



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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Day 25

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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

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

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Good afternoon. Mr. Barnabas, on a point of privilege.

Point of Privilege

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation) I will be speaking in Inuktitut. Mr. Speaker, this morning I must clear up a big misunderstanding in regard to the Member for Hay River who presented a document. I was unable to be in the House yesterday due to a personal tragedy that occurred in my riding, therefore, I was unable to respond to the issue that was raised by the Member for Hay River. I had not considered this to have grown into this proportion and I was not aware that this problem would become so great. I would like to indicate to the Member for Hay River and to my friend and colleague, Mr. Arlooktoo, that I did write the note. At the time I considered it as a confidential piece of writing and I did it more in the spirit of fun and as a joke. I do pass notes to my colleagues in the House not of a serious nature. I express my true regret today for having caused such a huge problem and I accept responsibility for the hardship that has been caused for the Member for Hay River, Jane Groenewegen, as well as, for the Member, Mr. Goo Arlooktoo. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Point of Privilege

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to rise on a point of privilege today. Mr. Speaker, in light of what this House has just heard regarding the unsigned note, I would like to say that I accept Mr. Barnabas' apology for writing the note. I would also like to offer my sincere apology to Mr. Arlooktoo and to this House. It was not my intention in seeking the truth in this matter to call into question the honesty and integrity of the honourable Member, nor indeed, any honourable Member. In my quest to find the truth, Mr. Speaker, the document which I tabled, I did believe to be true. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would request that I could seek the unanimous agreement of this House to withdraw Tabled Document 49-13(5) with my sincere apology for any inadvertent reflections on the character or integrity of the Member for Baffin South. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Hay River is seeking unanimous consent to withdraw Tabled Document 49-13(5). Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mrs. Groenewegen, you have unanimous consent. Tabled Document 49-13(5) is now withdrawn.

--Applause

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

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 63-13(5): Minister Absent From the House

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Manitok Thompson will be absent from the House for the remainder of the week to attend the Manitoba Trade Mission in Iqaluit and the Keewatin Regional Leadership meetings on the Keewatin pilot project in Rankin Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 257-13(5): Environmental Assessment of Cape Christian

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spoke about the garbage and abandoned buildings at Cape Christian, a former American coast guard station located 12 miles northeast of Clyde River. Today, I would like to talk about the environmental assessment done in 1996 and for the record, Mr. Speaker, I was involved in that assessment in 1996 by the Canadian Royal Military College. Their study showed that there are small amounts of PCBs in the paint of the buildings and 23 cubic metres of soil were found to be contaminated within the site. The study concluded that the site received low priority on the clean-up list, as there was minimal contamination and there was small risk posed by contaminants on site. The owner of the site is now the Government of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, Clyde River would like assurances from the government that the site is environmentally safe. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr.

Page 848

Barnabas.

Member's Statement 258-13(5): Support for Friendship Centres

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be speaking in Inuktitut. Mr. Speaker, this morning we met with the Members and staff regarding the friendship centres. It is important that these organizations receive funding because of the different initiatives they wish to carry out for their services and to maintain their businesses. In maintaining the services it was indicated, perhaps two years ago, by the friendship centres, the communications departments and the different organizations within the regions to help promote unity among adults and younger people, as well as elders. This is promoted through the use of the friendship centres, including

translation requirements, language and culture initiatives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 259-13(5): Support for Friendship Centres

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, will be making a statement about the friendship centres in the Northwest Territories. As the Member stated, this morning we had the opportunity to hear from the Northwest Territories Council for Friendship Centres in relation to some of the obligations they have to fulfil and, also, the dedication they have to serve the people of the Northwest Territories. In regard to the friendship centres in Canada, this is considered one of the oldest aboriginal institutions in Canada which moved north in the 1970s. The Tree of Peace Friendship Centre was established in Yellowknife in the early 1960s and other centres were developed from then, such as the Uncle Gabe's Friendship Centre, the Soaring Eagle Friendship Centre and Ingamo Hall in Inuvik. Mr. Speaker, in regard to the work and efforts these organizations do to assist, not only the government, but to serve the people of the Northwest Territories, I think it is important to note that all other jurisdictions in Canada, using an example such as Alberta who allocates more than \$250,000 a year to the Alberta Native Friendship Centres, plus an additional \$25,000 to \$30,000 to each of their 20 centres to offset the operational costs. The same thing applies in British Columbia which allocates \$100,000 to provincial friendship centres and up to \$30,000 to each friendship centre to offset the operational costs.

Mr. Speaker, it is critical that we support these organizations with the initiatives that we see. I think where we have gone with this government with the deficits and the cuts we see in our community, more and more people do not have the services and agencies that they had at one time. The demand on these organizations, such as the friendship centres, is coming to the point where they are dealing with not only social issues, but justice issues and assisting people where a lot of the systems and programs we had in place before are no longer there. Mr. Speaker, it is critical that this government and other colleagues of this House seriously look into the delivery of

programs and services that this government offers. Such an organization like the friendship centre has to be allowed the benefit of the doubt and have the opportunity to seriously play an active role in what happens in this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Roland.

Member's Statement 260-13(5): Support for Friendship Centres

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Inuvik has a long history with the Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre. The Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre has seen and been faced with many continued cuts over the past few years. These cuts have affected the way they offer programs and services for the community and surrounding communities. Last year they gave up the Alcohol and Drug Program due to the continuous cuts. Ingamo Hall could not offer this program effectively with the amount of funds they were given. The Literacy Program is another program that Ingamo Hall offers in the community and each year the funding is being cut. This past year Ingamo has had to fund raise over \$40,000 to carry this program. This is another program they may have to let go if the funding is not secured. The Ingamo Hall also operates an HIV/AIDS awareness project that is currently funded through Health Canada. This project receives \$45,000 a year to operate. Once again, these limited funds prevent them from offering a viable program. Mr. Speaker, we know that many groups, organizations and individuals throughout the Northwest Territories have had to deal with reductions. It has made ongoing difficulties for volunteers to continue to provide the level of programs they once were able to do. Mr. Speaker, we have heard on many occasions how volunteers wear thin after a while and there are few people to take over the places once those people move on. I urge this government to look through its budgets to try and find some available funding to help out these groups because it is these groups that help out the children and families on the lower income scales. We have heard so much about them in this forum. I urge my Cabinet colleagues to review what they can and try and find some appropriate funding so we can ensure the people of the territories have an equal opportunity to receive help that will benefit them in the long run. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Rabesca.

Member's Statement 261-13(5): Faber Lake Outpost Camp

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate a man from Rae Lakes that saw a dream and pursued it. As you may have seen in yesterday's News North, Alphonse Apples sought an opportunity to live his traditional lifestyle and at the same time help his fellow community and regional members. Alphonse has set up the Faber Lake Outpost Camp which helps minor offenders integrate back into their communities without the need to house them in the YCC. Mr. Speaker, at the present, I understand he only has two inmates at the camp, but he is hoping to get more. Camp life is hard and living is basic, bringing back the traditional Dene way of life. Alphonse teaches the inmates how to hunt, fish and do other camp duties. They also learn how to

Page 849

skin all types of animals and treat our mother earth with respect. Alphonse's camp is one of the eight camps currently operated across the north. I feel this is an excellent way to teach the inmates the traditional way of life and to bring them back to their home communities. I would like to congratulate Alphonse for his helpfulness and caring for his fellow men. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement 262-13(5): Support for Friendship Centres

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The record and honourable history of the friendship centres are very clear and undeniable across Canada. Part of that comes from the contribution of the Uncle Gabe's Friendship Centre in Fort Smith which is a long running institution that has had the benefit of a very good board and management, over the many years they have been in

existence, allowing them to deliver critical programs in the community within their budget. As well, they have developed the skills over the years to be very effective in going after third party funding, Mr. Speaker.

Very clearly in Fort Smith, the Friendship Centre has become one of the major players in the inter-agency group that delivers and oversees programs in the community. They, as well, have suffered over the years from budget cuts, reductions to core funding, cutbacks in other areas through Health and Social Services. It is going to be critical that the communities, through the health board of management and the department work with the friendship centres, not only in Fort Smith but across the north, to try to come to a greater and more formal work relationship that recognizes the contribution of friendship centres and could, hopefully, in the not too distant future, deal with issues like core funding for northern friendship centres, as we are one of the only jurisdictions that in fact do not provide core funding. So I, as well, would like to pay my tribute and compliments to the friendship centres across the north and, of course, specifically to the one in Fort Smith, which is a very, very important organization in our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement 263-13(5): Midget Hockey Team Selection Process

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about the Arctic Winter Games midget hockey team selection. Mr. Speaker, a constituent of mine contacted me yesterday and wanted me to set the record straight. Apparently, there have been some facts that have not been relayed consistently to the public. There has been a lot of media attention to this, as well as, statements and questions in the House. My constituent wanted me to make it clear the team that won the territorials was not a Fort Smith hockey team, in fact, it was not even a South Slave hockey team, it was a conglomerate of the South Slave and Mackenzie region. There were ten players from Hay River and Fort Smith, there were five players from Mackenzie region. The team did win the territorials, but people knew that it would be an all-star

Arctic Winter Games team and that the Arctic Winter Games team would go to the Air Canada Cup tournament.

Unfortunately, it appears that an important fact has been overlooked. The fact is that five players in total from the winning team were selected to the Arctic Winter Games team. My constituent wanted this emphasized that five players were, in fact, selected; there was one from Fort Smith, one from Hay River and three from the Mackenzie region.

Mr. Speaker, I have checked and selecting an all-star team for the Arctic Winter Games is consistent with the past three or four Arctic Winter Games. I have been informed that an all-star format is used in order to keep the larger centres from dominating the games and from sending all the teams. This allows the smaller communities to get their children into the games. Mr. Speaker, this is well demonstrated in the facts that there are ten communities represented on this midget team. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 264-13(5): Appreciation for Spousal Support

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, I was home in Iqaluit. It was the first time I was able to return home since the 16th of January. Mr. Speaker, while here in the Legislative Assembly sometimes this becomes the focus of our entire lives, and we lose sight of the real reason we came here in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, going home this weekend and spending time with my family and seeing the work my wife has to do being mother and father, raising our three children while I am absent, made me reflect on why someone would seek political office. Mr. Speaker, the role of a political spouse is very demanding and full of sacrifice. To go home and be welcomed back by the community, to be phoned, stopped at the Bay while getting our groceries, of neighbours stopping by, of sincere thanks after church on Sunday, makes the job and the responsibilities worthwhile.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people in Iqaluit who have given my

wife and I support through their kind words and actions. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank my wife for the sacrifices she has made. I will continue to represent my home and my constituency to the best of my abilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Ootes.

Page 850

Member's Statement 265-13(5): Telephone Rate Increases

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My comments today will be on the ever-increasing price of having a phone. A telephone is one of those modern conveniences that is hard to live without. Where would each of us be if we did not have this method of communicating with each other?

Here in the north it is becoming increasingly expensive to have a telephone. In 1995, NorthwesTel was allowed to boost its basic access rate by \$3 a month. Last year, that basic cost went up by \$4 more a month. Now, we have received word that basic access will rise by \$10 a month by August, 1999. That is a raise of \$17 per month in the past four years, Mr. Speaker.

The phone company says it has no choice but to bill us for more basic access and local use because it is dropping its long distance rates, but those rates are still amongst the highest in the country. NorthwesTel's long distance revenues of \$75 million in 1996 accounted for more than 60 percent of all the company's revenues.

There was talk about opening the northern market to competition by the CRTC, but the CRTC has pushed that back to July 1, 2000. While NorthwesTel says it is making all these changes in order to become more competitive, I am left wondering, competitive with whom? For the next 30 months, NorthwesTel will reap higher local rates, but remains a monopoly and that just does not seem fair.

For a lot of our citizens \$17 more a month for a phone is a huge expense. These rate hikes should have been pegged directly to the opening up of the market to competition, which at least would have given

consumers an alternative. We are all forced to pay substantially more for what should be regarded as an essential service. It may just become too expensive for many people to have a telephone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement 266-13(5): Addressing our Social Problems

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is no longer acceptable to recite our problems as the leaders in Canada in incarceration rates, suicide rates, infant mortality rates, fetal alcohol syndrome, FAE and alcohol consumption. Mr. Speaker, have we become too calloused as leaders that we do not cry when we read the letters, like those recently published in the newspaper by people who were the victims of abuse in residential schools when they were children.

Mr. Speaker, the north is in need of collective healing. We have men in our jails today who are returning there for the seventh and eighth time. Many of them are in the correctional facilities in our communities. It would do us well to go down to the Salvation Army or the YCC and have a meal with some of these inmates who will soon return to their communities with little hope of employment and little hope of avoiding the ability to resist the temptations that have messed up their lives in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, many people may see me as an affluent business woman from a comparatively affluent community, but I want to assure you that I have put my money where my mouth is. I have worked with people in our society who are in need of healing and in need of care.

Mr. Speaker, it is important, that we, as the leadership of this small territory, try to truly reflect the goals and aspirations of our people, not to be insulated, detached or completely preoccupied with process and managerial approach. The leadership must be visionary and passionate about our goals including the healing and wellness of our residents.

Today I would like to take our hats off to the people at the community level who address those social needs,

and meet the needs of those people, including agencies such as the friendship centres. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Henry.

Member's Statement 267-13(5): Archaic Legislation

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am confused by the comments made by some Ministers in this House in the past few days. Several Ordinary Members have pointed out there is an urgent need for legislative amendments to be made because we have several acts that are outdated and cumbersome. The Labour Standards Act and the Condominium Act, for example, are preventing people in the Northwest Territories from carrying out reasonable and necessary arrangements that any employer, purchaser or business person located elsewhere in Canada would be entitled to make.

Under our Labour Standards Act, an employer or employee in the Northwest Territories cannot even come to an agreement about the hours of work that best suit them both. We do not know how many employees our legislation is forcing to work outside of the system, possibly illegally. Another prime example is our Workers' Compensation Act. I venture to say there are no other Workers' Compensation Boards in Canada who have the ability to sue an employer.

Mr. Speaker, Members have been told by the Deputy Premier, by the Minister of Finance and by the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development that the legislative agenda of this government is full and that the government has set its priorities and apparently, that is that. Division is coming and our hands are tied. There is very little they say they can do.

On the other hand, new initiatives are being brought forward and we cannot seem to get a clear answer as to whether legislation will be required to implement them or not and I refer to the Keewatin pilot project.

Mr. Speaker, the government seems to have its priorities misplaced. With division coming, there is even more reason to

clean up the field. The last thing that the two new governments need, is to inherit obstructive legislation. Our outdated statutes are causing enough problems now. Surely, we do not want to duplicate them. Before we spend all our efforts putting into place grand new initiatives that may not even be appropriate for Nunavut, we need to make sure we do not perpetuate past mistakes. That is where our priorities should be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return To Oral Question 322-13(5): Impact of Freight Cost Increases

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have two returns. The first one is one asked by Mr. Barnabas on February 13th in regard to the impact of freight cost increases.

On Friday, February 13, the Member for High Arctic directed a question to the Premier asking how NAV Canada's phase I introduction of fees for air navigation services on April 1, 1998 will affect the cost of living in the north. As the Premier indicated, this is not an easy question to answer precisely.

The creation of NAV Canada as a not-for-profit private corporation was the result of the federal government's decision to put Canada's air navigation system on a commercial footing. Commercialization meant that Canadians would pay for the cost of air navigation services differently than they had before. Formerly, the government of Canada paid for most of the costs of air navigation services through the Air Transportation Tax (ATT) that was added to the price of every air passenger ticket sold. As NAV Canada brings in its new service fees, collected directly from the air carriers instead of the passengers, the Air Transportation Tax will be eliminated. Passenger fares would go up to cover the new fees, but the old tax that was added on top of the ticket price will be gone.

NAV Canada's new fees will come in two stages, one effective April 1, 1998 and the second on November

1, 1998. At the same time, the Air Transportation Tax will disappear in two 50 percent reductions.

How the air carriers, in turn, plan to recover NAV Canada's fees from the customers is a matter of each carrier's corporate pricing strategy. Depending on its competitive position, a carrier may decide to pass on all or a portion of the fees. The carrier also has the additional flexibility to distribute its fee recoveries between its passenger fares and its freight rates.

The new fee structure could not be avoided as NAV Canada put the air navigation system on a full cost recovery basis. Nonetheless, in a vigorous lobbying campaign with the northern air carriers over the past year, the Department of Transportation has been successful in minimizing the impact of the new fee structure on northern routes.

The department was able to make NAV Canada recognize that the fee structure, as it was originally proposed, would have had a greater effect on northern than southern air routes. As a result, NAV Canada agreed to raise the weight limit of the aircraft which the phase I fees would apply from 5.5 to 8 tonnes. The higher weight limit exempts Twin Otters and aircraft of similar size from the phase I fees. The department also won the concession that the new fees would not apply to flights departing from northern and remote airports where the air navigation services are delivered by CARS stations.

The phase one fees are set to come into effect on March 1st. The department is still in discussion with NAV Canada on the phase two fees that will come into effect on November 1st. Although I cannot be specific at this point, I am confident that we will have similar success in reducing the impact of phase two fees as we have already had with phase one fees.

For all that, I am sorry, I cannot give the Member an exact answer on the overall effect the new passenger fares and freight rates will have on the cost of living in northern communities. Too much depends on how the air carriers themselves decide to factor NAV Canada service fees into their fares and rate schedules. The final effect on the delivery costs of air cargo will vary from community to community.

I can tell the Member that the effect of the new fees on the northern cost of living will be less than if the Department of Transportation had not intervened with NAV Canada as early and as vigorously as it did.

My second return to oral question, Mr. Speaker, was a question asked by Mr. Erasmus on February 13th, in regard to NorthwesTel rate increases.

Return To Oral Question 319-13(5): NorthwesTel Rate Increases

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

First, I would like to remind Members that my role in relation to NorthwesTel is to ensure that the interests of the people of the Northwest Territories are made clear to the CRTC. It is the CRTC that makes the rules and sets the rates for phone companies.

I can tell you that providing local telephone service is very expensive, especially in the north. For a long time, phone companies structured their rates so that every house could afford to have a phone. This meant that long distance rates had to be higher in order to help pay for the local costs.

When phone companies were deregulated, competition for long distance services became intense. In order to compete for long distance customers, the companies that provided local access decided that the local system had to pay for itself, instead of depending on long distance revenues.

The rate increases we have seen so often in the Northwest Territories in recent years are the result of NorthwesTel getting ready for competition. They are increasing local access and balancing that with decreases to long distance rates. This works out well for customers who make a lot of long distance calls. Their total phone bill will probably go down. However,

Page 852

the CRTC has specifically ordered the introduction of long distance competition by July 1, 2000. NorthwesTel has been directed to increase local rates by \$4 effective August 1, 1998 and by \$6 effective August 1, 1999.

This government made a submission to the CRTC when they were holding hearings last year to decide on whether long distance competition should be implemented. We supported long distance competition. We realized that it would mean some increases in local rates, but we recommended to the CRTC that they introduce subsidies for areas like the Northwest Territories where costs of providing service are very high.

I am pleased to report that the CRTC took that recommendation seriously. They will be holding hearings across the country and in the north starting in May of 1998. We intend to continue to be aggressive on the need for subsidies to help northerners and we will be making a submission to the CRTC to make sure that northerners' interests are represented on this important issue. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to recognize Roy Courtoreille, the chairman of the board of directors of the Soaring Eagle Friendship Centre in Hay River, also, Abbie Crook, long-time friendship centre and social activist and, also, on the national board of friendship centres. Also, Dawna O'Brien who is actively involved in our friendship centre. They represent many years of community service and I would like to recognize them for their efforts. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce three members from Inuvik, Ann Kasook, the executive director of the Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre, Barry Greenland, a board member of Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre and Derek Lindsay, a town councillor and a board member of the Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise to recognize some of the members from Uncle Gabe's Friendship Centre. From the board, there is Lynn Dumont, Ethel Chalifoux, Tina McNeill, Al Dumont as well as Roger Rawlyk, the executive director. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize Barry Greenland, the sub-chief from Inuvik and, also, Chuck Laroque and other members of the friendship centres who are all here today. Welcome.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am happy today to introduce two members of Fort Simpson, two of my constituents who are also here with the friendship centre delegation. First of all, I would like to introduce Dwayne Lafferty, he is the executive director of the Deh Cho Society Friendship Centre in Fort Simpson, as well as, Alexa Tsetso, she is a youth representative with the Deh Cho Society Friendship Centre in Fort Simpson. Mahsi and thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 343-13(5): GNWT Role Regarding Telephone Rates

MR. OOTES:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation some questions in regard to telephone rates in the Northwest Territories. He mentioned in his return to an oral question today that they have asked the CRTC to hold hearings into providing subsidies for certain areas in the Northwest Territories. Could the Minister tell

Page 853

us, is that for all of the Northwest Territories or only certain areas? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 343-13(5): GNWT Role Regarding Telephone Rates

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to clarify that I wear three different hats as Minister here in this House and, I think, my role as Minister of Public Works and Services is what my relationship with NorthwTel is. Again, we are there to represent the interests of all the people in the Northwest Territories and the request that we made is for all the residents of the Northwest Territories in regard to the subsidies which they should consider in their increases to their telephone rates. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 343-13(5): GNWT Role Regarding Telephone Rates

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister stated that they are starting hearings next summer. Could the Minister tell us, if it is only in the Northwest Territories that they are looking at a subsidy system? Is that the purpose of it?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 343-13(5): GNWT Role Regarding Telephone Rates

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the CRTC will be starting to hold hearings across the country, and in the north, starting in May of this year. We recommended to the CRTC that they consider introducing subsidies for areas like the Northwest Territories, especially areas where the cost of providing the service is very high.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 343-13(5): GNWT Role Regarding Telephone Rates

MR. OOTES:

I take it that the Minister is really speaking of areas such as the isolated communities where it does not pay for the telephone company to operate as to the larger communities like Yellowknife. Could the Minister tell us, what specifically are they asking the CRTC for a subsidy for, is it for a telephone company to operate in isolated areas or is it for individuals to obtain reduced rates?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 343-13(5): GNWT Role Regarding Telephone Rates

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, previously, before this change by CRTC and the billing of the telephones started, the long distance telephone rates were subsidizing the local telephone rates. Now, with long distance competition that is going to be implemented in the Northwest Territories, is going to change. The cost of long distance telephone services will decrease and the cost of local telephone services will increase. In a lot of the smaller communities, there is a volume that is very small to try to subsidize themselves, so we will be looking at the smaller communities more so than Yellowknife. It is just in the beginning stage, we really do not know how it is going to go. The CRTC will be holding hearings to listen to all the interested parties in the north. As a result, hopefully, that will influence them in how they are going to be implementing the telephone rates. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 343-13(5): GNWT Role Regarding Telephone Rates

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the hearings will start in May of 1998, which is only several months away. Does the Minister have an indication yet, of where the CRTC will be holding hearings?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 343-13(5): GNWT Role Regarding Telephone Rates

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

No, we do not know where they are going to start. We will find out. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Roland.

Question 344-13(5): Recognition of Friendship Centres

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question would be directed to the Premier at this time. Mr. Speaker, as I had mentioned in my Member's statement, the concerns and the work the Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre has provided, it has had a long history in Inuvik in dealing with individuals from seniors in our community, right down to the infants and has provided much help to many individuals through the long history it has had in Inuvik. One of the things I would like to ask the Premier about is the issue of the community empowerment and transfer initiatives. Would this government recognize a group such as the friendship centres as one of the groups that can take part in community empowerment initiatives? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 344-13(5): Recognition of Friendship Centres

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that this government does recognize the hamlets, the city or settlement councils in the communities on an equal basis to band councils and Metis locals, but whether or not it recognizes the friendship centres on that same level, I do not know. I would have to find out for the Member what element is involved in the recognition of local governments. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary To Question 344-13(5): Recognition of Friendship Centres

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Premier inform us once he looks into this if, for example, right now recognizing community transfers, our community governments and in Inuvik we have three, the Town of Inuvik, the Nihtat Gwich'in Council and the Inuvik Community Corporation, being the Inuvialuit group, if that system is not functioning, will they look at some alternative forms? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 344-13(5): Recognition of Friendship Centres

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are committed to working with local elected officials in every community. For example in Inuvik, the town council, the Gwich'in, the Inuvialuit people and the community empowerment. I do not think it would be proper for us, as a government, to say if that does not work, we are going to do it another way. We are totally committed to working with the local

Page 854

community groups to achieve community empowerment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Two questions. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary To Question 344-13(5): Recognition of Friendship Centres

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Premier inform this House if the group gets a letter of agreement or a signed letter from the other community governments, if an organization such as Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre in Inuvik, is pursuing an avenue of community empowerment or one of the initiatives, will it be looked at and dealt with? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 344-13(5): Recognition of Friendship Centres

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That would be completely up to the community. They know best what function, avenue or vehicle they would use to deliver services to their community members. For example, in Inuvik, if the local government organizations decided that the friendship centre would be the best vehicle used to deliver a service to the people, then, by all means, we agree with local organizations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 345-13(5): Funding Friendship Centres

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier regarding grants and contributions within the executive. I was wondering if it is possible for the Minister and Cabinet to consider looking at the way grants and contributions are distributed and if there is a possibility of looking at some way funds can be allocated to the friendship centres through these grants and contributions.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 345-13(5): Funding Friendship Centres

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member is well aware, the grants and contributions of this government have a very limited amount of dollars. I

would be quite willing to look at that. I am not even sure, offhand, Mr. Speaker, how much grants and contributions we do have. I will take a look at that and get back to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 345-13(5): Funding Friendship Centres

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the NWT Council of Friendship Centre's presentation this morning, they do provide service to a lot of people in the Northwest Territories. I would like to ask the Premier, will he and Cabinet consider looking at the possibility of finding a way to contribute operations and maintenance costs to the individual friendship centres? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 345-13(5): Funding Friendship Centres

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize. I did not catch the full question. Can I have the Member repeat it please?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Krutko, your second supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 345-13(5): Funding Friendship Centres

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was in light of the discussions we had with the friendship centres this morning and the number of people that they do serve in the Northwest Territories. Will the Premier and his colleagues in Cabinet consider looking at the possibility of distributing operations and maintenance costs for funding to the individual friendship centres in the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 345-13(5): Funding Friendship Centres

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, we do have a limited amount of dollars available in our budget for grants and contributions. We have approximately \$95,000 for the women's initiative grant, we have \$167,000 for the Native Women's Association, we have \$296,000 for the Status of Women Council. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that is all the dollars we do have within the Executive's budget on grants and contributions. I know, previously, Members of the Assembly were quite concerned if we reduced any grants and contributions to the women's organizations or the Native Women's Association. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 345-13(5): Funding Friendship Centres

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all recognize that there is a funding crunch, especially when it comes to grants and contributions. The issue is important enough to myself and the other colleagues that the Premier, along with his Cabinet and Members of the social committee and other Members in the House, if we cannot find alternative funds within the budget and seriously consider looking at the possibility of funding the centres through a new source of funding if that is the will of the Premier to work along with other Members in this House to look at a new pot fund. If there is a will, there is a way, I think that if the Premier can commit to it.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin

Further Return To Question 345-13(5): Funding Friendship

Page 855

Centres

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will commit to the Member, and to the friendship centres, that we will work with our local organizations in the communities, as well as, with the friendship centres, the Metis locals, the band councils, the local elected hamlets, settlements or towns, to look at the funds that are existing in those communities to see how they can better use those funds. I will commit to that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 345-13(5): Funding Friendship Centres

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Premier consider looking at the possibility of working along with the friendship centres to review the capital assets of this government when it comes to establishing new facilities within communities? There was a suggestion made this morning about looking at something possibly for Rankin Inlet where we may have capital assets which are not being used now. Is it a possibility to allow those friendship centres to take over these facilities for a dollar?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 345-13(5): Funding Friendship Centres

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do have a disposal of goods policy that we do use. The local government, whether it is a hamlet, settlement or whatever municipal government, the band council and the Metis local, all these three are treated equally on the disposal of property assets with this government. I do know that in the past, for example, the Soaring Eagle Friendship Centre in Hay River, we gave them that building and the Metis local as a government, for a dollar. The book value on that building I believe was \$380,000, the old liquor store warehouse. The last time I went by there, there was a beehive of activity and they are making very good use of it. It was a good investment by our government by giving them that building. I should know that. My mother started it or was very instrumental in starting it many, many years ago.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 346-13(5): Equipment Donation to Friendship Centres

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as to my Member's statement earlier this morning, I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment if any equipment that was used by the language bureau could be made available for friendship centre use? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 346-13(5): Equipment Donation to Friendship Centres

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Mr. Speaker, I am not aware if any plans for the disposal of equipment for the language bureau have been made or if, in fact, any of that equipment will continue to be needed by the government. I would be prepared to investigate and get back to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 347-13(5): Allocating Surplus Funds to Education

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Several times in this House we have heard from various Ministers, last week from the Education Minister, that there was no more money to rebase their budgets, but there are surpluses and slippage within individual departments. I am wondering would the Finance Minister commit to the House at this time that, when there is slippage, when there are surplus monies within individual departments, would he commit those funds to Mr. Dent to help him rebase Education so that our teachers are not in bad situations with overcrowded classrooms and so on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 347-13(5): Allocating Surplus Funds to Education

HON. JOHN TODD:

No, Mr. Speaker. It would be inappropriate for me to commit to one department versus another department. As Finance Minister, I have the obligation and responsibility to make sure that monies that we distribute to the programs and departments are done in a fair and reasonable way based upon the priorities of the government. We have heard earlier today everybody speaking about the friendship centres and need for additional dollars there. We have heard in the House from Mr. Picco himself that we need money for librarians, we need money for teachers, we need money for health, we need money for everything according to him the last three or four years. What I would say is that, if there are any surpluses or slippages in departments, we would look at it as an overall approach to government and allocate those dollars accordingly, but at this time, I have not seen any surpluses or slippages. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 347-13(5): Allocating Surplus Funds to Education

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I could refresh the Minister's memory. Last week in Hansard, the Education Minister and the Finance Minister said that the Members of this House pick and select the priorities of the government where money is going to be spent. For example, \$500,000 or more surpluses in the firefighting budget was then reallocated to other departments based on a priority. Is the Minister telling me if the Members of this House do not think education is a priority, he cannot shift money around? I think

Page 856

over the last couple of weeks the questions and the statements made in this House have demonstrated that, indeed, to the Members of this House, education is a priority. I will ask the Minister, what happens to

that money when there are surpluses that he cannot remember? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 347-13(5): Allocating Surplus Funds to Education

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I like it when my colleague gets excited. (Applause) Anyway, Mr. Speaker, as I said to my colleague and the colleagues in the House at this time, I do not see where there are going to be any surpluses except for what we announced in the budget. I believe if there was an overall surplus in the budget, it would go against the accumulated deficit to ensure that when the two new territories come into being, that the debt load that they will have to carry will be less. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 347-13(5): Allocating Surplus Funds to Education

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not trying to debate the Minister or take the bait. I am trying to ask a question. I believe the Minister is not entirely correct when he says that the only surpluses in this government would be directed toward the deficit because, as I just explained, there was a surplus in the firefighting budget. I believe last month there was \$1.2 million under RWED that was rebased into other departments. My question is, in those cases, not at the end of the fiscal year, but in those cases, where money has not been expended within an individual line item, individual departments, would the Minister help Mr. Dent, he said he needs the priority from the Members of this House. Will he help the Department of Education and rebase those monies? That is what I am asking.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 347-13(5): Allocating Surplus Funds to Education

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As my honourable colleague knows, I was talking about any surpluses that may be acquired at year end that would be charged up against the accumulated deficit to ensure that his children, whom he talked so fondly about earlier today, are going to have a future and that they are not going to carry along a huge debt into Nunavut. That is the overall objective of this government and if there are any departmental surpluses, we would review it as we normally do at the FMBS, make some recommendations, whether it is education or whether it is health care, or whether it is our colleagues in the House today and the friendship centres, et cetera. I am not prepared here to say whether one way or another. We put money into education, the friendship centres, health care, justice system, hospitals, et cetera, that this House has been debating for the last two and a half years. What we will do is look at any surpluses in a comprehensive way, allocate them according to the priorities established in this House by both Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly and get on with the job of doing government and doing it well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 347-13(5): Allocating Surplus Funds to Education

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it took a couple of supplementaries to get to this point, but indeed, we just found out that there are departmental surpluses at varying times, that FMBS and this House decide what the priorities are. It has been demonstrated, this House has identified education as a priority. Again, I would ask the Minister of Finance, that when there are departmental surpluses, would the Minister and the FMBS, the Cabinet, the government and Ordinary Members have an opportunity to ask and go to Mr. Todd to make education a priority so we could rebase like we did last week with some other organizations within this government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 347-13(5): Allocating Surplus Funds to Education

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must be clear, Mr. Speaker, education is a priority of this government, the same as health care, housing for poor people and friendship centres, et cetera. It is naive for my colleague to stand up in the House and say, it is a number one priority and, therefore, we should shift the money there because I have the support of this House. If he wishes to bring a motion in, and suggest to me as to where we put it, and the House says where it wants it, we would give it due consideration. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 348-13(5): Disposal of GNWT Liquor Warehouse

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd. Sometime ago, the government had listed some assets that they wished to offer for sale. Among those assets was the real estate known as the location of the liquor warehouse. Could the Minister tell us as to what the situation is with that particular piece of land, as far as disposal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 348-13(5): Disposal of GNWT Liquor Warehouse

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If my honourable colleague is referring to the liquor warehouse which currently resides across from the MacDonald's, the arrangement which has been made with this government is, we have offered the land to the city at a nominal fee, so they can build the new arena they wish to build. The land and the arrangement are

Page 857

conditional upon them building the arena on that property. We would put out to public tender the

acquisition of the building itself. It is no longer required as it now has been privatized and is in private hands. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 348-13(5): Disposal of GNWT Liquor Warehouse

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that information and I understand from what he says is, the City of Yellowknife was offered the land. Was that a condition of the City of Yellowknife obtaining the land that they would build an arena on it or can they use it for some other project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 348-13(5): Disposal of GNWT Liquor Warehouse

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We were clear, explicit both in writing and orally. It means the land was approved by Cabinet conditional on the city building the arena on that property. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 348-13(5): Disposal of GNWT Liquor Warehouse

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if the City of Yellowknife chooses not to build an arena on that land, will the Government of the Northwest Territories repossess it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 348-13(5): Disposal of GNWT Liquor Warehouse

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, if the city should decide not to utilize the land to build the arena, the land will come back to the government. Then the government will make a decision as to how to dispose of it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 348-13(5): Disposal of GNWT Liquor Warehouse

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Minister. It was reasonably clear. Will the government still be proceeding with the disposal of the structure that is on that property, regardless of whether the city uses it or not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 348-13(5): Disposal of GNWT Liquor Warehouse

HON. JOHN TODD:

My colleague, Mr. Dent, advises me that city hall will be making a decision on this proposal on Monday. Subject to whatever the decision is made by city hall, then the government will have to decide how it acts. Assuming city hall agrees they are going to build a new arena on that property and given that Cabinet has to sign it off, then I would make the assumption, that the land would then be transferred to the city and the government would put out the tender for the facility, the building, to public tender for people to bid on. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 349-13(5): NorthwTel Rate Increase

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Public Works and Services. It is in relation to the reply he had made about my questions

concerning the NorthwTel rate increases. I appreciate that the CRTC sets the rates of phone companies. The Minister had indicated that the company which provided local access, decided the local system had to pay for itself instead of depending on long distance revenues. It was the reason for the local rate increases. I would like to know if there was a reason for implementing the local phone rate hikes over a period of time, rather than raising it all at once when long distance competition is allowed into the NWT?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 349-13(5): NorthwTel Rate Increase

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know the reasons why. I do not know the complete details of the package different companies are bringing forward. I will endeavour to look into that and try to get more specific on exactly what their reasoning is for the honourable Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 349-13(5): NorthwTel Rate Increase

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister also indicated that at the last hearings they recommended that the CRTC introduce subsidies for areas like the Northwest Territories where costs of providing services are high. Could the Minister indicate from whom would the subsidies come?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 349-13(5): NorthwTel Rate Increase

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, NorthwTel previously was subsidizing the local phone rates for long distance. The subsidy would be done by the phone

Page 858

companies that will be continuing to provide those services. If NorthwTel is going to be providing those services, the subsidies would be handled internally from within the company. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 349-13(5): NorthwTel Rate Increase

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister had indicated that subsidies would be from competing companies, including companies from the south. Could the Minister indicate what would be the consequence if there are no subsidies involved in the CRTC's decision? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 349-13(5): NorthwTel Rate Increase

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I assume that if presentations to the CRTC during their hearings across the country in the north, starting in May, are not taken into account, mainly the position that we will be moving forward is, urging them to seriously consider looking at the north. The cost of doing business in the north and using the telephone is very high and they should seriously consider having a subsidy system in their works. If that is not taken into consideration, the worst case scenario is, the telephone rates will be a lot higher than what we have today. NorthwTel has been directed to increase local rates by \$4 effective August, 1998, and \$6 effective August, 1999. This is after the hearings take place. There is already direction by the CRTC for NorthwTel to increase their rates. I assume that would remain in place. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 349-13(5): NorthwTel Rate Increase

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the CRTC does not include subsidies in its decision, will outside competition be contributing anything at all to the phone system which is currently operating in the north, so people can actually have phones in their homes?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 349-13(5): NorthwTel Rate Increase

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know at this point in time. Again, there are going to be public hearings and we are going to be making a very aggressive effort in trying to have subsidies to help northerners. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 350-13(5): Statute Revision Process

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Justice and it is with regard to a division related issue which is the statutes revision. About a year ago, when a detailed process, such as this, was undertaken, the decision was made by the department to use in-house staff to take on this task, as opposed to bringing in somebody specifically detailed to do that job. From what I am hearing, this has become a full-time occupation for some of your senior people. A lot of the other legislation needs to be updated and will not get addressed because there is not time. What we will be doing is marrying inadequate, old and out of date legislation in the west marrying in the east because of the fact we do not have time. Could the Minister indicate whether this process is on time? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 350-13(5): Statute Revision Process

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The statute revision project we started as a new Assembly in May of 1996, involved several things. One is to consolidate and ensure that the laws and statutes were in place for both the Nunavut Territory and the Western Territory. Also, at the same time, deal with the French translations of both sides and the Inuktitut translations for the Nunavut side. The federal government did provide more than a million dollars of funding to do this project.

I am informed that the work is in progress and the Member is correct, it is a massive task that will require many hours of work for our staff. At what stage it is at now, I will be asking for a briefing from the department very soon so that I will be able to tell the Member exactly what stage it is at now. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 350-13(5): Statute Revision Process

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister, as well, elaborate on the fact that initially we were under the understanding that this could be done part-time by your senior people? Now in fact, it is a massive job. His department was supposed to be able to do all the other attendant work as well as do this and not miss a step, so that there would be a seamless transition. Could the Minister indicate whether, in fact, this is still going to be possible? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 350-13(5): Statute Revision Process

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are confident that the work will be done. The question would be, how much further ahead could we expect to be, then, what is the absolute minimum? That is the one thing that I will need to

Page 859

check out. The Department of Justice did appoint the statute revision commissioner and we also have hired other staff, a legislative editor, some interpreting staff for French and Inuktitut languages and therefore the work is going on. The plan is for government to put forward a division measure's implementation act, which we would introduce, discuss and pass in the spring session, probably in May or June. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 350-13(5): Statute Revision Process

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the department also be able to ensure that the legislation which is being reviewed and mirrored will be updated, so that we are not just mirroring and passing on problems with antiquated, outdated and no longer relevant legislation, east and west? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 350-13(5): Statute Revision Process

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answer is yes. Last year, we did approve the Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act 1997, which dealt with some of those problems and needs for updates. We are doing that again this year. Then again, I need to remind the House that time is limited, there is a lot of work to be done. I would have to say that the government and staff are doing their best to get as far ahead as we can with this project. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 350-13(5): Statute Revision Process

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister indicate when he would be able to provide a more detailed, thorough briefing and update to the House so we have a clear understanding of how this very critical task is progressing? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 350-13(5): Statute Revision Process

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I can commit to is to brief the House in the next few days during the review of the Department of Justice's budget.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Enuaraq.

Question 351-13(5): Environmental Status of Cape Christian

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to Minister of RWED, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi. Will the Minister give his assurance that Cape Christian is environmentally safe and contaminant free? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 351-13(5): Environmental Status of Cape Christian

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the years, there has been extensive work done to clean up this particular site. There is still some work to be done, but most of the environmental concerns have been addressed. What I understand is, that there is still some cleanup that needs to be done, buildings, some of which contain asbestos, some old fuel and some minor spot contaminations that still need to be cleaned up. We

are presently having discussions with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to clarify exactly who is responsible for completing the cleanup and the restoration of that site. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Enuaraq.

Supplementary To Question 351-13(5): Environmental Status of Cape Christian

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From my understanding, the ownership of Cape Christian, the whole infrastructure was turned over to GNWT from the government of Canada. If the site is not contaminant free, when can the community expect it to be cleaned up?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 351-13(5): Environmental Status of Cape Christian

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are, as I said, still having discussions with the federal government as to who has ultimate authority in regard to the assets and the present condition of the site. Once those negotiations are complete, we would expect that, following a positive outcome of that, we should be in a position to come out with a work schedule that would outline who and how this last phase of the work could be completed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 352-13(5): Disbursement of Departmental Surpluses

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow-up on my earlier question concerning the allocation and priorities of surplus departmental funds. My question is to the Minister of Finance. Who prioritizes the disbursement of said surpluses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 352-13(5): Disbursement of Departmental Surpluses

Page 860

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure what my colleague is say, is it departmental annual surpluses or surpluses that relate on a monthly basis or some other number? If he could just clarify what he means by that?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 352-13(5): Disbursement of Departmental Surpluses

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I gave an example previously in my other question. I mentioned the \$983,000 that was found to be in a surplus in the firefighting budget as an example. That is what I am talking about for Mr. Todd. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 352-13(5): Disbursement of Departmental Surpluses

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that was a unique situation, Mr. Speaker, I could be wrong, of course, but RWED had actually saved a significant amount of money because of a lack of fires. They had reallocated the dollars into employment programs and some infrastructure that were required in the communities. It is not the norm that we would have large surpluses of that nature in departments. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 352-13(5): Disbursement of Departmental Surpluses

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I am trying to find out here is where this money comes from. For example, the Standing Committee on Infrastructure said to put privatization of POL on hold, yet the government went out and spent \$250,000 on the study and then they decided to shelve it. The government found \$750,000 to do a Med-Emerg report that has been slammed by the medical association, which is \$1 million. Who prioritizes this money? Someone must have extra money. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 352-13(5): Disbursement of Departmental Surpluses

HON. JOHN TODD:

No, that was money that was in the existing Ministers' budgets and they chose to spend it that way. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 352-13(5): Disbursement of Departmental Surpluses

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister said earlier I was naive. I might be naive, but I am not stupid. There is money within the budget. The money is prioritized by the Minister. It has to come from somewhere. Is the Minister saying now that the Minister of an individual department has discretionary funds or money to allocate, even though the priority of this government, as an example, when we said not to study the privatization of POL as a recommendation of a standing committee of this House, they went ahead and did it anyway? Why can he not do the same thing in contradiction of what the Minister has just said. How is that money prioritized within the departmental budgets? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 352-13(5): Disbursement of Departmental Surpluses

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, I would never suggest that my honourable colleague was stupid. Ministers have authority within their existing budgets to move monies around, which is just the way governments are run. I cannot remember what the total value of the ability of a Minister is, I could find that out. They have the capacity to move monies around. The question that Mr. Picco is asking is, he is talking about surpluses. I am saying that is an unusual phenomena. The one that he alluded to is one that came about because there were significant savings in firefighting last summer, that is all. That was an unusual situation, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for someone on Cabinet who can answer a comment. Twice, Mr. Speaker, I have tried to ask this question today and the Minister, I should be directing the question to, is not available. I will hold my question until the appropriate Minister is available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Laughter

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

I will pass, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 353-13(5): Additional Funding to NWT Development Corporation

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance earlier said it was unique circumstances where there was \$983,000 in surplus money from the fire suppression program and that is why it was reallocated. Mr. Speaker, I understand that last week, there was a \$1.2 million appropriation that was

moved to the NWT Development Corporation. Where did that money come from? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 353-13(5): Additional Funding to NWT Development Corporation

HON. JOHN TODD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was talking about the

Page 861

unique situation where we did not expend the kind of money that we anticipated, in fire, that is fact, not fiction. The additional dollars that come about where we allocate money are done through a supplementary appropriation that my honourable colleague knows, that is where it goes, and he has the ability to be involved in that through committee. If he is talking about the \$1.2 million that relates to the Development Corporation, I would have to take a look at that, but I would suspect it came out of supplementary appropriations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 353-13(5): Additional Funding to NWT Development Corporation

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding was that it was not a supplementary appropriation, but was because of a surplus from another department. My point is, how could that be moved then, from one department to another when we have already demonstrated the need for more money, for example, in education and some of the other areas? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 353-13(5): Additional Funding to NWT Development Corporation

HON. JOHN TODD:

I had better go back and check Hansard, Mr. Speaker. What my honourable colleague has been saying for the last two years, because all he does is keep asking us to spend money and then privately tells us to save it. Mr. Speaker, what I will do, is take the question as notice, so that I can get a clear response to my honourable colleague and report back to him. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question is taken as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Picco. Your point of order.

Point of Order

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, the Minister is implying in private conversations with me that I have said one thing and I have done another and that refrain is misleading the House because he knows that it is not true. I would like something done here on this.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. With regard to Mr. Picco's point of order, the Chair cannot make a decision on two opposing opinions. It is not up to me to make that determination. I would also remind the Members that other Members could raise on a point of order if, for example, a Member accuses another Member of misleading the House. The Member cannot accuse another Member of doing that and it could be raised as a point of order. Mr. Picco, you are the one who made that allegation. Mr. Todd can raise on a point of order and he will have a point of order. Mr. Picco, you do not have a point of order. Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 354-13(5): Funding for the NWT Tourism Association

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, tourism is tremendously important to a lot of organizations in the Northwest Territories. Quite a few are employed in this industry. It is one of the few areas which has growth potential for us. The NWT has an association in place and sometime ago it requested funding from the Minister of Renewable Resources for a funding increase. The Minister has stated at the time that he had meetings with the association, advised them that he would like to see them become more self-sufficient, but also to develop a plan. In the mid-term

review I had asked the Minister if he would address this question. He had committed to revisiting this issue with the organization. My question will be for the Minister, Mr. Kakfwi, if he could update us on what has transpired with the association regarding funding? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 354-13(5): Funding for the NWT Tourism Association

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have not yet scheduled any meetings between myself and the tourism association. Hopefully, by the time this session ends and there is time to give proper attention to issues like this, we will be able to report some work done in this area. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 354-13(5): Funding for the NWT Tourism Association

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are in the middle of a budget process and I am sure the organizations are curious as to whether they can receive funding for the coming year. Tourism depends upon promotion, as we all know. Could the Minister tell us what is the hang up in providing funding for the tourism association? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 354-13(5): Funding for the NWT Tourism Association

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the things which needed to be done was to rationalize the present funding allocation which is given to the tourism association. With that, would come a work plan and an idea of what it is that the association hopes to achieve, some goals and specific objectives over the

coming year. We would then have a discussion about what the department would do in support of achieving those objectives and if there is a need for additional funding above and beyond what we have and if it is substantiated, then we would be in a position to look at it. One of the issues we raised with them was to institute membership fees. The individual businesses, which constitute the membership of the tourism body, would feel like they have ownership and responsibility. This would be doing what everybody else is doing in the country which is paying for a membership fee into the association. Thank you.

Page 862

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 354-13(5): Funding for the NWT Tourism Association

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister tell us if he has had feedback from the association itself with regard to his request for a rationalization plan? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 354-13(5): Funding for the NWT Tourism Association

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have had discussions with the associations at the officials level. There is not at this time anything substantial to report, except to say, that I am going under the assumption we are still working on it. We had agreed to work with them to come up with something substantive so the association would be working in the interest of the membership, in cooperation with the department and set out to achieve tangible results to increase tourism in the western Territory. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 354-13(5): Funding for the NWT Tourism Association

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is naturally, in all of our interest to ensure success in this area. As I said before, tourism depends very much on promotion. Promotion requires dollars. Could the Minister tell us if he has some plan to meet and address this whole issue within the next month with the tourism association? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 354-13(5): Funding for the NWT Tourism Association

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I already have had a meeting with this group. Last year we have done what we can to give them direction and clarify our expectations. I expect there will be some positive developments with regard to what needs to be done. I am prepared to meet at any time once they have made some progress on some of the areas we have outlined together earlier in the year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 355-13(5): Business Incentive Policy Impacts on Small Business

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will ask my question in Inuktitut. (Translation) Last year I asked a Minister, I cannot remember exactly which Minister it was directed to, however, I will present my question to the Premier. It is in regard to small businesses which are being impacted by the BIP. When the government awards a contract to a particular business, what kind of policy do they abide by? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 355-13(5): Business Incentive Policy Impacts on Small Business

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have the Minister of RWED answer the question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has developed, within the department, the capability to promote and support community economic development. Specifically, we are in a position to better serve people in remote outlying communities who are presently engaged in business and who are thinking about getting into business or are having difficulties in other areas. It is my view that we can because we have developed the capability at the headquarters and regional levels that contacting the regional superintendent would be the first step to go. We can also provide information from the headquarters level. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas. Question period is over. Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 355-13(5): Business Incentive Policy Impacts on Small Business

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I would like to know is how many small businesses are registered for the BIP? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 355-13(5): Business Incentive Policy Impacts on Small Business

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know the number. I am prepared to take the question as notice and get back to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 09-13(5): Court Proceedings on Layoff Severance Packages

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week I made a Member's statement regarding concerns by employees who were laid off from this government and the inconsistencies they may have been told by personnel officers regarding their severance packages and how these packages are formulated. I have two written questions.

Page 863

1. Is the Minister aware of any employees or former employees who have launched court proceedings regarding unfair packages?

2. If so, is the amount in dispute sufficient to warrant the government's proceeding with the court case? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Written questions. I would like to remind the Members again. There are no preambles to written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Hamilton.

ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Return to Written Question 6-13(5) asked by Mr. Picco to the Minister of Justice concerning personnel inquiries for the Baffin correctional centre on February 1, 1998.

Return To Written Question 6-13(5): Personnel Inquiries Regarding Baffin Correctional Centre

Screening is done in accordance with GNWT staffing policy. Screening criteria are established and agreed to by the members of the staffing committee which consists of one Human Resource Officer and one or two representatives of the division in which the position is located. All screening records are kept with the competition file which is subject to audit by central agency staff. In this instance, the then manager of the Iqaluit Young Offenders Facility who was a registered psychologist, a personnel services officer from Yellowknife and the warden of the Baffin Correctional Centre comprised the staffing committee.

There is no specific staffing function located at the Baffin Correctional Centre beyond the specific involvement of the facility staff as divisional representatives on staffing committees.

All psychologists who wish to practice in the Northwest Territories are required to be registered with the Registrar of Psychologists located in the Department of Health and Social Services. This is often a lengthy process as the requirements are stringent. It is partially this process of ensuring appropriate registration that brought into question the qualifications of the recently dismissed psychologist at the Baffin Correctional Centre. The process by which a registration is granted requires the applicant to provide more information in far greater detail than is required by staffing policy and is therefore relied upon as the final assurance of qualification in such cases.

A review of the process followed in the hiring of the psychologist at the Baffin Correctional Centre indicates that no errors were made with respect to GNWT hiring procedures. A review will be carried out to determine if it may be necessary to exceed the requirements of GNWT procedures in some cases. If such a conclusion is reached, recommendations for a general change to procedures will be made to the interdepartmental human resource committee for all departments to consider. If necessary, additional steps will be introduced to the process in the Department of Justice.

The warden of the Baffin Correctional Centre met with all inmates in the centre to discuss their situation in light of the absence of the person formerly serving as the correction's psychologist. He stated that all reports completed by her had been removed from the inmate files, and that the reports had been sealed. The reports will only be reopened when a new correction's psychologist is hired. Manon Leblanc, a psychologist with the Department of Health and Social Services has agreed to provide counselling services in Iqaluit to BCC inmates and young offenders at Isumaqsungittukkuvik who request such services.

It has been concluded that no release was affected by the work done by Ms. Bannerman in Iqaluit.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Return to Written Question 7-13(5) asked by Mrs. Groenewegen to the Minister of Justice on victims services in the Northwest Territories.

Return To Written Question 7-13(5): Victims Services in the NWT

For the current fiscal year \$76,634.11 has been collected through the victims of a crime surcharge, as of December, 1997. In 1996-97 the amount collected was \$105,936.75 and for 1995-96 it was \$98,176.45. In January, 1996, there was a one-time contribution from the GNWT of \$300,000 to the Victim Assistance Fund.

The Victims of Crime Act of the Northwest Territories establishes the Victims Assistance Fund and provides for the appointment of a victim's assistance committee. The committee is appointed for three-year terms to make recommendations to the Minister of Justice on policies regarding the needs and concerns of victims of crime, and on the distribution of the Victims Assistance Fund. Funding is available for short-term, community-based projects and activities which directly support or benefit victims of crime through: training; direct services; public awareness and information; and/or research. At monthly teleconference meetings the victim's assistance committee reviews submitted proposals from agencies and individuals and makes recommendations to the Minister on disbursements from the Victims Assistance Fund. The Minister of Justice makes all the final decisions about disbursements from the fund. The committee receives administrative and executive support from a half-time departmental staff person. This person also works with victim initiatives sponsored directly by the department's community justice division.

The victim's assistance committee's annual reports for 1995-96 and 1996-97 are now being printed and, when received, will be tabled before the Legislative Assembly. To date, in the 1997-98 fiscal year, a total of \$139,133 has been disbursed from the Victims Assistance Fund. A list of those disbursements will be provided to the Member for Hay River. The Victims Assistance Fund is a revolving fund. Any monies remaining at the end of one fiscal year are automatically transferred to the next fiscal year. The Department of Justice is committed to the continued funding of victim support programs. Main estimates show funding for victims services for the 1998-99 fiscal year to remain at the same level as in the previous fiscal year.

During the 1997-98 fiscal year, the Department of Justice,

through its community's justice budget, committed \$200,000 toward community-based victim services projects in Rankin Inlet, Iqaluit, Fort Smith and Yellowknife and to victim support services for the people impacted by the Grollier Hall investigation. In addition, activities and/or services related to both victims and offenders were included under its \$1.1 million in contributions to communities for community justice committees.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Mr. Picco.

ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

Reply 2-13(5): Mr. Picco's Reply

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over two years ago when we came to this Assembly, we came here to work for all our constituents. During the opening address by the Commissioner, Helen Maksagak, she mentioned that we are here to work together for the betterment of all people in the Northwest Territories and all of our constituents. When we are in this House, Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation to represent all of our constituents to the best of our abilities and to work together with the Cabinet and those Ordinary Members to provide that counter balance to Cabinet. In that role, we have to ask questions and in the questions that we ask, we try to find answers and the answers that we find sometimes are not appropriate to the Member. Therefore, you ask a supplementary question. When Ministers try to imply that questions and statements made are innocuous or asinine, which is not acceptable. That brings you to the next point, Mr. Speaker, the credibility factor of the government itself. People are credible in the things that they do and the work that they carry on and the statements that they make. It is very cheap to have innuendo to say that a Member or an individual has said one thing in committee and another thing outside the House. Find the transcript to state that and prove it. That would be my response or my retort to an address made like that. Questions are posed, not to pose debate, Mr. Speaker, but questions are asked to find answers. Sometimes the answers to questions that you are asking have already been given in the committee, but they are not available to the public at large and, thus, the opportunity in this House to ask a question so that it comes in the public domain.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, it is very frustrating as an Ordinary Member of this House to bring up questions. It is almost like a tooth-pulling exercise to try to get an answer. When the House prioritizes areas of concern for financial expenditures of this government, hopefully, it is done with the best intention of all the people who we are here to serve. Public money spent for the public good should be accountable to the public. That is the whole basis of transparency within government, Mr. Speaker. That is why some motions have been brought forward within this House over the past several months and the past year. An example is a motion on May 13th, moved by myself and seconded by the honourable Member, Mr. Ootes. All these points come to one conclusion, one finale and that is to give an opportunity to all Members to have an opportunity in this House to express opposing views and debate. Mr. Speaker, it is not up to myself or any other Member of this House to warrant if the questions being asked are opportune or if they are of an imbecilic nature. To grade someone's questions is not the question. Mr. Speaker, it is the answers that are given to the questions that are being asked, and that, Mr. Speaker, is the credibility factor of this government.

People are listening or reading Hansard, they can see that the questions are being asked and posed and the flippant responses sometimes that are received. That is not acceptable. We are here as a group of people to represent our constituents as a whole. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me that some Members of this House spend too much time in the House. They start to believe their own rhetoric and that is some of the stuff that is being said on the street. They pass that off as not important or superficial. The people on the street are the people that elected you in the first place and their thoughts, wishes and understanding should be brought forward. That should not be here to be made fun of or to disregard. Mr. Speaker, the Commissioner in her opening address said, and stated very plainly, that the Government of the Northwest Territories, this the 13th Assembly, had a very difficult task to do and that difficult task is not made any easier, Mr. Speaker, with flippant responses or fun making or trying to bait Members into saying things or raise debate. That is the credibility factor brought on by this government.

Another area, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to bring up is the information that is put out by the government. We have demonstrated over the past two years that there are fiscal problems within the government and yet the public at large sees items

and examples like the \$250,000 spent for the study of the privatization of POL, although it was rejected by the standing committee of this House, someone, somewhere, thought it was a priority. We saw the \$750,000 spent on a Med-Emerg report that was slammed by the NWT Medical Association and criticized widely in the media and by the public at large. That was \$750,000 spent by this government. When you question those types of expenditures by the government, then you are putting yourself up for ridicule by the Members who answer our questions. That is not acceptable. Those types of things do not allow a Member to do his job or her job. To be told that you are tactful because someone said that you are on an Internet foreign server, that is incorrect. To have Ministers phone you and say that statements you have made are slanderous and liable, that is not correct. To imply that you have said one thing in this House and another thing somewhere else, that is not correct. It is not acceptable. Although it may not fall within the jurisdiction of this House legislatively, through points of privilege or through points of order, it is still not correct.

I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the public at large sees it for what it is. It is a flippant disregard for parliamentary procedure. We have all seen on our TVs what happens in the House of Commons or in other jurisdictions, but one of the reasons that we are here in the Northwest Territories is that we have a unique form of government which is called consensus government. Under the consensus rule of government, each Member is allowed to speak to issues that they feel free to speak to, without a party affiliation, without towing a party line. That is a unique opportunity for each individual Member of this House to vote that way. Although we all know, Mr. Speaker,

Page 865

indeed in some cases and in some instances, when you do that, you open yourself up for other problems and that could be slight intimidation, cat call, joint questioning or being given the cold shoulder by your colleagues. This is part of the game we see here in the Northwest Territories. Consensus government systems and the acid test of consensus government, Mr. Speaker, are when you have money. When you have money within a government to give you accountability and transparency and when you have people that agree with you. If I support someone's bridge in hard luck bay and they support my breakwater in tough luck harbour, then you can get a consensus. But when you have no money and you

have individual MLAs fighting over a small piece of pie, then it is hard to have a consensus.

Mr. Speaker, in the crux of the situation that is the acid test of consensus government, is that a good thing or a bad thing Mr. Speaker? It is not for us to decide here today, it is for the public at large who watch the House, who watch the program on TV, who read in the media and the newspapers, who read Hansard, Mr. Speaker, that is now available on-line in many of the government offices and at private computer terminals in the Northwest Territories. They can see what is being said and what is debated. That type of exposure of the 13th Assembly probably has not occurred in the history of this Assembly. I think, Mr. Speaker, in itself, that has been a good thing because the public at large can see what is being said. Mr. Speaker, sometimes what is being said has to be taken into context of what the topic was at the time. To take something out of context and say one thing to imply another, that is called innuendo, is cheap and not acceptable in a consensus form of government. If I choose, or any other Member chooses, to ask questions during the committee of the whole or in any other form, you are asking questions because of legitimate reasons.

When I read the Hansards, and I have heard other people say when they read the Hansards, based on the questions that individual Members ask, I have never heard anyone say that the questions were flippant or the questions were of a meaningless nature. To imply such is unparliamentary, Mr. Speaker, and that is not acceptable. The flippant retorts when an Ordinary Member asks questions or the perception of flippant retorts by some Ministers when they answer questions, is not acceptable. Mr. Speaker, the public at large is sophisticated enough to know the difference between those types of answers and the questions given, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Ministers, the Members, they could all smile, laugh and do whatever they want when you are asking your question, but I know myself Mr. Speaker, when I am here at night when I write my questions, I do them in an effort to bring out public disclosure. To mock that, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day which is a buzz word and a buzz phrase, certain Members of this House like to say because every sentence that they have has to have at the end of the day in it, for my children and your children. These slogans, Mr. Speaker, slogans, because that is what this government sometimes, I believe, is becoming a slogan government, is not acceptable. I think that the public at large sees it for what it is.

The Commissioner in her opening address talked about the challenges of the 13th Assembly. Those challenges were fiscal, as well as logistical problems, in dealing with division and other issues. It will be history, Mr. Speaker, history, that will judge this Assembly. It will not be the Members in this Assembly. It will be five years, four years or ten years down the road when people look at what has happened in this Assembly, based on probably the questions that were raised, the deals that were done and, again, Mr. Speaker, I think when I hear it in this House, questions on accountability, questions on money being spent for the public good, it should be accountable to the public. Mr. Speaker, the public is informed, they are sophisticated, they listen to the radio, they read Hansard, they read the media reports and they talk to individual Members. They know what is happening within this House with the questions that are being posed by Members, and they read the questions that are being posed by Members and they know the answers are not forthcoming and thus that raises the concept or the illusion or I guess even, you could say, Mr. Speaker, the fact that there are problems within the government. Has that been stated before? Yes, Mr. Speaker. Has it been stated in the public at large? Yes, it has, Mr. Speaker. I think that is what the Commissioner in her opening address tried to allude to, that the challenges of this Assembly were not only the fiscal problems we had, the run-up to division, the perception of the public at large.

It goes on some of the crises that we have had here including the Keewatin situation, some questions on Lahm Ridge Tower, Mr. Speaker. The Lahm Ridge Tower, when that first came up, it was brought up by myself in October and, at that time, I was satisfied with some of the responses that I had from the Ministers. On the Aurora Fund, Mr. Speaker, I look back at the Aurora Fund as an instrument to this government that was not very clear. When I asked simple questions, Mr. Speaker, I never once asked on the Aurora Fund who got the money. I asked how many jobs had been created, how do you have access to this program, is it marketed, Mr. Speaker. It turned into full page ads in the newspapers and the disclosure of the loans that were being made by this government. Was that a good thing, Mr. Speaker? I think it was. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, when you look at public money spent for the public good, you will get a retort by saying, well, that is private business. Well, it is not private business, Mr. Speaker, if the Royal Bank lends Bombardier \$2 million. That is private business because private shareholders own the Royal

Bank. If the Government of the Northwest Territories, through one of its corporations, the Development Corporation, the Business Credit Corporation or the Aurora Fund, which is an instrument of government, is lending money, then that is public money. Public money spent for the public good should be accountable to the public.

On the other hand, the Aurora Fund, because it is private investors, I would tend to agree that the money being loaned out by that fund, although it is an instrument of government, probably should be confidential, but money spent by this government in loans and grants could be and should be public knowledge. It is done in other jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker. So, if someone gets a loan for \$1 million from a government agency, I have no problem having that money made public and how much was received, even though it is a private individual getting it. They are getting public money. Mr. Speaker, when I came here, when I looked over my questions that I have asked in this House, they run the whole gamut from environmental

Page 866

questions to education concerns to health concerns and so on, Mr. Speaker. I would challenge anyone in this House, Mr. Speaker, to show me a flippant question in Hansard. I did not ask any flippant questions and I have tried to keep the decorum of the House to the standard that the Commissioner had talked about in her opening address when she talked about the difficulties that would be experienced by this, the 13th Assembly.

The difficulties faced by this 13th Assembly, Mr. Speaker, were not only difficulties brought on by fiscal problems and monetary problems, they are brought on by the retorts, the answers and the questions given in this House. If there is public perception, Mr. Speaker, of problems within the 13th Assembly, as some people have said a banana republic, we heard that the people in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, during our mid-term review thought it was a circus. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is the perception because they probably read the Hansard which is on-line in different places in the Northwest Territories and also in the federal civil service and in the government of Canada where anyone who has access to an Internet provider can look at it. I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, in anyone's wildest imagination, that John Chretien, the Prime Minister of Canada, is sitting in his office every day waiting with bated breath to read the Hansard of the Northwest Territories government, and the statement

to that type of effect, I think, is ludicrous and I think anyone listening to that type of statement would have to tend to agree.

Mr. Speaker, we have had an opportunity in this House to pass legislation that has benefited the people of the Northwest Territories and I have agreed to some of that legislation. I did not agree to the Public Service Act because it was a draconian piece of legislation and I think I have been proven right on that. I introduced a motion, Mr. Speaker, to censure Cabinet because of the way they were shifting capital dollars around which was supported by the majority of Members in this House. It was not done in a flippant manner. When I ask a serious question, I would like a serious answer. I do not appreciate, Mr. Speaker, the offhand cracks and comments and so on and so forth. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of things that the Commissioner talked about in her opening address with regard to the challenges faced by the 13th Assembly and the biggest challenge, Mr. Speaker, is the challenge the Members in this House present by themselves, to themselves with regard to the way we act and the decorum of the House. If we all remember that, we could probably have a better House.

Mr. Speaker, everyone has their own way of dealing with stress. The Commissioner, in her opening address, spoke about some of the challenges and stress that we would face. Some Members in the past have dealt with it in different ways and have had problems with the law, some have had marriage breakups and some have had fiscal problems. The life of a politician, Mr. Speaker, is not an easy one. The majority of the Members in this House are new Members. There were 15 rookie MLAs elected two and a half years ago. Mr. Speaker, sometimes, I know myself, I wonder what I am doing here and am I here for the right reasons, am I a politician for the right reasons? Sometimes colleagues may question your sincerity but, Mr. Speaker, I do not think anyone can question the work ethic. Some people complain you might be too accessible to the public but, Mr. Speaker, it is the public that elected us and we should be accessible to them. I do not see any problem with that.

Mr. Speaker, many times in committee things are said but the committee meetings are not open to the public. One of the things which has been a plus within the consensus form of government is, it has given the Ordinary Members an opportunity to influence or at least massage the budget and the priorities of the government. However, Mr. Speaker, we do not forget that the government is the Cabinet as elected by the

Members of this House. If we had a chance, Mr. Speaker, to do it all over again, there might be some changes.

--Laughter

Those changes would be made within the guidelines, regulations and past practices set down by this Assembly. That, to me, is a good thing. Recently, we have seen in the east, for example, Mr. Speaker, the land claims organization, NTI, form a shadow Cabinet because they felt a lot of the issues that they saw as important were not being brought up in this Assembly. In particular, Mr. Speaker, they talked about the Keewatin situation, articles 24 and 23, and I did speak to the chairman of NTI and, for example, mentioned that I believe...and I went through Hansard. I had brought up article 24, as an individual MLA more than 15 times in this House in the past two and a half years and article 23, at least a half-dozen times over the past couple of years, Mr. Speaker. All Ordinary Members have tried to the best of their abilities to ask questions, to make statements for the benefit of the people of the Northwest Territories.

When we look at the challenges, the Commissioner spoke about in the opening address, those challenges have not only come from outside forces, Mr. Speaker, but they have come from inside forces. The manipulation, the innuendo, the back stabbing and the other things that go on in this House are, yes, they are shameful, Mr. Todd - but they do happen and to say they do not happen would not be a fair assessment. Mr. Speaker, those types of things should be brought out in the open and they should be brought forward. I do not expect when a statement is made within a committee to have it thrown back at someone without any type of proof. Innuendo, Mr. Speaker, is cheap. As an Ordinary Member of this House who has tried to do the best job to represent my constituency, I have tried to stay away from that but we are all guilty of shortfalls and shortcomings.

Mr. Speaker, I never came here on a banana peel but, after saying that, Mr. Speaker, I have learned a lot over the last two and a half years. I have learned to respect a lot of the Members in this House and I have learned to put up with some of the Members in this House. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say, in closing, in my reply to the opening address, that as an Ordinary Member we are allowed one question and three supplementaries and the Minister, as in any parliamentary government, has the chance of a final retort. I used my opportunity to retort during the reply to the opening address by the Commissioner, Mr.

Speaker. Earlier, I had talked about some of the stresses that we are all under as politicians and I talked about the internal and external stresses. The internal stresses, of course, would be the work inside this House and

Page 867

the external stresses and pressures are put on us by constituents, by the job we have to do and by the tough decisions we have to make. Mr. Speaker, the votes that I have made in this House and the statements that I have made, I stand by them. The questions I have asked, I would probably ask again. I did not ask questions on the Aurora Fund to embarrass anyone. I asked those questions for public accountability. I did not ask the questions on the Lahm Ridge Tower to embarrass anyone. I asked those questions on the basis of public accountability.

Mr. Speaker, in my platform I stated that I would try to make government more accountable to the people. It is what I have tried to do, although some of the Members in the House might think I was asking questions facetiously, but I must say, Mr. Speaker, when I look around the House to my honourable colleagues, I have learned a lot from individuals in this House. I respectfully say, Mr. Speaker, that one of the Members last week mentioned that we do not say enough about people when they are here with us and then when they pass on we usually give them great congratulations and thank them for their work. It is a sad commentary on our whole social structure.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to, at this time, point out a couple of people for whom I have a lot of respect and thank them for their guidance in helping me anytime I have had questions and needed support. Mr. Jake Ootes, who is the chairman of the Ordinary Members' Caucus and is a very honourable man, who is very forthright; I would like to thank Mr. Ootes publicly for his support. I would also like to thank Mr. Mark Evaloarjuk. Mark is from Igloodik and is an experienced politician, having served in this House before. I remember many times being at the Hall Beach airport in 1983 and 1984, seeing Mark come through the airport. Recently, this summer in Pangnirtung, Mark chaired the Baffin Leaders Summit when Mr. Abe Ookpik died. Mr. Abe Ookpik was a very good friend of mine who used to visit me at my house. Mr. Evaloarjuk pointed out that a lot of times we support people and say nice things about them after they are gone. This is an opportunity in this forum to thank those two individuals, Mr. Ootes, who was the first government employee of the Northwest

Territories, back in 1968, and Mr. Evaloarjuk, who is a person who has served in this House before, not in this actual House. We should thank those types of people and yourself, Mr. Gargan, who is now the dean of the Assembly. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, as politicians the public side of our life is seen a lot, the private side is sometimes hidden. I have felt perhaps we could arrange to follow a person around to see what they do in a normal run of a day. Some of us have quite an enormous constituency workload that we try to deal with, as opposed to other Members who might only get a call or two a day, some Members get ten, 15, 20 calls a day. They get E-mails, faxes and so on. The workload for individual Members varies and because of that some of us put more time in than others. To question some Members and say you were not in at 8:00 a.m. or 9:00 a.m. is sometimes an unfair statement. Some Members prefer to stay after-hours because the building is quiet. There are fewer people around. The phones are not ringing and you can do more work.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I would like to say in my reply to the Commissioner's address there have been many problems within this Assembly, many of them brought on by the Members themselves with perception, but if anything, Mr. Speaker, the pros and cons are, you try to learn from mistakes you have made and from statements that might have been made. Sometimes it is in fun or in jest when you ask a question and the response comes back. Sometimes it is taken the wrong way at the beginning and it leads to something else. Never once, Mr. Speaker, have I ever questioned the sincerity of the Members in this House on the job they have tried to do for their constituents, although all of us, as individuals, would probably do their job differently. When we ask for rebasing of monies and priorities spent on issues like health care and education, when those issues are brought up, I believe, in a sincere fashion, I would hope that the government, which is the Cabinet, would ultimately look at those requests and, hopefully, act on them accordingly for the betterment of all the people of the Northwest Territories and not the public perception which is that vested interests seem to have got a hold of the 13th Assembly. I do know, Mr. Speaker, that many of the Members of this House who have tried to bring the accountability question forward have demonstrated that, indeed, is not the case.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my reply to the opening address and thank the peanut gallery across the hall, across this great Assembly for allowing me

the opportunity to say my piece today. I do feel refreshed after spending four days at home, after having been here in this, not the City of Yellowknife, which is a nice place, but this Assembly for something like 33 straight days which can wear on anyone's patience. It is a good thing to get home and be refreshed, come back and go back at it. It is what we are elected to do and that is what I am going to continue to try to do to the best of my abilities, Mr. Speaker, over the next 14 months. I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your cooperation and support when things get a little out of hand and when points of order are raised and points of privilege. As, indeed, you have always acted in a fair and courteous manner toward this Member. I thank you for that, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for allowing me to reply to the Commissioner's address. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Replies to the opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

BILL 12 Write-Off of Debts Act, 1997-98

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am overcome. I give notice that on February 19, 1998, I will move that Bill 12, Write-Off of Debts Act, 1997-98, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Notices of motion 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; Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1997-98; Committee Report 02-13(5); Committee Report 03-13(5); Committee

Page 868

Report 04-13(5); Committee Report 05-13(5); Tabled Document 15-13(5) and Tabled Document 19-13(5). With Mr. Ningark in the Chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I would like to call the committee to order. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you. Mr. Chairman, that we proceed with Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99 and that we continue with the Department of Public Works and Services followed by the Department of Justice. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do we agree, we will deal with Bill 8, Appropriation Act 1998-99, Committee Report 02-13(5), Committee Report 03-13(5) and continue with the Public Works and Services review and subsequent to that, Justice? Do we agree? After the break? Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Prior to the committee considering this item, asset management, within the Department of Public Works, as I did yesterday, I would also like to do today, I would like to advise the House that I have an interest in a company which leases a building to the Government of the Northwest Territories and as such, I am declaring a conflict of interest, pursuant to the provisions of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. I will be withdrawing from the House and will not be participating in debate or consideration of this item. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Henry, your declaration of the conflict of interest is noted. Thank you. Mr. Erasmus is first on the list from yesterday. However, we will take a break and come back. Thank you.

--Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We will resume committee of the whole. I would like to call the committee to order. I would like to ask Mr. Antoine if he wishes to bring in the witnesses before we get into detail?

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mr. Chairman, yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do I have the agreement of the Members of the committee?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Go ahead. For the record, Mr. Minister, would you please introduce the witnesses to the committee.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my right, I have Ms. Gay Kennedy. She is director of corporate services. To my left, is the deputy minister, Mr. Ken Lovely.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister and welcome to the committee. We are on page 5-8, 1998-99 main estimates, Public Works and Services. We are reviewing the activity, assets management and when we concluded last night, Mr. Erasmus was on the list and I would like to ask Mr. Erasmus, do you now wish to proceed?

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the area of vehicle replacement, would this include areas where DPW used to provide vehicles and now, no longer provides them?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister, you had your hand up earlier before I recognized Mr. Erasmus. Was there something else other than what is on the review that you wish to address? Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mr. Chairman. There were a number of questions that were asked by Members yesterday and I would like to make a presentation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Keeping in mind, you will be responding to Mr. Erasmus after the presentation is given. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not have all the information that was requested yesterday, but the department has done the best they can in the short time available. I would like to hand out a number of documents that were asked for. The first is some preliminary information on 1996-97 entitled, Public Works and Services, 1996-97 Construction Operation and Maintenance Contracts over \$5,000. The second is entitled, Yellowknife Office Space Inventory of Major Leases. It shows the lease cost for 12 major leases in Yellowknife, broken down, into base rents and utilities. The third document is titled, Yellowknife Office Space Planned Space to be Vacated by Year 2002. This document provides information on where and when leases will be dropped and when buildings will be sold over the next few years to reduce our inventory by 88,000 square feet by the year 2002. Members asked questions yesterday about our options paper submitted to Cabinet on July 31, 1997. Some Members felt Cabinet was being asked to approve the extension of existing leases as well as other components of the plan. In fact, the document did not request approval for extension of existing leases. I was asked to provide copies of the option paper so Members could see for themselves. I regret I cannot provide a copy of the document as it is a Cabinet paper. However, I can quote directly from the paper to help Members understand which approvals were requested.

Here are some words from the interdepartmental section of the paper. The spreadsheet attached shows the potential distribution of departments in the residual GNWT leases and is supplied for illustration purposes. Following approval by Cabinet, it will be necessary to work with each deputy minister to fine tune their space requirement and satisfy their individual needs within the overall plan.

In addition, in the recommendation section, I will quote from the item related to long-term leases. The wording of the recommendation asks Cabinet to approve the consolidation of departments into existing long-term leases and exercise options to extend further favourable leases up to division. However, in

the document, was there any indication of which leases were considered to be favourable? I have attached one of the spreadsheets from the Options Paper, which is titled: Appendix B. It was an option that was approved and shows how departments could hypothetically be accommodated in a variety of existing and new leases that would be entered into, through the competitive process. This document was for illustrative purposes, and the final plan, which was approved in January, 1998, includes some changes because further consultation with deputy ministers resulted in some increases to the amount of space that was needed. With that, I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to respond to Mr. Erasmus. The response to Mr. Erasmus and his question about vehicle replacement is, in various communities, we do replace vehicles and only in the areas where we still provide the services. These are only Public Works vehicles. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus, do you have further questions or comments before I recognize Mr. Steen? Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question was in the area of vehicle replacement. Is there vehicle replacement in the communities where DPW no longer provides vehicles?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the vehicle replacement is only in areas where Public Works and Services are still providing services. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Assets management. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is the department able to ascertain whether the unit cost is higher now that there are fewer vehicles to purchase since in most of the larger communities, DPW no longer provides vehicles as I understand it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

I am told we have not noticed any increase in the costs of the vehicle replacement even though we only do the regional centres where we are still providing the service. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

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

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does this only include the actual purchase of vehicles or maintenance as well?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the operations and maintenance of asset management, there is provision for maintenance of these vehicles. In the asset management, capital, there are purchases of new vehicles as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the areas where the vehicles are no longer provided through DPW, have those communities indicated they have not received enough money for vehicle maintenance through the user-pay system?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am told we are assuming the funding is adequate, since this department has not received any feedback one way or the other on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

That is fine for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. On the asset management list, I have Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, for clarification, I am going to have to ask the Minister, after reading Hansard, his response to me was, the deputy minister has the authority and to some degree, the regional superintendents...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Steen, would you please indicate the page number for the witnesses? Thank you.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, I would be happy to do it, but I cannot find it. I read it here. It has been on more than one occasion that the Minister and his deputy minister have indicated, through a piece of correspondence passed to us that the deputy minister and regional superintendent have, basically, the authority to sign away the budget. The Minister has stated in response to a Member that he is totally responsible for the expenditures of his department. I would like to ask the Minister, how often would the deputy minister or the regional superintendent advise him as to how much is left in his budget? Apparently, they have the authority to spend it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department could check the expenditures of the superintendent as well as the deputy minister from the financial system we have in place. We could check weekly, but it is normally done on a quarterly basis to see how we are doing every three months. The system is suitable for these purposes so that we could check on them any time we want.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on a normal working day, after the deputy minister has signed an extension for a lease for \$10 million, how long after he has done that would he normally inform the Minister that he has signed away \$10 million?

Page 870

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in this case, not being a new lease, then it could be some time before the Minister becomes aware of it. In this case because there was an extension of an existing lease negotiated, it would be a couple of weeks before the Minister might know something about it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the past two budget sessions, in the main estimates, we were supplied with information items which identified all of the leases under commitments of this government up to the year 2017. It was in the 1997-98 main estimates and in the 1996-97 estimates it was up to the year 2015. I would like to ask the Minister why this information is not in this year's budget?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the deputy minister to provide the details on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The commitments for leases in terms of the budget that we are reviewing today are included in the asset management activity under other operations and maintenance. The total budget for lease payments for the department to commit to for 1998-99 is \$15.792 million. It is part of the \$32.414 million you see under other operations and maintenance. The money for the upcoming year is included in this main estimates document and it is included in subsequent years as they arise.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I came to the conclusion that the money had to be in the \$32 million figure. What I would like to know is why this particular page, schedule of lease budget requirement which was in the past two budgets, is not included in this year's budget?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we are not too sure which documents the honourable Member is referring to. Perhaps if we knew what it is, the department officials might be able to recognize it. I am told we do not know why this particular information item was not in this year's main estimates. We were assuming it was not required in the call letter from FMBS when information is required from the department. If this information is required by the honourable Member, then we would provide that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman. May I have my pages back?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, this information which was provided previously is quite relevant to the budget. For instance, it shows new office leases for the year. It shows inventory reductions. It shows lease renewals. It is quite relevant to the budget. In particular it shows what this government is committed to per year. This information I have is only for the 1997-98 budget. It shows total commitments from 2002 to 2017 is reduced from April, 1996, by \$52 million down to April 1, 1997 for \$46 million. It also shows by year what the commitments are for this government. Obviously, if we signed a new lease, we would have increased the commitments of the government by \$10 million. I have a number of questions in this regard. The most important one is, who or what is this government committed to in the year 2002, considering division must be responsible for some of these leases. Nunavut is, obviously, going to be responsible for a portion of these leases. Going on the information I have for last year, 1997-98 budget, it shows from the 2002 to 2017, this government was committed to \$46 million. There are commitments for 2000 and 2001. If we add all those totals up, you will come close to \$60 million. I would be interested to know what portion of that is ours and which portion of that is Nunavut's. I cannot question the Minister because he does not have the information I am talking about and neither do the other Members. I dug this out of my own budget books. It is very important information from my perspective, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. This was your last question for the time being. Mr. Minister, would you reply please?

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think it was a very good observation and a very good question. If the information was provided in previous budgets and it is not now, I do not know what happened. I would like to apologize for it. We have individual leases of different lengths and terms. The department could draw the information out and have it for the honourable Member and what kind of commitments we are going to have every year into the future and including the year 2002. We can do that. The information is existing information we do have. We have a Yellowknife office plan which has been implemented which will see us making some changes in dealing with the Yellowknife office surplus area in the next year or so. It will change the numbers as well. We will provide the information as

close as we can with the information we have and including the commitments we have. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

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

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is in regard to the disposal of government surplus property and assets. My question to the Minister is, how many billions concerning land have been given away as assets to groups or agencies for a dollar by this government?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this department had disposed of some of the assets to two different groups for nominal fees in the past. I understand this information was provided to the Standing Committee on

Page 871

Infrastructure when it was asked for. I am told there were very few of these buildings. We do not have the detailed information here, but we could provide that to this House. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My other question is in regard to the way assets are disposed of. Is the decision made by the deputy minister or the Minister himself or is it made by Cabinet? Who makes the decision these assets are going to be disposed of for a dollar?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the decision for disposing of buildings in this manner is made by the Financial Management Board and the

department who is relinquishing the building has to declare a grant in kind for financial purposes which is how it is recorded. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is it the Minister of FMBS or is it the deputy minister of FMBS? Who makes the decision from FMBS?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All of the Ministers are on the Financial Management Board and it is made as a financial decision by Cabinet, which is the FMB. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are there any criteria for any non-profit organizations to acquire government assets, such as alcohol and drug centres in the communities which operate out of a government house and they do not have any operation and maintenance dollars? What is the arrangement for that class of people? Are there different classes of groups who can qualify for acquiring government assets for a dollar or do they fit into a different category altogether?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When government buildings are being considered for donation, which is the best way to describe a nominal sum, there are fairly clear guidelines on how the government makes those assets available. There is a list of whom the government must go to first, second, third and fourth.

The first, to my recollection, I do not recall all of the details, but we can provide a copy. My recollection of

the first group on the list is other government department. For example, if a health centre is declared surplus, they might go to a variety of government departments and ask do you need it. If none of the other government departments need it, then the next group on the list is municipalities. My recollection of the next group is non-profit groups, but I would have to check that and I could provide a copy where you could see there is a sequence. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I raised the question is that Aklavik operates an Alcohol and Drug Treatment Program out of a housing unit that used to belong to this government. When we got rid of government assets and sold off houses, this is one area that myself, the mayor of Aklavik and the committee approached the previous Minister on to see if there was a way to acquire that building for a dollar. However, there were outstanding amounts owed against the facilities, which I was hoping could be written off. In this case we were disposing of an asset yet there may be liabilities attached to that asset once you get rid of it. Is there a way of disposing of the asset and also disposing of any outstanding liabilities that may be attached to such a building?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Perhaps Mr. Krutko is referring to a statement of interest from the group. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Any assets that are declared surplus are declared surplus by whichever department has occupancy of the building. So if a learning centre in a community was to be declared surplus it would have to come from the Department of Education. When that is the case, they go down the list to the point where they are talking to non-profit organizations. They never transfer liabilities to them to my knowledge. In terms of the ones that I have seen, no liabilities have been transferred. It is simply the asset itself unencumbered by liabilities. I am not aware of a community where that has actually occurred. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to Aklavik, because that is one particular case that I have been involved in, I believe your department has been made aware of it. The process was that eventually we went through the municipality where it was distributed under your section of classes, it was classified as a second group that you allocated before you got to group three. Group three will probably be the alcohol centre because it is a non-profit society.

With regard to the outstanding amounts, what I was talking about is there was, apparently, an account that was revolving where they were supposed to eventually pay the different fees. When the building was put on the market for sale, there were operations and maintenance costs for that building because the government was still... it was being taken off as an asset, but there were still costs associated with that building where they had to pay the fuel, the power and whatever. What they did, because the alcohol centre was in that building, was they took those amounts and they charged them back to the alcohol and drug centre for those fees. Why, in this case, could the government not have recouped that cost through the department because it was put on the market and was no longer classified as a government asset? It is a complicated matter but, hopefully, you have received the gist of what I am saying, circumstances which were out of the control of the alcohol centre and out of the control of the government

Page 872

because they classified it as no longer a government asset because it was up for sale. Is there a way that the department can consider looking at recouping those costs which were billed to the alcohol and drug centre?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can look into that one specifically. It is enough of an exception that I can talk to my colleague in the FMBS, which is the department that has ownership of those assets. I will provide some more detail on that and get back to the Member directly, if that is okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Is that okay? I thank you kindly, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I did not catch the exact amount that the deputy minister said was in the \$32 million. I believe he referred to somewhere around \$15 million was in asset management for leases. Mr. Chairman, this information I have, from last year's budget, shows for 1998-99, the requirement for this year was going to be \$9.862 million. Why is \$15 million needed for the leases this year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Mr. Chairman, the total value of lease payments under asset management is \$15.792 million. The amount that is shown for headquarters is \$8.676 million, with smaller amounts for each of the regions because of the fact that not as much office space is leased in those locations. However, and this is just supposition because I do not have the documents with me, the commitments for lease payments are based on the expiry dates of existing leases. So if a lease was due to expire in the 1997-98 fiscal year, for example, there would be no commitment for that in the 1998-99 fiscal year. However, there would still be a need for that lease or an alternate lease to continue to house whatever government department occupied the space. The commitments to lease payments are only on the basis of the expiry dates of the existing leases. They do not take into account the need to renew or to compete for alternate space and new leases. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for having to refer to these documents since I am the only person who seems to have them, but there was another piece of information here that was fairly relevant. It showed over the years whether or not the government is, in fact, moving toward reducing the number of leases that they have in consideration of

amalgamation and division. That is why I would have been interested in seeing what the figures were and whether or not they were increasing rather than reducing as far as our commitments were concerned. You could follow through this thing with the information that we have here that, in fact, some of the commitments have increased rather than reduced although we were supposed to be in a holding pattern. I am sure the department has justification for that but it is what I am referring to. Without this information, I cannot objectively see what the reductions are for this year. The deputy minister suggests the figures that I have here are only relevant to the commitments and not, in fact, relevant to the amount of lease money that we pay. I came to that conclusion on my own because I see the relevance for that year and I compare it to the main estimates for leases, for instance, for 1996-97 which was \$18 million in the main estimates and in 1995-96 there were \$20 million in the main estimates. If we are saying that this year it is down \$15 million then obviously we are reducing our lease requirements. However, again, without the information in front of me it is very hard to arrive at that conclusion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The information you have, if it is within the government budget within the fiscal year and the Minister would like to entertain that, it is up to the Minister. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

The honourable Member has a good point. If he cannot see clearly because of a lack of information he has from the previous budgets, not including this budget then, again, I apologize for that and we will try to provide that information. In the package that we have provided to the Members, it shows a Yellowknife office plan, space to be vacated by 2002. It is also in the package that we provided. It shows when lease spaces will be vacated and what space will be released at what time. That information is provided in the package that was just distributed. I would like you to note that on page 5-8, under asset management, the 1997-98 revised forecast total operations and maintenance is not much different from the main estimate that we are putting forward. The only difference is about \$400,000. It is in the same ballpark as last year's revised forecast. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, is the department then working toward identifying what portions of leases would be able to be identified as Nunavut costs in future, and how much the Department of Education or the Department of Transportation is going to be involved in the Lahm Ridge Tower, for instance? Is the department working toward dividing those costs, identifying those costs and cost-sharing buildings at this point in time?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. That involves another department. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are working with the lead department, the FMBS, and looking at the division of assets and liabilities. The departments are participating in the exercise now where we are looking inside each department to see what these assets are, where they are and we are trying to determine how these assets will be divided. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, I presume then, that before the Lahm Ridge Tower lease was signed, there was some consideration into what portion Nunavut would have of that, if any?

Page 873

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the two departments which are being considered are headquarters cost. A small part of that would be identified as east and west. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. You have 30 seconds, Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I have the Minister repeat that without losing my 30 seconds?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I do not know. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try to do it quickly in 30 seconds. When we are determining the liabilities, east and west, the assets are fairly straightforward because it is buildings, equipment and that sort of thing. When it comes to liabilities, the leases that we enter into in the capital, at this point, are for both territories. In future, of course, any space we occupy in Yellowknife will be occupied specifically by a western government. Any discussions with the federal government about transition costs associated with higher lease costs in a place like Yellowknife because the public service is reduced in size are normally dealt with through the Department of Finance and is part of formula negotiations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. That ends the time for Mr. Steen. On page 5-8, asset management. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I have a bit of clarification on appendix B which has been handed out, specifically, the Lahm Ridge Tower. It has Education, Culture and Employment and DOT. Rental general office space has a total of 31,020 and program space required is 3,241. Then the total building space is 41,474 and the building surplus, in other words, is 7,213. Could you tell me what this program space required is all about?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The deputy minister.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The office space we occupy is broken down into general office space which is the space occupied by staff desks, file cabinets and that sort of thing. Every department has some specific requirements for program space. As an example, in the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, there would be a library of curricular materials that could be distributed to different parts of

the territories, be it a video or an audio-visual centre for the storing of materials for class rooms, those sorts of things. It is the kind of space which is not occupied. Program space means the space is not occupied by staff but space required to do the business of the department and to act as either storage or to do program business. One good example in Yellowknife is the space occupied by the Department of Education in some of our buildings where they deliver social assistance or income support services. Not all of that is general office space. Some of it is the lobby, counselling, that sort of thing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you. Of the total building that we pay space for, is it just the general space and the program space and the total of those two? We do not pay square footage beyond that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

That is correct, Mr. Chairman. In the case of the Lahm Ridge Tower, the total building space that we rent is 41,474 square feet, the Member was looking for the figure yesterday. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We were referring to dollar figures yesterday on the same issue. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

The total building space is 41,474. Do we pay \$16.44 plus \$10.33 on that total?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand there is an apartment in that building that has been converted to office space. Is that outside of this 41,474?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Outside of this space, yes. We do not pay for renting that space. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

When division comes, no doubt you had figures with respect to the amount of reduction that is required for education and transportation. Could you tell me how much of a reduction will take place over the next two to three years in both of those departments in regard to space requirements?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This attachment you see before you comes from the options paper that was developed in July, 1997. At that time we calculated the program and office space that was required based on the forecasts we received from departments for their office space requirements up to and including division. We went back to departments, as you probably noted in the Minister's opening comments, and confirmed whether or not these figures were accurate after we received approval in principle from Cabinet. The figures you see here for the Lahm Ridge Tower reflect any reductions that are planned for those two departments up to division. I cannot give you the exact figure. I could get it for you and tell you how we based our calculations, but I do not have it with me. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If this is the total space requirement up to division, then after division presumably, we

Page 874

do not need this amount of space. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Mr. Chairman, what this spread sheet shows is there are 41,474 square feet in the office building. We currently rent that amount of space. It shows that we will have a surplus of space in that building of 7,413 square feet by division and just after division. At this point, we cannot say that we will not require it because we have not been told yet by the government of Nunavut how much they will require from us in terms of contracting services back. I do not have the categorical answers. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You cannot be categorical, but it is a fair assumption on my part, I think, and correct me if you want, that after division we will not need all this space, and yet we have signed for an eight-year lease on all of this space? Am I correct on that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

That is correct, Mr. Chairman. I would not want to be in a position where, on April 1, 1999, I had to remove staff from the building because the government of Nunavut might want us to contract back curriculum development services. In all of the buildings that you see, you will note that we have not tried to eliminate all the space because we are not sure of the future. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you. This shows a surplus space that we are paying for of 7,213 square feet. There is potential, if we take 30,000 and let us give Nunavut 8,000 square feet. We have a potential 15,000 square feet that are surplus to our needs. I am being very conservative, Mr. Chairman. Am I correct in that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Mr. Chairman, may I ask the Member to repeat that? I did not quite catch the end. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes, would you repeat your question to the deputy minister?

MR. OOTES:

Thank you. Right now you are on appendix B. You are showing 7,213 feet that is surplus for present needs. If we take the total of 31,000 that people occupy and reduce it by 25 percent, that would give me 10,000 square feet that might be surplus to our needs, in addition to the 7,000. We are going to have a reduction after Nunavut. There is no question about it. You are being hypothetical when you say we may do contract services with Nunavut, and I understand it. It is what we want to do, but we have no assurance of that. Is it not correct that we may have a lot of space available in this building that would be surplus to our needs?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. deputy minister.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This office space plan was a bit of an exercise in crystal balling, which is probably the best way to put it. In some ways we had fairly accurate information about what we were going to look like by 1999, and in other areas it was not quite as clear because we did not know about any demands that might be made by the government of Nunavut.

The figures that you see are the general office space positions that the departments will have as we move

ahead with our plans for division. The actual number of positions do not necessarily correspond with the number of general office space positions you see here. In fact, we need more space for the existing organization until we start making any reductions that occur as a result of the creation of two new territories.

It is impossible to downsize our holdings everywhere and continue to take into account the needs of the departments today because we have to do it today, not only today, but up to three or four years from now. This is a bit of a snapshot in time. You can see from the document that was circulated, and it is called the Yellowknife Office Plan Space to be Vacated by 2002. The actual plans for reduction of 124,000 square feet of office space, we are leasing an additional 36,000 square feet as a result of the sale of the Laing Building. We will be down 88,000 to 90,000 square feet by the year 2002. It is based on the forecast that we have at the moment which is based on our best guess about what is going to happen with the organizational structure for Nunavut. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Other than space for staff, the deputy minister also indicated space for office equipment, libraries and so on. Your time is up, Mr. Ootes. We are dealing with asset management, total operations and maintenance. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On appendix B that was handed out, this is on option 3. For example, a building surplus shortfall of 21,924 that is forecasted. It is not the information that was requested? For example, I requested information on existing surpluses in different spots throughout the city. This is a forecast, correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister or Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yesterday, when that question was asked about office space surpluses in Yellowknife, we went back to the drawing board to try to locate the information that would allow us to answer that question. When I took a look at the office space surpluses we had, they were surpluses where, and I will give Public Works and Services as an example, we occupy three floors of space in the YK Centre Building. We have reduced our staff

significantly over the past two years. Although we have staff on each of those three floors, they are occupying more space than they need in order for them to do business. It was very difficult for us to go and take a look. We would have to determine the office standard, compare it to the office standard, do the calculations and say, on floor five of the YK Centre we have 800 square feet of surplus space, that is probably too much, probably more like 50 square feet. On the sixth floor, we have maybe 125 square

Page 875

feet. It is a long exercise in trying to go through each and every one of those floors to determine who is on the floors at any given time. Departments have project staff working, it is almost impossible for us to actually pinpoint it within each of the leases, other than to say, in the lease for the Bellanca Building, perhaps, we have 2,000 square feet of surplus space. I hope that answers the question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We arrived at a figure of 75,000 or 76,000 square feet of surplus space existing today, that had to be calculated somehow or was it just a formula that came out and you figure you have this much space? I understand what you are saying right now with some of the situations, but you have calculated somehow 76,000 square feet of surplus space. I was hoping that we would see that information on how these numbers came about. Where is that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I now have a better understanding of where you are coming from. I think we can provide information on the surpluses by department which may help to explain the situation. We will get back to you on that one as quickly as we can.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. You will provide that information at a later date? Mr. Roland, are you okay on that? Asset management. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Mr. Chairman, I was going to suggest that we consider moving on. We have been on this most of yesterday and today.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total operations and maintenance, page 5-8, \$42.577 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Assets management, page 5-9, buildings and works, headquarters. Total region \$22,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

No, Mr. Chairman, I am on the next one.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Total region. Buildings and works headquarters, \$22,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Building and works, Baffin region, total region, \$450,000. Agreed? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On this high temperature hot water utilidor removal Iqaluit, I thought this was already removed some years ago, prior to this, so is this something new? Does this carry on from an old item or what?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Mr. Chairman, the high temperature water system in Iqaluit was shut down some years ago, but there were portions of the line that remained intact in the middle of town. We did budget on a project basis to remove those lines because they contained asbestos and they are in an area where they are impeding traffic. They need to be removed for the safety of the public. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Okay. Building and works, Baffin region, total region \$450,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total building and works, \$472,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Acquisition of equipment, Fort Smith region, total region, \$61,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, Inuvik region, total region, \$24,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Acquisition of equipment, Baffin region, total region, \$27,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, Keewatin region, total region, \$27,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total acquisition of equipment, \$139,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total activity, \$611,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 5-10, systems and communications, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$601,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Page 5-11, this is where Members are interested. Petroleum Products. We flip the page over, Petroleum products on page 5-12, building and works, Fort Smith, total region, \$10,000. Mr. Steen.

Page 876

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, I do not have a question on page 5-12, but I have a question on page 5-11, petroleum products. My question, Mr. Chairman, is I would like to know if the department is tendering petroleum product contracts in my region, Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk, Sachs Harbour, Paulatuk and Holman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I apologize Mr. Steen. You had indicated to me earlier that you wanted to ask a question on page 5-11. Do we agree Mr. Steen will ask a question on this page, petroleum products? Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the contracts come up, we will be putting them out for public tender, the soonest will be about 2001. The staff is trying to get that information. We do not have that information at our fingertips. We will get that information right away. The information here is that this department has issued further extensions to all the short-term contracts and all these agreements are now scheduled to expire March 31, 1999. I think that is the latest information we have here. We thought there might have been the possibility of privatization, but that is on hold. Therefore, everything was on a holdback on a month-to-month basis. Since the privatization process is not going to happen, we are going to be scheduling the issuing of the contracts after the end of March.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Are you okay with that, Mr. Steen?

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I understand these contracts were short-term due to the privatization initiative. I recall recently seeing an advertisement in the paper for petroleum product services for Tuktoyaktuk. Why is the Minister suggesting this is not going to happen until 1999?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Mr. Chairman, I am not familiar with the contracts in your constituency, but any of the delivery contracts that had expired while we were considering privatization were extended to March 31, 1999. In some cases, though, we have had situations where contractors have said they do not want to continue. I can recall one in the Baffin and another where we had to withdraw the contract because of a non-compliance. Tuktoyaktuk may fall into the category of the contractor not being prepared to continue. We would not be going to tender unless that was the case. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I presume the Minister will give me the information on my particular community. I am under the understanding that unless present contractors were not willing to carry on until 1999, there is no option to have those contracts tendered?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

He is asking, there is no action to have those contracts tendered at this time? Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Mr. Chairman, if the contractor, whose contract has been extended to March 31, 1999, would prefer to be in a situation where we would go to tender, we are open to that and we can do that. We would not hold the contractor to the March 31, 1999 date unless they were prepared to continue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. In other words, case by case. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, I want to make a point here. Ever since I was elected, I send to into the House that the people in my communities want those contracts tendered so that they would be paying the cheapest price possible for fuel and gas. We have been continuing this process on a month-to-month, six-month to six-month basis, with no opportunity to bring the price down. Therefore, I do not understand the department's move to now extend those contracts without going to tender until 1999.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You will recall that one of the initiatives of this government was to consider the privatization of the petroleum products division. We had a range of delivery contracts that were in place in all 42 communities. Some of them were short-term and were due to expire while we were considering how we would go about privatization. Some of them

were long-term and they extend to, I believe, 2002. We did not want to go out to tender on the short-term ones which had already expired because we did not know what was going to come out of the privatization study which might have recommended something totally different. We did not want to have a number of contracts in place that we could not get out of. We already have, I believe, 22 long-term ones that we cannot get out of until 2002. We are committed because we tendered those and we have entered into contracts. We said to the 20-some short-term contractors, we cannot go out to tender now, however, because we are not sure where this thing is going. This was done early in 1997. We will agree to extend the existing contract until 1999 to give them some certainty. We felt they had to have at least that degree of certainty to be able to do business for the community. We did it on that basis rather than trying to preclude our ability to go out to tender. We just did not know where we would be until we made the decision in late 1997 to cancel the privatization initiative. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Petroleum products, page 5-11. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is with regard to the private sector getting into the fuel delivery business, especially where there are existing contracts with this government. The case I am talking about is in Fort McPherson where there is now an organization looking at, not only selling gas but, also delivering fuel products, heating fuel and P50. I would like to ask the Minister, what do you do in that case? Do you go out to competitive bid or wait until the contract has run out?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

Page 877

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I understand that in Fort McPherson the Tetlit Gwich'in Council representatives met with my officials at the beginning of the month to discuss certain issues and the possibility that the locally owned fuel company, Dunnett Petroleum, would be interested in providing fuel services. Our officials explained to the

representative that we had contract obligations for a local fuel deliverer up to the year 2001. There were potential business opportunities available other than that, as well, and we would like to explore those. We would like to try to live up to our contractual obligations to the year 2001. We are prepared to enter into discussions with the council to explore alternatives to increase or have them enhance their participation in providing fuel service in Fort McPherson. We are open for discussion to see how and what kinds of options are there for us. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Petroleum products. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is with regard to the safety of storage facilities. In light of the report by the Auditor General, who identified some environmental liabilities to the government, and with regard to some communities where the tank farm was built in a flood plain, who does the assessment on that particular item? How often is there an assessment done on these particular facilities, to look at the whole question of environmental liability and to see if there are structural damage, permafrost shifts and other such things? The critical thing is these things have been built, in the case of Fort McPherson which is located within a flood plain, where when it floods there is water right around the facility. In that case if there is ever a major oil spill, it is going to affect not only Fort McPherson but probably the Delta. My question is what is being done to ensure that there are inspections and these facilities are checked periodically?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you. This department made a decision to make an environmental assessment for this spring and summer. We are going to be providing a public tender to have that assessed. We understand that there is potential for environmental contamination around the Fort McPherson tank farm and we need to do a good assessment of it. As soon as it warms up this spring, we will be putting a contract out. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are there any other communities that have been identified on which to do such an assessment?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The environmental conditions of the petroleum products division's facilities are largely unknown. In 1996, this division had a visual inspection at most of the sites that it runs. It did not include soil or subsurface examinations. This division intends to issue requests for proposals to examine the environmental conditions at about 42 different sites this year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the petroleum products division, I notice under operations and maintenance you have nothing there for salaries and wages, although you do have employees because I know in Inuvik there are 36 employees. Where are these covered? You do not have salaries and wages under operations and maintenance?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 5-17 you have petroleum products revolving fund, the salaries and wages are covered under there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Roland, perhaps if you have questions on that page you will wait. We are under petroleum products now? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you. He showed me where they are covered under. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 5-11, petroleum products, activity summary. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate to me if the superintendent had the authority to award these contracts for petroleum products?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Yes, he does. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand the answer was yes. Could the superintendent of the region have been advertising these contracts without the Minister's knowledge?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister is not notified about these contracts. He normally just does it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that the Minister is not notified.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Would you reply, Mr. Minister?

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

No, I am not notified about this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, every advertisement says the

Page 878

Minister responsible and in this particular case it says, Mr. Antoine. Is Mr. Antoine having people advertising things in his name that he is not aware of?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In many cases, Mr. Chairman, I also see my name in the newspaper when certain items from different departments I am responsible for, are putting out a tender, a proposal call or some of these things. That is how I find out about it sometimes. I am just used as a figurehead in this whole department and the department does its work in this way. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, who made the decision to extend these contracts to 1999? Was it the superintendent's decision or was that further up the line?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The decision was made by the deputy minister and the director of the petroleum products division. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is all I have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Petroleum products, page 5-12, building and works, Fort Smith region, total region, \$10,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Buildings and works, Inuvik region, total region, \$810,000. Agreed? Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not wish to get into a competition with my honourable colleague, Mr. Krutko, on who can ask the most questions here, but I am interested to know what Sachs Harbour, \$810,000 in the capital estimates is.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The facility in this community does not meet the current national fire code, safety and environmental standards. This was a big concern to the community. A complete safety and environmental assessment of the facility was completed in 1992-93 and the following deficiencies were identified: the liner, levelling of tanks, corrections to the erosion problem at the facility. This may require relocation of some tankage, fencing, new stairs painting and new dispenser building. Airport facilities' standard improvements include liner, tank supports, fencing and earthworks. Deficiencies will be corrected during the projects. In 1996-97, there was design and tendering of \$141,000. In 1997-98, we mobilized, we did some earthwork and there was supposed to be some construction of \$909,000. This year, 1998-99, is the second year of construction, painting and inspection. That is the \$810,000. The following year there is a warranty of about \$22,000. That is the complete information on the upgrade of the tank farm in Sachs Harbour. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Building and works, Inuvik region. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, is this an extension to the existing contract of last year or did the department intend to tender this work?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mr. Chairman, it is a multi-year contract. It is the same contract. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Building and works, Inuvik region, total region, \$810,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Building and Works, Baffin Region, total region, \$220,000. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has been some concern with the tank farms and some environmental liabilities. Has the department had a chance to review those? In some places in conjunction with NTPC, they share tank farms or at least a tank in the same pipeline. Could the Minister or one of his officials update us on environmental liabilities surrounding the tank farms? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Picco, I am advised the question was asked and answered. However, I will allow the Minister to respond.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the tank farm environmental assessment, we are going to issue an RFP to examine the environmental conditions at 42 sites throughout the north. The petroleum product division intends to work cooperatively with the Northwest Territories Power Corporation and the Department of Transportation. These two organizations have undertaken an environmental assessment of their properties in the recent past. Where there is an opportunity to consolidate future projects to maximize benefits to the GNWT and the

NWTPC, they will be encouraged to do so. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Building and Works, Baffin Region, total region, \$220,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Building and works, Keewatin region, total region, \$75,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Where is Kitikmeot? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

In regard to this planning review, is this just in the preliminary stages? Is this going to go on for five or ten years?

Page 879

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The amount indicates one year. Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

It is a one year planning study, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Building and works, Keewatin, total region, \$75,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total building and works, \$1.115 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Total activity, \$1.115 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 5-13, details of grants and contributions, total grants \$260,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Is this a forgivable grant where basically it does not have to be paid back? What is the purpose of the grant and what is it going to be used for?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The grant is a grant in kind. When we entered into an arrangement to lease Northern United Place for Arctic College, we had to find an alternative location for the YWCA which provided emergency housing for the community of Yellowknife. The only alternative available to us within the resources we had was to use the Rock Hill Apartment Building that was being used at the time for Arctic College student housing. We transferred the students out of Rock Hill and into Northern United Place. Now it is being used for emergency housing by the YWCA. Rather than charging them -- because we do not charge them rent -- we simply require them to pay the utilities, we have to declare the value of potential rent as a grant in kind. That is what the \$260,000 is for.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total grants, \$260,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total grants and contributions, bottom of the page, \$268,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. On page 5-14, information item, active positions. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to know exactly, and I have asked this question to every department in regard to the affirmative action positions with regard to reductions in these different departments. Could the department tell me what the status of this department is, when it comes to P1, P2 and P3 positions?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do you have the information available, Mr. Minister?

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have 354 employees. On page 5-14 it shows some. We also have some in the petroleum products area. The total is about 354 employees. One hundred and thirty-two are aboriginal people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Active positions. This is information for Members. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Systems and communications, page 5-15, an information item provided to you. Page 5-16, active positions, systems and communications, an information item. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Petroleum products revolving fund, an information item on page 5-17. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Active positions, petroleum products division, an information item on page 5-18. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Public stores revolving fund, information item on page 5-19. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 5-20, granular program revolving fund. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to this particular matter, the community of Aklavik has been trying to obtain gravel in their community or to have it stock piled because Aklavik is an isolated community where they can only get gravel in the winter months. In order for any development to take place in the summer season in regard to building housing units or doing any road maintenance, there are no real dollars in the community for gravel which has been taken out of the system. What does it take for the community to access this \$11 million for gravel in the community of Aklavik?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The deputy minister.

MR. LOVELY:

Mr. Chairman, this is one of those complicated revolving funds that is sometimes difficult to explain.

What we have done over the years is, funded our cost of producing gravel in communities through a revolving fund. The gravel that

Page 880

is needed for foundations in communities is stock piled in a variety of locations depending on what projects are planned for the coming years. We sometimes have to go a couple of years in advance because of blasting and the need to get equipment in, particularly in the eastern Arctic, in Nunavut. We spend the money to stock pile the gravel, and then we recover the money because it is a revolving fund. We have to pay the money back. We recover the money from the projects which are built. So if DOT had an airport terminal building planned for Aklavik, for example, or Arctic Bay, they would buy the gravel from us, and then we would reimburse the revolving fund for the costs. There is no actual money there in cash to provide to communities or to organizations for a granular fund. It is a fund that was established specifically to allow us to pay for the gravel upfront and then recover the cost through sales. That is what the purpose of the fund is. If a community has construction projects planned for upcoming fiscal years, depending on what the availability of gravel is in that location, we might go in to stock pile it and use the revolving fund to do that. On the other hand, if gravel is readily available, we would simply use existing stores. I am not sure if there is a stock pile in Aklavik.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is exactly the reason I am asking the question because Aklavik is supposedly getting an addition to their school this summer. There is going to be money allocated to upgrade the water treatment facility which is in the capital plan. That is the reason the community has been asking for it, to ensure there is adequate gravel in the communities. They have been trying to access funds to bring the gravel into the community and stock pile it so when these activities happen, they have a stock pile in the community. In the case of Aklavik which sits on a flood plain because of its location, most of the time that is the only gravel they can depend on until the following spring where they can haul it out because there are no all-season roads in the area. It basically only has access with airports.

This is why I am asking the Minister or deputy minister if they can work along with Aklavik to ensure they have these dollars available to them when these facilities are being built, especially in the case of the summer - it is almost spring time - and the school addition is supposed to be constructed this summer and the same thing, with the upgrade of the water treatment plant, which has been allocated for this and next year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Would you ensure the supplies, Mr. Minister?

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will work with the honourable Member and the community of Aklavik to make sure they have sufficient gravel this year for these upcoming projects and we will get back to him. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. On the same page I have Mr. Miltenberger.

Committee Motion 16-13(5): Extend Sitting Hours

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to move that we extend sitting hours to conclude the matter under discussion, mainly the main estimates for the final three pages, for the Department of Public Works and Services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

There is a motion moved by the honourable Member for Thebacha to extend the sitting hours until we conclude this particular department. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. We shall sit here until we conclude this department. Thank you. Granular program revolving fund. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Detail of work performed on behalf of third parties, page 5-22. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Page 5-22, total department, \$3.125 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We move back to program summary on page 5-5, Public Works and Services program summary, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$59.626 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Capital, total capital, \$1.726 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total expenditures, \$61.352 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that consideration of this department's estimates is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

I wanted to ask the Minister how soon we could have the additional information that he said he was going to provide?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister, I believe in the beginning you indicated that information was provided. The information that you were able to provide, perhaps you can reply to Mr. Krutko.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

We will provide that information by the end of the week. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The Department of Public Works and Services is concluded. I would like to thank Mr. Antoine and the witnesses for appearing before the

Page 881

committee. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before the Minister and his staff leave, I have a small question I would like to ask them and I think it would be beneficial for all Members here. I realize that it is important that all Members get their questions answered but could I ask, particularly the officials, we have the deputy minister and a senior official here and I am sure there are a number of people in the background supplying all this information. Could the Minister, through his deputy, tell us how long they generally would budget for time to present their budget through the House? How long would they normally take?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I am advised that the Department of Public Works and Services budget is concluded and it is inappropriate at this time to ask questions of the Minister. We have concluded this department. I will rise and recognize the clock. Thank you, Mr. Minister.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1998-99 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Seconded by Mr. Miltenberger. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day, Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

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

Orders of the day for Wednesday, February 18, 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
 - Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1997-98
 - 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 Main 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
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 18, 1998, at 10:00 a.m.

--ADJOURNMENT