally, communities have made adjustments to how they deliver services. Some communities have had to take a look at how services are delivered and identify other ways to become efficient in order to live within the subsidies that are provided. The same level of subsidy has been provided, generally, over the last two fiscal years. What the department is doing this year is taking a look at the distribution of the funding to communities under the program, recognizing that there have been some changes in some communities resulting from metering; for example, in the town of Inuvik if there have been substantial changes in population to warrant some adjustments. We are not anticipating there would be significant adjustments for this coming year in the distribution of the funding budget we are working with. We are taking a look at the allocations to see if there have been some significant changes that might influence the allocation to individual communities. We are working with a pot of money, a budget, and it is a distribution formula that we use. In this fiscal year, we distributed an amount of about \$10.1 million and we are looking at a distribution of \$10.4 to \$10.5 million in 1998-99. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total operations and maintenance, \$64.865 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will defer this to a later time, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I will try again. Total operations and maintenance, \$64.865 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, very much. Page 4-29, detail of grants and contributions, total grants, \$4.499 million. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, in the area of senior citizens and disabled property taxes, I had, again, questioned the Minister on the fact senior citizens are not being treated equally in some tax-based communities.

Some tax-based municipalities are placing a ceiling on the tax relief which is available to seniors.

Whereas, it might be that some seniors, because they have an expensive home, some of those seniors may have a lot of money, but in many cases, seniors do not have a lot of money because they do not have access to a big pension or RRSPs or that type of thing.

Committee Motion 13-13(5): To Implement a Means Test for Senior Citizens Unable to Afford Property Taxes

I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs take the necessary steps to ensure that a means test, similar to that used to implement the seniors' fuel subsidy, is introduced to ensure that senior citizens eligible to benefit under the Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act and who cannot afford to pay taxes, do not pay taxes as a result of ceilings that tax-based municipalities may place on the available tax relief.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The motion is written and distributed to Members of the committee and is translated. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Total grants, \$4.499 million. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the senior citizen and disabled property tax, I did raise this issue earlier in the budget and also with the Department of Finance to find a way that they can work out some system so that the elders do not have to apply every year for this tax rebate. I will be moving a motion to that effect.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Are you ready to make a motion now?

MR. KRUTKO:

Yes, I am. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Committee Motion 14-13(5): To Streamline the Process for Applying and Receiving the Property Tax Subsidy

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I move that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, in cooperation with the Department of Finance and the Municipalities take steps to streamline the property tax subsidy for seniors and disabled persons to improve the process for applying and receiving this tax benefit.

And further that consideration be given to not having a requirement for seniors and disabled persons to reapply each year for the tax relief.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The motion is in order. It is written and it is translated. To the motion. Mr. Miltenberger, you have your hand up. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Total grants. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, thank you. I noticed under NWT Association of Municipal Administrators, the grant to the association has been reduced from \$130,000 to \$5,000. Actually last year, the revised forecast was from \$130,000 down to \$5,000. Mr. Chairman, this seems to have some relation to the motion Mr. Erasmus put on the floor, whereby providing training to municipal administrators. I was wondering, why we are reducing their grants?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The area that Mr. Steen is referring to is on page 4-29 under the NWT Association of Municipalities, municipal administrators. Madam Ballantyne.

MS. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the reason that amount has shifted is the department is now contracting with the Association of Municipal

Administrators for the delivery of the advanced SAO training course rather than providing that through a contribution. The funding is still there. It is just not showing up where it used to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Madam Ballantyne. Total grants, \$4.4 million. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it seems to me, under home owners' property tax rebates, when we removed that, I do not see any amounts there at all for a homeowners' property tax rebate. I presume this program is eliminated. I would like to point out here that I believe this would have resolved the motion or the tax rebate would have addressed the concern Mr. Erasmus brought forward as far as senior citizens being unable to pay over and above the subsidies supplied to seniors and disabled persons. It shows here in tax-based communities, they would have been eligible for \$300 each, and in small communities these seniors would have been eligible for \$75 each. Did we cut that out?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we did. We cut it out. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to point out that this reduction of the property tax rebate has resolved the problem that Mr. Erasmus made a motion on. Since we cannot increase the budget, I do not know how we are going to find money for Mr. Erasmus' motion unless we take it out of somewhere else. I would like to ask the department, what was the reason for taking the home owners' property tax rebate? What was the reason for doing away with it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was part of the Deficit Elimination Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total Grants, \$4.499 million. Do we agree on this page?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Contributions, page 4-31. We have 32 and 33, total contributions, \$59.017 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total grants and contributions, \$63.516 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We have an information item on page 4-34, active positions. Any questions on this page? It is an information item provided to you. Thank you. Detail of work performed on behalf of third parties, page 4-35, total department, \$14.352 million. Do we agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We have program summary, page 4-5. Municipal and community affairs, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$81.487 million. Do we agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Capital, total capital, \$24.651 million. Do we agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total expenditures, \$106.138 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We have concluded the department.

--Applause

Does the committee agree that the consideration of the department's estimates is concluded?

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SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I would like to thank the Minister and the witnesses for appearing before the committee. Does the committee agree that we proceed with Public Works and Services?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Enuaraq, you had your hand up.

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to continue with the next department, which is DPW. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We have agreed. Minister Antoine, are you prepared to make your opening remarks for your department?

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today, I am pleased to present the 1998-99 Main Estimates for my new

portfolio, the Department of Public Works and Services. The department's proposed budget for 1998-99 shows the need for about \$59 million in the operations and maintenance budget and about \$1.7 million in capital funding. The department has a total of 370 positions. Fifty of these are associated with the nonappropriated activities of the revolving fund for petroleum products and the chargeback fund for computer services.

Public Works and Services has two priorities for the coming year. One is to work toward a smooth transition of departmental services when the Government of Nunavut is established. This requires particular emphasis on the activities of the petroleum products division because plans for privatization have changed and services are still very much needed in Nunavut and the Western Territory. As 1999 draws near, it is very important that our employees, suppliers and contractors communicate and work together at all levels within the department and the government so that critical services of the department continue to be well managed and well delivered. The department is also managing a number of the Nunavut incremental infrastructure projects and will ensure that they are ready, on schedule and within budget.

The other priority for the next year is to implement community maintenance agreements. Maintenance agreements are now operational in ten communities and are being discussed in 19 more communities. Public Works and Services continues to provide technical support for many of the services that are transferred to communities. The department is working with MACA to ensure that the process works smoothly. These maintenance agreements are a good way for the communities to gain experience in managing government infrastructure. That completes my opening remarks, Mr. Chairman. I will be pleased to answer the Members' questions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Who did the review of this department, which committee? We will take a moment to break here. Do you want to take five? I am told we are ready. Mr. Barnabas, do you have opening remarks on behalf of your committee?

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Committee Members were concerned that some regions may have been receiving inappropriate amounts of fuel price

subsidies. The department agreed to provide the committee with the appropriate price subsidy information. The committee recently received the fuel subsidy information as requested. The document outlines in detail positive or negative subsidy amounts by community and product. The committee looks forward to reviewing the data. The Minister informed the committee that he and his department concurred with the committee's recommendation that the privatization of POL be postponed until after division. The Minister also indicated that the privatization initiative would require the implementation of an alternative supply system. However, alternative supply system projects were also deferred upon the advice of the committees and residents of the affected region.

Aviation gas, or AV gas, is fuel specifically used by piston driven aircraft. There is no AV gas available for the smaller communities. Currently, piston crafts have to haul their own fuel, which decreases cargo space, increases operating costs and compromises the safety of the passengers and crew. The department stated that there was no need for AV gas to be available for small communities as turbo pumped aircraft, which do not require AV gas, will eventually replace most planes. However, the committee is aware that there are many piston driven aircraft currently in operation in the north and that there will continue to be so. Turbo propped aircraft are expensive to purchase and operate. The committee does not anticipate rapid change on the current situation. The committee further noted that the piston-driven aircraft forms a majority of aircraft being used in the north. Lack of available AV gas in many communities gives an unfair advantage to the limited number of airlines.

The committee feels strongly that if the fuel is available for turbo propped aircraft, fuel should be available to the piston driven aircraft as well. More importantly, the few airlines that do use turbo props serve only selected communities. The Minister recently wrote to the committee to comment on some of our initial concerns. He advised the committee that there are significant issues to consider regarding the supply of AV gas. These issues include the limited shelf life of AV gas, environmental issues related to its use and disposal and the special handling and storage requirements associated with AV gas. He has directed his officials to re-examine options to provide AV gas in isolated communities. The committee looks forward to reviewing the upcoming evaluation.

In Yellowknife, the department is working on a major office plan to deal with the downsizing associated with the creation of two new territories. Committee Members noted that the plan might result in large penalties or buyouts on long-term leases. The committee requested that the department provide a copy of the office space consolidation plan and that they provide an explanation of how landlords may be assured that they will be treated equitably in any office space consolidation initiative undertaken by the government. The committee recently received the office space plan as requested. The plan describes lease commitments and the consolidation of office space in the city of Yellowknife. Committee Members look forward to reviewing the document. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Before I give the committee Members the privilege of making general comments, I would like to ask if the Minister wishes to bring in witnesses and I will recognize the Member.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would like to bring in witnesses.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The Minister wishes to bring in his witnesses. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister, would you please introduce the witnesses to the committee?

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, to my left is Ken Lovely, he is the deputy minister of this department, and to my right is Ms. Gay Kennedy, the director of corporate services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Welcome to the committee. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion to report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. There is a motion to report progress. However, I do not have a quorum. I will ring the bell. The Chair recognizes a quorum. There is a motion to report progress. It is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is defeated. We are on general comments. We are dealing with Public Works and Services and Mr. Antoine is ready to receive general comments. Are there any general comments? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the Minister's opening remarks an issue that I would like to have some information on is the maintenance agreements and to what communities are they open to and what is entailed in a maintenance agreement. Is this a form of privatization where you are giving your buildings, works and employees over to the hamlets or municipalities? There is an issue I would like to have some more information on when the Minister is responding to our remarks.

As well, the petroleum products area is an issue of concern for myself, although Inuvik is in a private sector, or is into the private market when it comes to fuel and that. One thing I think we felt was an impact on when Public Works received the contract for its fuel now being delivered out of Strathcona, it has had an impact in the way it gets dealt with now. I believe when it was out of Norman Wells there was a significant area fund agreement with the Government of Canada that controlled the way they could bill for gas and diesel coming out of Norman Wells. Since you have gone down to a different location that agreement no longer applies. This is an area of concern for me because we have seen quite a hike in diesel and gas prices in the last year, home heating oil as well. I know that Inuvik, as well as Norman Wells and Aklavik, fall under a different area, but we were told as part of the agreement when it was signed that there would be no significant impact with that. We are finding that there is actually an impact. That is one of the areas where we have concerns from the community that I represent. As I said earlier, I would like to get some information on the maintenance agreements and what they entail. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I hope our Minister and his staff will be keeping notes because the general procedure we do in the general comments is after everyone has made a general comment, we allow the witnesses to reply in the end. At this point I will not recognize the Minister or any of the witnesses until everyone who wanted to speak has spoken. I have on the list Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that this is the final budget that our deputy minister in this area will be doing as he will be leaving the government after a long period of service. I wanted to indicate the appreciation I know a lot of us feel for Mr. Lovely's long employment.

--Applause

Mr. Chairman, I know he has been around a long time. I first met him, I believe it was '72 or '70, thereabouts, when we were with the Arctic Winter Games Volleyball Team. It seems like a long time ago. He has been with the government ever since. I would like to wish him all the best in his future endeavours and once again, I would just like to thank him for all the service that he has put in.

Mr. Chairman, one of the things that I wanted to comment on is the community maintenance agreements. The Minister had indicated that there are ten maintenance agreements operational in communities and there are discussions in 19 more. Are these maintenance agreements, such as community empowerment, where communities are taking over the implementation of these services? Also, what I wanted to know is if there is any additional training involved to ensure that the process works smoothly after the take over? I noticed that the department is working with MACA to ensure this, but I was wondering if we could get some further explanation on how this is being done? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Members, this is your last opportunity to question the Minister. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The previous Member, as well, mentioned the maintenance agreements that I made reference to. It is an interim step toward community empowerment and it is a community empowerment initiative. Through these transfers the responsibility for maintaining buildings and works in a

community is turned over, transferred over to community governments. The facility ownership is not transferred, just maintaining the buildings and the works. The funding is provided by Municipal and Community Affairs and is transferred from Public Works and Services through MACA. These community governments then fund, and are responsible for such things as, maintenance of schools, health centres and other facilities in their communities. Through these agreements that are now operational, we have: Cape Dorset, Tuktoyaktuk, Holman, Pelly Bay, Fort Resolution, Pangnirtung, Baker Lake, Cambridge Bay, Taloyoak and the Hay River Reserve First Nation. For the other 19 agreements, we are in the draft-

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agreement stage, they are: Tsiigehtchic, Repulse Bay, Arviat, Pond Inlet, Resolute Bay, Clyde River, Coral Harbour, Tulita, Chesterfield Inlet, Whale Cove, Aklavik, K'asho Gotine, Fort Resolution, Kugluktuk, Broughton Island, Deline, Sachs Harbour, Detah, Ndilo, Snare Lake, Wha Ti and Rae Lakes.

Further on, there are preliminary discussions that have been initiated now with Jean Marie River, Lutselk'e, Trout Lake, Paulatuk, Kimmirut and Sanikiluaq. Those are the community maintenance agreements I mentioned and tried to explain what they are and the training involved. Once these maintenance programs are turned over to the communities, the department goes back on a regular basis to see how they are doing and any place where there is a requirement for further training, then those are initiated.

Regarding Mr. Roland's concern about the fuel, petroleum products situation, a little bit of history, Imperial Oil submitted a proposal containing two options and one of them was for diesel and gasoline products to continue to come out of the Norman Wells refinery. The aviation products would come from Imperial Oil's refinery in Alberta, the Strathcona refinery, and delivered to Hay River. That is option one. They also included a second option, that all products coming out of the Alberta refinery outside of Edmonton, the Strathcona refinery, be delivered to Hay River. This is the option that eventually won out because of the good price. Option A, the first option from Norman Wells, included pricing for products to be sold through Imperial's agency in Inuvik, Aklavik and Norman Wells. That is the fuel that would be sold from the Norman Wells refinery.

The price regulation authority under the Proven Area Agreement of 1944, which Mr. Roland is referring to, would come into effect if Option A was chosen. However, Option B was chosen, and it did not include a proposal for Imperial's agency because the products would be coming from the south, and it is not coming from the proven area. As a result, the Proven Area Agreement with its authority to regulate price had not been in effect. As a result of that, that arrangement they had from Norman Wells to Inuvik and Aklavik as well, did not apply. Imperial Oil's Option B was selected because of the best overall value to the Government of the Northwest Territories, as well as to the NWT Power Corporation. As a result, a three-year contract was awarded to Imperial Oil in Option B and this expires at the conclusion of the 1998 re-supply season. Again, the Government of the Northwest Territories does not provide the petroleum products to the town of Inuvik. It is done through a private outlet. It does not have the ability to regulate private pricing of the petroleum products in that community. I hope this is the information that the honourable Member is looking for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Because Mr. Erasmus was the last name on the list who wanted to speak, I allowed the honourable Minister to respond. Mr. Krutko, do you wish to make a general comment? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the maintenance agreements you mentioned Aklavik in your discussions. Aklavik had a problem when they were looking at taking over the whole aspect of Public Works where they maintain the water treatment facility in which they were looking at taking over that responsibility. One of the things they have learned is, that by taking that responsibility over, the human resource persons that were involved with Public Works for years, did not come along with that transfer. The community was stuck in the position where they were going to lose the community foreman to run and maintain the water treatment plant in which they had no experience, no training or anything. Through that experience, it has opened my eyes up to the whole idea of these maintenance agreements. The idea is great, but we have to ensure we have people in place who have been there for years, who know the plant, the facility inside out, so that if you are going to take anything over, you have to allow the human resources to go along with these transfers. Especially, in regard to systems that have been around for 20 years where

people have worked there from day one, who know the facility inside out. They know when something happens to the facility and where you have freeze-ups when it gets cold. In implementing these agreements, there has to be assurances through these agreements, that there is the protection in place to allow those individuals who have been with the department, to also go with these transfers, to the municipalities. Also, not only human resources, but also the resources have to go too, in regard to the salaries and benefits those individuals received for the years they have put in with the government.

The other area I want to touch on is petroleum products, in which I have been in discussions with your former colleague and yourself, Mr. Minister, the area of petroleum products in regard to privatizing certain sectors of that industry, especially where there is an interest being shown by particular petroleum organizations.

In the case of Fort McPherson, the band, along with a joint venture arrangement and the band council in Inuvik own the gas station in Fort McPherson. They were looking at the business of not only selling gas, but also developing fuel products for the community. In light of that, the community has been asking the Minister to look at the possibility of either tendering the process out, or looking at privatizing it, where they want to get into the petroleum industry in a big way. One of the proposals that went forth to Esso Resources, the Gwich'in Development Corporation also submitted a bid in which they were disqualified on the basis they were involved with a joint-venture company which was based in Seattle, Washington. They are still interested in looking at that sector regarding the connection between the Gwich'in aboriginal organizations in the Northwest Territories and also in Alaska. The whole area of privatization and looking at that sector allowing communities to consider those initiatives, should be opened up and allow the communities to seriously consider looking at that particular industry with regard to privatizing it. I would like to ask the Minister, what is being done in regard to these issues that I mentioned? In regard to Aklavik and the transfer of that maintenance agreement, I believe it was only in place for a couple of days because they realized the human resources they had were not adequate. They did not have the capable, trained people to take on such a responsibility and they gave it back to the Department of Public Works and also the area of petroleum products. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Before I allow the

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Minister or the witnesses to respond or reply to general comments, I would like to ask if there are any other Members who wish to make a general comment? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question as to whether the Minister would answer Mr. Krutko's specific question first, or whether you want me to go ahead with my comments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. What we do here, Mr. Ootes, do we try to follow this general rule we decided on a couple of weeks ago? We do general comments. At the end of all the general comments, the Minister will respond. I know they are taking notes. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you. I would like to comment a bit about the whole area of government methodologies of contracting. The government is spending an awful lot of money in the non-competitive contract areas and there are many of those. There are the negotiated contracts and there are sole-sourced, but in some of the smaller areas, there are construction management and site superintendent service contracts, and recently of course, we have become accustomed to the request for proposals. It is certainly evident there is a place for all of these types of contracts, but there needs to be clarification of exactly what are the

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regulations of these contracts and under which guidelines do they operate. In many cases, contractors have complained that when they do not win the contract, they do not have sufficient information fed back to them to allow them to analyze why they were unsuccessful. Their concern is, they want to know so they can improve their bidding process. As I say, I have had a couple of contractors contact me in that regard. This is one area.

The second area of concern with the contracting system is, we do not seem to have what I would call, one package that clearly identifies the types of contracts and conditions. We have passed two

motions in this House, in regard to non-competitive contracts and that was passed last May and then, one on requests for proposals last October, in both cases, seeking clarification on the methodologies. It is a concern out there. Also of concern is the amount of money which is starting to go to tenders, straight bidding and tendering into these various methods of contracting. I am sure everyone can appreciate when you go for a request for proposal, it is a totally different system that is not as open to scrutiny. It is subject to interpretation comparatively to a public tender. It is a definite area of concern that is heavy out there. So, that is one area.

The other area I have a question on, Mr. Chairman, and perhaps, I can receive an answer from the Chairperson on this. I would like to ask some questions in regard to the Yellowknife office plan that was developed. Is it more appropriate to be done under the directorate, then, in general comments? I will ask for the Chairman to clarify this for me because the directorate would have some responsibility for instituting policies and procedures. I do not want to wait until I get to asset management and then find out it does not belong there because the directorate would follow which procedures and processes and how the policy was developed with respect to the office plan for Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. We can ask a general question, but if the Minister wishes to respond at the end of these general comments that is his prerogative. Any other general comments from the floor? Mr. Minister, would you now like to respond?

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Yes, I would like to respond. Mr. Krutko asked about maintenance agreements speaking about his constituency of Aklavik in regard to specifically the agreement with the water treatment area and it had to deal with a situation that did not really work out and of all the different maintenance agreements the intention is good by the department. However, we ran into certain problems and in this case the department ran into some problems with regard to Human Resources. I would like to turn this over to the deputy minister who has had hands on experience with this, Mr. Ken Lovely to maybe elaborate more on the situation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In general, the terms of the community transfer agreement seem to be working out quite well. They give communities the opportunity to have some experience at managing budgets and staff, and handling responsibility for all the buildings in the community. However, in some cases, we have encountered difficulties such as the one Mr. Krutko mentioned. In spite of everybody's best efforts it just did not work out. We abided by the community's wish to turn the responsibility back to the department, but I do not think we have given up on the potential for a similar transfer for sometime in the future, if we are able to satisfy the community that the skills they need to run the water treatment plant would be available to them. Sometimes these things take a couple of tries before they are successful and it often takes quite a while for us to work with the community as they get used to the new responsibilities and acquire a bit of training. In general terms, so far we have had good experiences and communities have started to recognize that some of the advice and assistance we provide is useful. They are no longer feeling as though they need to keep us at arms length. I think it is working, generally, fairly well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Antoine, carry on.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the petroleum products situation in Fort McPherson, there is an existing supplier with a long-term contract with Public Works and Services and that long-term contract ends in the year 2001. There is a legal matter of looking at that and honouring that contract. There was a letter that was sent to the interested party in this regard. The department did meet with the community, and, subject to dealing with the long-term contract, perhaps having to wait until it is over, in order to honour that contract, the department is open to looking at other types of innovative and new arrangements that the Member for Mackenzie Delta mentioned. Mr. Ootes mentioned when dealing with the Yellowknife office plan, in a couple of places we would suggest the role of the deputy minister falls under the directorate. I think there was some concern about the authority of the deputy minister and some decisions. Perhaps it might be a good area to address that at that time. For the overall contracting agreement you want some clarity on what are the regulations in regard to non-competitive contract area

and you are seeking clarification on the methodology. Perhaps I could turn it over, if we have time, to the deputy minister because he is eager to get into this part of the discussion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We have a few seconds to spare. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Mr. Chairman, this is a very complex issue, one in which I will not necessarily deal with the questions in the exact order they were presented. There are a variety of different types of processes that are involved when we contract. We did put together a draft negotiated contract policy in response to a request from the Legislature last fall and that was forwarded to the standing committees for review. A document was circulated to Members early last year called PWS contracting methods which provided an outline of how we deal with tenders and proposals and sole source within the Government of the Northwest Territories. I should make it clear that the Department of Public Works and Services does not have the responsibility for regulating the practices of other departments in the way that they follow their contracting. We deal specifically with those areas for which we have responsibility. The rules that guide us in contracting are in the financial administration manual.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I have to recognize the clock. It is 6:00 p.m. Mr. Minister and witnesses, you can continue with the responses tomorrow when we return to the committee of the whole. Thank you. I will rise and report progress. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Good Evening. We are on item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 8, Appropriation Act 1998-99 and Committee Report 03-13(5) and would like to report progress with three motions being adopted. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Seconded by Mr. Arlooktoo. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. To remind the Members that today is Roy Erasmus' birthday. I am sure he is listening from his office. Happy Birthday, Roy.

--Applause

Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there is a meeting of the Ordinary Members' Caucus at 9:00 tomorrow morning.

Orders of the day for Friday, February 13, 1998:

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

18. Second Reading of Bills

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

- Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act

- Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99

- Committee Report 02-13(5), Standing Committee on Government Operations, Report on the 1998-99 Main Estimates

- Committee Report 03-13(5), Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Report on the 1998-99 Estimates

- Committee Report 04-13(5), Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development, Report on the 1998-99 Main Estimates

- Committee Report 05-13(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

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20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Friday, February 13, 1998 at 10:00 a.m.

--ADJOURNMENT