



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

6th Session

Day 5

13th Assembly

HANSARD

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1998

Pages 97 - 123

Page numbers reflect printed Hansard

The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

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

DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Madam Groenewegen. Before we get into orders of the day. Due to an illness in his family, the Speaker will be out of the Legislative Assembly for an indefinite period of time. As Deputy Speaker, I have been asked to assume the Speaker's duties in his absence. It is hoped that the Speaker will be able to return to the Chair before this sitting of the session ends.

Also, I ask Members to join me in wishing the Member from Iqaluit, Mr. Picco, a very happy birthday. He is 47...I mean, 37 years old today.

--Applause

Thank you. Orders of the day. Item 2, Minister's statements. Mr. Ng.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 20-13(6): Child Abuse Prevention

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to talk about the prevention of child abuse. On August 27, 1998, Sheldon Kennedy, the former NHL hockey player who was abused by his junior coach, visited Yellowknife as part of his cross Canada campaign to stop child abuse. Yellowknife Mayor Dave Lovell proclaimed August 27th Child

Abuse Awareness Day in honour of Mr. Kennedy during a luncheon barbecue at City Hall.

During his one-day stay in Yellowknife, Sheldon spoke at St. Patrick's High School and visited Ndilo and the Territorial Treatment Centre. In addition, he was able through a teleconference set up by NorthwesTel to speak with people in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay, Inuvik and Whitehorse. Mr. Speaker, I believe that Sheldon's campaign had an impact here in the Northwest Territories as I am sure it has in the rest of Canada. Speaking out and standing up against child abuse takes courage and conviction of purpose. Sheldon's visit is to facilitate change in attitudes toward abuse, and to change in the way that we respond to abuse. He has started the Sheldon Kennedy Foundation. Its objective is to make a major contribution to the prevention and treatment of child abuse, through awareness, education and action. I believe that one of the most powerful tools we have in the fight against child abuse is awareness. By making people aware of the horrors of abuse and by supporting people in their healing, we can reduce the suffering that results from child abuse. Mr. Speaker, the prevention of child abuse can only be achieved if we work in partnership with individuals, families and communities. We all have a duty and a responsibility to protect our children from abuse by teaching and educating them. Children need to know when they are being treated inappropriately. They need to know that they do not have to put up with inappropriate behaviour. They need to know that there is somewhere they can get help. Further and just as important, we need to provide, by example, an abuse free life style.

Children can also be protected by creating an atmosphere in our communities where they feel safe enough to come forward if they are being mistreated or abused. When children do come forward we need to take action. We need to provide support and protection services, as well as legal and counselling services for those who have been victims of abuse. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services, in partnership with the Status of Women, has produced a brochure called Help Stop Child Sexual Abuse. We distributed this brochure at the sessions held with Sheldon Kennedy. This brochure states what child sexual abuse is, where to report abuse and provides the names of agencies that can provide assistance to those who have been abused. Additional copies of the brochure are being distributed across the NWT to boards, local offices, counselling

agencies and shelters. I have distributed copies to all Members of this House.

Mr. Speaker, child abuse is a serious problem and we hope to raise awareness of this issue and the resources available to those in need. Children are our most important resource and we need to ensure that they grow up in a safe environment so that they have the opportunity to become contributing members of our society. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 21-13(6): Status of NWT Housing Corporation's Homeownership Initiatives

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr.

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Speaker, I rise today to provide the House with a status report on the success of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's initiatives to promote homeownership. In the early 1990's the corporation was spending over 70 percent of its budget on public housing, most of that money came from Ottawa. However, starting in 1992 the federal government began reducing and two years later eliminated funding for the construction of new public housing units.

Mr. Speaker, this meant the corporation had to shift its focus from building public housing to programs that helped northerners build their own homes. The corporation realized that many families living in public housing could afford the cost of running their own homes, but needed some help financing the construction. By assisting these families to move out of public housing, Mr. Speaker, public housing units could then be reallocated to those families who were in greater need.

Mr. Speaker, while the corporation has been successful in providing more NWT residents with new homes, these homes come with high price tags for the clients and cannot be afforded by everyone. The population of the NWT is young and growing, the need for lower cost single family homes is also growing. The corporation has identified this problem

and is already working on innovative solutions to solve it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 22-13(6): Student Success

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I have some good news today about the growing number of high school graduates in the Northwest Territories. To date, this year we have graduated more high school students than ever before, a total of 325. We expect more before the end of the calendar year. This is an increase of nearly ten percent over the last year and nearly 100 percent since 1990 when Education, Culture and Employment put the grade extension policy in place.

Mr. Speaker, this policy is intended to improve student participation and success. I am pleased to say today that it has been effective. In 1990, only 60 percent of students had access to a high school education in their home community. That number has increased to 90 percent today. Students no longer have to leave the support of their families and communities to pursue secondary education. NWT participation rates in high school have also grown tremendously and today compare to the Canadian average. In 1990, about 45 percent of high school age northerners were enrolled in school. Today, that number is close to 85 percent. By the year 2010, we expect that number to increase to 90 percent.

Many of our graduates are people who previously dropped out of school but returned when high school became available in their community. In most of Canada, the median age of high school graduates is 17 or 18; in the NWT as a whole, the median age is 19. In Nunavut, the median age of high school graduates is 20. Now that students can complete high school in their home communities, we find that students in their 30s, 40s and even 50s are returning to school and graduating. These students are to be commended for their efforts and success.

We know there is still a lot of room for improvement. Our graduation rate, even with recent increases, remains the lowest in Canada. However, I am confident that the number of high school participants

and graduates will keep growing if we continue to improve access to and the quality of high school programs. We need to celebrate improvement and realize that as more people access and complete a secondary education the health and well-being of our northern society improves. A high school education opens up opportunities for jobs, for further education, for self-sufficiency.

I ask that we all acknowledge the commitment and support provided to our students by communities, families and educators across the Northwest Territories. I know I represent the Members of this House in wishing all the students in the NWT every success in this academic year.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 23-13(6): Quebec Reference - Legal Perspectives

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On August 20th the Supreme Court of Canada delivered its opinion in the Quebec Secession Reference. I will make a few comments on the legal issue and Mr. Kakwi will speak about the national unity dimensions of this decision.

Three questions were put to the court which essentially asked:

- Under the Constitution of Canada can Quebec unilaterally separate from Canada?
- Under international law does Quebec have a right to unilaterally separate from Canada?

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- If the Constitution of Canada and international law conflict, which one is paramount?

The decision is about 80 pages long. But there are some points of particular interest to the people of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut which I would like to mention.

The Minister of Justice of the NWT intervened in the reference in November, 1996. Yukon, Manitoba,

Saskatchewan, Makivik, the Cree of Quebec, the Chiefs of Ontario and a number of other parties also intervened. The Government of Quebec refused to participate in the reference, so in July 1997, the court appointed a Quebec lawyer called an amicus curiae or friend of the court, to put forward any legal arguments that Quebec would probably have used if they had participated.

For the past 30 years there have been indications that the Parti Quebecois and other Quebec governments have wanted to expand into the marine areas and islands in Hudson Bay, James Bay, Ungava Bay and Hudson Strait. In December 1994, and again in September 1995, the Government of Quebec tabled sovereignty bills in their legislature which appeared to indicate that Quebec intended to unilaterally extend their jurisdiction into parts of the NWT and Nunavut. This was one of the reasons the GNWT intervened in this reference case. We do not believe Quebec has a valid claim to these areas, nor do we think that it was legal for Quebec to annex lands and waters in the NWT and Nunavut.

Intervenor aboriginal organizations argued that the Constitution, treaties/land claims agreements, aboriginal rights and international law required aboriginal consent before aboriginal peoples and their territories could be taken out of Canada. The federal government was evasive on the issue of protecting aboriginal rights in the event of separation. The federal government's legal arguments contended that aboriginal issues were important, but outside the scope of the three questions posed in the reference. The decision made by the Supreme Court confirms that Quebec does not have a right under the Constitution of Canada to separate unilaterally. The court said that Quebec must obey the law, which includes the amending formula in the Constitution of Canada.

Typically in complex court decisions, everyone can find some support for their own position. In this decision, the court said that if a clear majority voted yes to a clear referendum question, Canada would be obliged to negotiate with Quebec. In these negotiations, virtually everything would be on the table. For example, boundaries would be on the table. The rights of aboriginal peoples and minorities would have to be taken into account. There would be no presumption that Quebec could keep all of its present territory, and certainly there would be no presumption that Quebec could annex areas in Nunavut or Labrador. So Quebec might be diminished or expanded depending on the outcome of

the negotiations. Mr. Speaker, we are continuing our assessment of the legal implications of this important decision, particularly of its relevance to aboriginal peoples and to the new territory of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Minister for National and Constitutional Affairs, Mr. Kakfwi.

Minister's Statement 24-13(6): Quebec Secession Reference

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Minister of Justice has provided a summary of some of the highlights of the Quebec Secession Reference. I would like to make a few comments about the political implications of this discussion. This decision essentially says that negotiations will be required if Quebec gets a clear yes vote on a clear question, in a referendum on separation. The decision also stresses that things will get very complicated in the event of a yes vote. But we are not on the brink of a referendum at this time. The Premier of Quebec, Mr. Bouchard, still must call an election. The outcome of the next provincial election in Quebec will be a very important indicator of what we can expect in the coming years. If Mr. Bouchard cannot produce a convincing win, including a substantial majority of the popular vote, the likelihood of a referendum in the near future is not great.

The decision in the reference case is not likely to end the national unity debate. I think it is safe to say that the PQ will try to do things indirectly, if they cannot do them directly. The social policy reform talks, for example, provide Quebec and other provinces, with an opportunity to reduce federal influence in their jurisdictions. Quebec can be expected to incrementally increase its autonomy and bide its time. At the moment Mr. Bouchard has picked a fight with the Prime Minister to try to increase Canada's influence in international affairs. In his foreign travels he often adopts the vocabulary of statehood as though Quebec were already an independent country.

On the other hand, if the conditions for a yes vote do materialize in Quebec in the near future, the fact that northern Quebec is the homeland of aboriginal

peoples, with constitutionally protected rights, will be a very important factor

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in any negotiations. Aboriginal peoples in northern Quebec have consistently and overwhelmingly voted against separation. They want to stay in Canada. There will probably be strong forces at work to keep these areas within Canada.

On the issue of aboriginal rights the Supreme Court said:

"The promise of s.35 of the constitution...recognized not only the ancient occupation of land by aboriginal peoples, but their contribution to the building of Canada, and the special commitments made to them by successive governments. The protection of these rights, so recently and arduously achieved, whether looked at in their own right or as part of the larger concern with minorities, reflects an important underlying constitutional value."

The court clearly stated that aboriginal interests would have to be taken into account in any negotiations concerning separation. The constitution guarantees the rights of aboriginal peoples and they cannot be ignored by Quebec or Canada.

When the GNWT intervened in the reference and raised the issue of Quebec attempting to annex certain islands, some people asked what all the fuss was about over a few isolated islands. More than a few islands are at stake. The area in question is quite extensive. To put it bluntly, Quebec believes these islands would give it a better claim to potentially resource-rich marine areas such as Hudson Bay, James Bay and Ungava Bay. Quebec separatists want these islands because of the very important role they could play in drawing maritime boundaries in international law. I wrote to the federal minister and the Quebec government in 1995 to say that it would not be in the interest of northerners or Canadians generally to let these islands be spirited away by a separatist Quebec.

Many commentators, including some political leaders, have stated repeatedly that the federal government was wrong to take this reference to the Supreme Court. They argued that the matter was purely political. But all politics must operate within the limits of the law and that is one of the basic conclusions the court reached.

Along with our colleagues in the other provinces and territories, and the national and regional aboriginal organizations, we will have to take a careful look at this decision and its political ramifications in the weeks and months ahead.

Some obvious questions are:

- What constitutes a clear referendum question?
- What constitutes a clear majority?
- If there is a yes vote, who negotiates for the north and for aboriginal peoples?
- What process is used to make that decision?
- How will any deal be ratified by the Canadian people?

In closing, I believe it was important for the GNWT to intervene in this case and to bring to the attention of Canadians some of the issues which have been on the margins but which affect the north in very important ways. We must now be prepared to make sure that these unique interests are not forgotten or traded away without our consent, in any dealings or negotiations surrounding Quebec separation. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, members' statements. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 47-13(6): Heavy Workload for Igloolik Nurses

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to make a statement regarding heavy workload experienced by the two nurses in Igloolik. There are only two nurses in Igloolik, and within the past 21 days, they have seen 435 patients. There was one particular person who has had a major surgery and had to be visited by the nurses while he is at home recovering. This patient just had heart surgery. During question period, I will be asking the Minister of Health regarding this situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends).

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Evaloarjuk. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 48-13(6): Expansion of Iqaluit School

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, because of the anticipated growth associated with the creation of Nunavut, the federal government allocated monies under the Nunavut incremental infrastructure envelope. These monies were targeted to the decentralized communities and Iqaluit, as outlined in Footprints 1 and 2. As part of that program, Iqaluit was scheduled for a new seven-classroom school. After reviewing the enrolment numbers and the unprecedented growth in the Tundra Valley and Happy Valley area of Iqaluit, it was quickly realized that the seven classroom facility as planned would be redundant at completion next fall. With support of the Iqaluit education authority and our departments of Public Works and Services, and Education, we began lobbying the federal government to come up with the extra money to expand the original seven classroom school to 11 classrooms. Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, that most officials and departmental staff were not very hopeful that new monies could be found, although the demonstrated need was there.

Mr. Speaker, I met with the Honourable Jane Stewart earlier this summer about the situation and the redundancy issue of the new proposed seven classroom school. Ms. Stewart also had an opportunity in early July to travel to Iqaluit to see the increased development and growth first hand. At the end of

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July, DIAND announced that they would increase the proposed new Iqaluit middle school from seven to 11 classrooms. I would like to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to thank the Honourable Jane Stewart and the Nunavut Secretariat, our departments of Education and Public Works and Services and the Iqaluit education authority for their support and encouragement over these past several months of hard work on behalf of the people of Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Picco. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 49-13(6): Wildlife Act Amendments

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement today is regarding this government's obligation it made when land claims were settled as a signatory to those agreements, and also for this government to enact certain sections of the land claim agreements to bring it into effect. Mr. Speaker, what I am talking about is the whole area of the Wildlife Act of the Northwest Territories, where certain amendments have to be made to allow the Gwich'in and Sahtu agreements to take part in enacting those sections which will give the boards and agencies of this agreement the authority to carry out its work and activities. Mr. Speaker, in regard to the Inuvialuit, who settled their claim in 1984, it took almost ten years for them to implement certain sections of their wildlife agreement. The Gwich'in agreement, which was signed in 1992, six years to the day, nothing has been done to ensure that those agreements are enacted so that that section also can come into effect.

Mr. Speaker, I have asked this question to the Minister several times in regard to what is being done with the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development to ensure that this legislation is being carried out to its fullest, and the Government of the Northwest Territories is doing its part to ensure that legislation is drafted and passed through this House so those agreements can take effect. Mr. Speaker, I feel it is time this government stood up and stated exactly when these agreements will have the power they need to carry them forth and the legislation drafted, so that this House can pass the appropriate legislation to enact these agreements so they can be carried out as they were negotiated, and the aboriginal groups and this government could work along ensuring that our wildlife is being protected, and also that boards have the ability to carry that out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Rabesca.

Member's Statement 50-13(6): State of NWT Campgrounds

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the summer I had the opportunity to travel in our southern regions of our great country. During our trip, I was able to take my time and enjoy the sights along the roads. We often stopped at the rest areas to get out and stretch, and I realized that the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has over the years, developed some very nice campgrounds and picnic areas, all easily accessible from the highways. We have some very beautiful areas that provide residents and tourists great pleasure and relaxation. The department has done a very good job of developing and promoting the various parks and campgrounds it has. However, during my return to Rae-Edzo I looked at the picnic areas on the north side of the Mackenzie River and I found the picnic areas to be in fairly good condition. Between Fort Providence and Rae-Edzo we have two picnic areas for day use only; one at Chan Lake, and the other at North Arm. As I stated, both were in very good condition, but have had no real maintenance or expansion done to them in many years.

This past summer, the department did some brushing at North Arm. It has been years since any capital work was completed at these sites, and what is most disturbing is the fact that we do not have a campground anywhere between Fort Providence and Yellowknife. I believe the department should make an effort to find a place along Highway 3 that is suitable for a campground. The North Arm day use area is the only spot on the 340 kilometre section of Highway 3 which has access to one of the world's largest lakes, Great Slave Lake. Yet, this government has not considered this spot to be considered for a campground. It is a very beautiful area, and I am sure tourists and residents alike would enjoy having a campground situated there. It has always been my understanding that in order to promote tourism, one must have facilities for tourists to stay and things for them to do. How can this be done when we lack

the most fundamental facilities to attract tourism, the campground? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Rabesca. The Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement 51-13(6): Trailcross Child Care Facility

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to briefly rise and talk about an issue which is very important to the people of Fort Smith and, I believe, the children of the Northwest Territories, and that is the state and future of our child care program in Fort Smith at a place called Trailcross. The program that is run there is geared to treat children between 12 and 18 with mild to moderate behavioural and/or emotional problems. This facility has been in Fort Smith since the 60's and has decades of honourable history and service to the people and children of the north. For the last number of years, given the fact that the building it is in is old and somewhat decrepit, the department has been studying whether, in fact, they should be renovating or replacing this building, and it started out with the need for possible minor renovations. Over the past two years this agonizingly slow at times review has not come to any conclusions. As we move into our final round of business plans as a territorial assembly, it is critical that this issue be resolved, that there be some

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indication as to what is going to happen, how this very important program will be supported, and how this facility will be upgraded so that, in fact, we can continue to deliver an essential service to children in the Northwest Territories. Later, during question period, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister questions in regard to this very important program. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Henry.

Member's Statement 52-13(5): GNWT Payments to NWT Businesses

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the past few years we have heard of many worthwhile initiatives this government has implemented with some aim to assist northern businesses. Clearly this government is attempting to provide many avenues geared to the business community and to encourage investment and establishment of new businesses in the north. Recently, a local business person shared

their concerns regarding a system of payment established by this government, and the problems associated with it. Amongst them were the regular glitches with computer systems, Christmas shutdowns and, of course, the occasional human error. Delays in receiving payments are frequent. This creates certain cash flow problems for businesses, especially when they rely solely on GNWT for revenue. This problem has a more dramatic effect on businesses in the smaller, isolated communities. Once a department receives an invoice, it is forwarded to the Department of Finance for processing. They in turn, will process a payment and issue a cheque via the mail system. We are lucky here in Yellowknife that the mail system is originating in Yellowknife, and we receive these payments in a few days. Other communities have to wait much longer. Mr. Speaker, the problem does not end there.

In some communities, there are no bank services and the businesses in turn must send their cheques to a larger community for eventual deposit. These delays all add up to a lengthy process. Mr. Speaker, I understand there is a policy in place for issuing payments and I appreciate the fact that this government has attempted to streamline their system. I am aware that the policy to issue payments to northern businesses provides for a three-week turnaround and, yes, this is a far better cry than the precomputer days. However, I believe we could do a great service to our northern business community by establishing a system of direct deposit or electronic payments where businesses can receive payments directly into their bank accounts. It is my understanding that the finance department does not have the current ability to provide this service because of a lack of software and manpower to establish such a system. We must look at the issue and give consideration to implementing a system whereby we can deposit the payments directly to businesses' bank accounts who provide services to this government. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Henry, you have unanimous consent.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and colleagues. We have the ability to use direct deposits with government

payroll and some departments are using direct deposit now for issuing payments; the Department of Public Works and Services, and the Executive are two such departments. Mr. Speaker, let us support our business community across the territory. Who knows, maybe the money spent on software and implementation will be a cost-saving measure compared to what this government does spend on stamps, envelopes and labour? Later today, I will be asking the Minister of Finance for some further clarification on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

Member's Statement 53-13(6): Cambridge Bay High School Fire

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as Members are aware, on August 3rd the Killinik High School in Cambridge Bay was accidentally set on fire by three children playing with a camping stove under the deck of the school. The fire started at approximately 4:00 p.m. and lasted until the early morning hours of the following day. The loss of the high school building was a tragedy for all residents. Not only was the building the base for high school programming, it also contained the May Maghagak community library, the community gymnasium and the offices of the Kitikmeot Heritage Society. Mr. Speaker, this building had undergone complete renovations and expansion over the past several years. It was originally the primary school built in the early 1970's. In 1994, it was turned into the high school, upon completion of the new Kullik Elementary School. Needless to say, as the only school in Cambridge Bay for over two decades, all residents have been impacted by this loss.

The Killinik High School loss has also impacted the Kullik Elementary School, which shared its mechanical, electrical and municipal service systems with the high school. I am pleased to report that temporary systems were put in place within a couple of weeks to ensure that the Kullik Elementary School could open. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize and extend thanks to all individuals who helped out during the fire, in particular, the volunteer firefighters and water truck operators who spent the evening, night

and early morning fighting and containing the blaze. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the residents of Cambridge Bay, I also wish to recognize and thank the many organizations, agencies and individuals throughout the NWT and Canada who have offered to assist the community after the fire. This tragic loss to the residents of Cambridge Bay has once again drawn the community closer together.

A number of community and government groups have come together to ensure that high school programs would be ready

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for the start of the school year, which began more or less on time in late August for high school students, and early September for elementary school students. These groups include the local education authority, the hamlet council, the management and staff of Killinik High, the divisional board, Nunavut Arctic College, and the GNWT through Education, Culture and Employment, and Public Works and Services staff. These groups got together to plan and put into place the necessary temporary classrooms and support facilities and supplies needed to get the high school programs up and running. Work is also fully underway for planning the new replacement facilities with a 1999 construction schedule to coincide with a 2000 school year opening. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Ng, you have unanimous consent.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I am sure this government and the incoming Nunavut government will ensure that the current and future needs of Cambridge Bay and its students will be adequately addressed as we move forward in replacing the loss of the Killinik High School and the services supported by that facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Members' Statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement 54-13(6): GNWT Finding to St. John Ambulance

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, 26 years ago, the St. John Ambulance organization was invited by the government of the day to establish here in the Northwest Territories. Since that time, the organization has become an active contributor in almost every community in the NWT. The volunteers are well-known for their work in providing safety and first aid training courses. The St. John Ambulance brigade has volunteers who serve at numerous public functions. This past winter, for example, St. John volunteers provided services at the Arctic Winter Games, which saw thousands of competitors and members of the public participating. The Arctic Winter Games alone, benefitted from more than 700 hours of volunteer first aid and safety services. Their involvement in large events, such as the Arctic Winter Games and similar public functions is important, not only for public safety, but also supports the professional functioning of events attended by many NWT residents.

St. John Ambulance is not just a first aid and safety training organization. They also undertake good work by providing youth programs. Programs for children six years and older give children in our communities a chance to build social skills, self-esteem, as well as knowledge and skills in first aid and safety. Unfortunately, in April of this year, the St. John Ambulance was told that they would no longer receive any further funding from the Government of the Northwest Territories. Last year, funding was cut in half from the \$95,000 of two years ago. This year, their funding is zero. This core funding went specifically into the operation of the organization's volunteer programs. On average, 1,000 hours of volunteer services were delivered throughout the NWT each year. The funding cuts will mean this service will no longer be available. I know that many organizations have been affected by government cutbacks, and, certainly, St. Johns took their fair share of cuts over the previous two years. However, given the nature of the service provided by St. John Ambulance and the overall benefit to the public, I strongly believe and would encourage the Minister that their funding be reinstated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Steen.

Member's Statement 55-13(6): Tuktoyaktuk Nurse Shortage

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to make a statement on the shortage of nurses in my home community of Tuktoyaktuk. I would like to bring out the fact that this really is a problem in all of my communities of Nunakput were there is a potential for shortage for nurses. This is not a new issue, Mr. Speaker, it has been developing for the past number of years. We have reached the point now where we are down to only two nurses in Tuktoyaktuk and a reduction of services to the public has occurred because of the shortage of time these nurses have to serve the public. I have also been told that this problem has been brought to the attention of the health board on a number of occasions, but at this point in time there does not seem to be any favourable results. Later today, I will be asking the Minister of Health and Social Services, Honourable Ng, as to what his department is doing in dealing with this issue. Mr. Speaker, I am sure we do not want another situation where nothing is done until we reach a situation like in the Keewatin last year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize two of my constituents, Dave and Rachquel McNabb. Dave was the first president of Metis Nations of the Northwest Territories. He presently sits on the Deninoo Community Council in Fort Resolution and spearheaded the drive of zero tolerance for the Deninoo Community Council. I would like to request all Members to welcome my constituents to the Assembly. Thank you.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I would like to recognize a constituent of mine from Fort McPherson, Mr. Frank Smith.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure today to welcome in the gallery, Yeta Yensen, who is the deputy chief statistician of Greenland in town to explore cooperation with the GNWT and Nunavut government. Sitting next to Yeta, is a very good friend of mine, Bob and Mr. Miltenberger, Jack Hicks of RWED in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 1975 and 1979, I used to live in the Keewatin area in Coral Harbour. I would like to recognize the mayor of Coral Harbour visiting our Legislative Assembly. Thank you. (Translation ends)

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize Johnny Ningeongan, who is the mayor of Coral Harbour from my riding. It is a pleasure to have him here. He is meeting with the Ministers. I would

also like to thank the Ministers for giving him time to meet with them. Thank you.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a resident of Yellowknife South, Elaine Whitford. Elaine is the spouse of our Sergeant-at-Arms, Tony. Elaine has just returned from a volunteering assignment in Nepal. I believe she took a little rest and relaxation in Australia on the way back. If I may, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize Mr. and Mrs. Dave Legros, in the gallery, residents of Yellowknife South and also to point out to my fellow Members in the Legislature that the Pages today are from Ecole St. Joseph's School in Yellowknife South. They are Shawn Breman, Christine Do, Kayla Fisher, Elaine Hanaschuk, Crystal Legros, Chantelle McCarthy, Elise Babyn and Kyla Wright. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Welcome to the Assembly everyone. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Rabesca.

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not too sure if my constituent members are in the gallery, but they were, former chief of Dogrib Nation, Alexis Arrowmaker, along with Ted Blondin and Eddy Erasmus. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 55-13(6): Tuktoyaktuk Nurse Shortage

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated in my Member's statement, there is concern being expressed quite publicly in the community of Tuktoyaktuk about the shortage of nurses. Mr. Speaker, members of the public are now to the point where they are getting concerned as to the programs and services that will be available from the health centre. As I stated in my statement, the concern has been expressed to the health board in the past. There is no obvious, favourable results at this time. I would like to bring the question to Minister Ng, the Minister of Health and welcome him back from his visit to the south and his meeting with the Health Ministers there. I would like to ask him a question as to whether his department is aware of the situation and what they are doing at this point on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 55-13(6): Tuktoyaktuk Nurse Shortage

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are fully aware of the seriousness of the situation. It is not just Tuktoyaktuk or the Beaufort Delta in these types of circumstances. We found over the course of the past couple of years, and certainly over the past few months, that there has been more than a considerable strain on the nursing profession, and nurse practitioners throughout the Northwest Territories as a result of the increasing recruitment from other jurisdictions, other countries, particularly the United States.

As the honourable Member noted, I just came from a federal/provincial/territorial Health Minister's meeting. It is an issue that is not just within our jurisdiction, but certainly, a national problem as well, particularly in the rural areas and the remote locations of the northern provinces that operate very similar to the Northwest Territories. What we have done, Mr. Speaker, is quite frankly, we think there has to be a long-term solution in having Northerners recruited and placed in positions where they can hopefully, will stay and provide service to their own constituents, whether it is in their home community or certainly in the Northwest Territories. That is on a longer scale.

On the short-term, right now we are doing some work with our partners, the boards in trying to identify where we can fill in on a short-term basis, some of the immediate needs. We certainly have a concern in this area, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 55-13(6): Tuktoyaktuk Nurse Shortage

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this sounds like there is not going to be a short-term solution to the problem of the shortage of nurses. I am sure the House will agree with me that this problem is related to our salaries and benefits that are available to the nurses at this point in time. What I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, could the department look into what services are going to be available to the community of Tuktoyaktuk considering there is only two nurses available and what services can be expected to be available and how long down the road is it going to be before services are brought back up to full standards? What I am asking for is some kind of a report to the House on this, from the Minister. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 55-13(6): Tuktoyaktuk Nurse Shortage

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I had indicated, the department is working with boards throughout the territories to try to identify where the short-falls are, both on a short-term basis and on a medium-term basis as we know. When people give notice of their intent to leave and also knowing where some of the short-term replacement personnel may be for some of those boards and yes, we plan on putting in place after identifying those factors putting in place a plan to try to address the issues of services for constituents throughout the territories. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Steen.

Supplementary To Question 55-13(6): Tuktoyaktuk Nurse Shortage

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear the Minister is going to put together a report on the issues of the territories, but I wonder if the Minister or his department could get in touch with the health board in Inuvik and find out exactly what services are available to the public in that particular community with the existing staff? I understand they are down to half of their staff right now. Right now, I am particularly concerned with that particular community. I understand that we can address the whole issue territorial wide, but it is going to take longer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 55-13(6): Tuktoyaktuk Nurse Shortage

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with respect to the honourable Member's immediate concerns about Tuktoyaktuk, I can certainly provide that information to him as soon as it is available, but as I indicated, it is a territorial issue that has to be addressed on a territorial nature. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Question 56-13(6): Amittuq Nurse Shortage

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is a follow-up to Mr. Steen's questions. My question is directed to the Minister of Health. It is concerning the two communities I represent, Igloolik and Pond Inlet. These two communities have the same concerns and their population is about the same with over 1000 people. They usually have two nurses on staff and have a very heavy workload. They work the majority of the time where there is usually only one or two nurses on staff. I wonder if the Minister can tell me when these communities can expect to get more nurses? Thank you. (Translation ends)

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Evaloarjuk. The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng. (Translation ends)

Return To Question 56-13(6): Amittuq Nurse Shortage

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot speak on those communities as to when they may expect to have any additional nursing resources available to them because that responsibility lies with the board. Right now, our main focus as I indicated in my reply to the honourable Member for Nunakput, is trying to fill the vacancies with an existing nursing staff positions that are vacant. Before we can even look at expanding that, we have to deal with the existing shortfalls Mr. Speaker, with our partners, the boards. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

(Translation) Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Evaloarjuk. (Translation ends)

Supplementary To Question 56-13(6): Amittuq Nurse Shortage

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is there a policy in place indicating how many nurses there should be in a community according to their population as this is very important to me and what the policy is? For instance, if there are 500 people in a community, how many nurses can they have? Thank you. (Translation ends)

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

(Translation) Thank you. Mr. Ng. (Translation ends)

Further Return To Question 56-13(6): Amittuq Nurse Shortage

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HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, no, there is no policy to my knowledge. Staffing has historically been set at the time of the 1988 federal transfer. The territorial government, at that time, the resources which were in place in the communities were transferred. Subsequent to that as a territorial government passed on some of the responsibilities to

the boards, they made some adjustments within their service area in recognizing some communities growing faster than others and the needs of their communities in their service area. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

(Translation) Thank you. Oral questions.
Supplementary, Mr. Evaloarjuk. (Translation ends)

Supplementary To Question 56-13(6): Amittuq Nurse Shortage

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ng responded that for Nunakput there is a territorial-wide issue. Would the Minister of Health be able to tell us whether there is going to be more training for nurses in the north from the communities? If there is no training of northerners, what happens? (Translation ends)

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

(Translation) Thank you. Mr. Ng. (Translation ends)

Further Return To Question 56-13(6): Amittuq Nurse Shortage

HON. KELVIN NG:

Mr. Speaker, I have been in discussions with my honourable colleague, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment particularly about nursing programs and it is one of the areas that is in our Recruitment and Retention Plan that we plan on moving forward on. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

(Translation) Thank you. (Translation ends) Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 57-13(6): Donation of House for Iqaluit Homeless

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, last year the Baffin leaders meeting in Pangnirtung, and again this year they are meeting in Iqaluit, passed a motion supporting the Iqaluit homeless shelter. This past summer, the building was condemned by the Department of Health and was closed. The shelter was running at approximately 120 percent occupancy, Mr. Speaker. In conjunction

with several agencies in Iqaluit and our local Northwest Territories Housing Corporation office, we were able to fund a new building and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for the Housing Corporation for his pro-active work on this. I am wondering at this time, if the Minister could update us on that project, the homeless shelter in Iqaluit? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 57-13(6): Donation of House for Iqaluit Homeless

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do recall the two important sessions I attended with the honourable Member, along with other Baffin MLAs, where they showed the homeless shelter. It was discussed in an attempt to come to grips with the growing numbers of homeless people, not only in Iqaluit, but in other parts of Nunavut, notably in Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay.

The homeless shelter in Iqaluit was indeed, closed after inspection by the environmental health officer and since then there have been attempts, the Member noted by several agencies and as of today, there is a plan to convert a one-bedroom public housing duplex into a new shelter. We have budgeted \$57,000 to this project and we see our role as one of a support role, rather than lead role in getting this homeless shelter open again. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 57-13(6): Donation of House for Iqaluit Homeless

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, indeed, this is a very serious situation that has developed over this past summer and with the cold weather coming we have approximately 20 to 30 people in Iqaluit who have been using that shelter and the facility was not able to sustain that number because of overcrowding. I am wondering, in the new facility does the Minister have any idea if indeed we would be enlarging that facility to allow for more people to take advantage of

the homeless shelter because of the need in Iqaluit?
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 57-13(6): Donation of House for Iqaluit Homeless

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have actual numbers and estimates of how many this facility will be able to hold, but what I can say is, because of the growth in Iqaluit and the natural migration of people from other parts of Nunavut into that community that the number of homeless is sure to increase, and are increasing as of today. Our hope is that the new facility will be opened in October and there are these societies and groups that are working together to try to make it suitable and adequate for the numbers that will require this shelter. I believe that once the facility is opened we will likely find that there will be more homeless than can be housed, but that is my personal projection. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 57-13(6): Donation of House for Iqaluit Homeless

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious concern and the Minister is right, that quite a few of the people actually using the shelter are coming from outside of Iqaluit. I am wondering, with the dramatic increase

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in the homeless that we are seeing in Iqaluit, is there any way that the Minister could commit at this time with help from his department, and hopefully Health and Social Services, we could put some kind of contingency plan in place from other agencies of this government to help us alleviate this problem? Right now, the resources in Iqaluit from Town Social Services are being stretched to the limit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 57-13(6): Donation of House for Iqaluit Homeless

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories is involved through the Housing Corporation's contribution of monies for the operations and maintenance and the conversion of this building to a homeless shelter. The Department of Health and Social Services is also involved with some funding. We also have ensured that there is a staff home put into this group. The Emergency Shelter Society, the Town Social Services, the Regional Social Services and the Inuit Society are all working together and combining what resources are there, along with the government, to ensure that the homeless shelter is as suitable as possible given the resources. As I said, we are dealing with a growing problem. We are dealing with homeless, generally jobless people who are going to Iqaluit, in this case, to look for work and in many cases not finding any. In many cases dealing with the housing authority. The Department of Social Services is working to its maximum capacity. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 57-13(6): Donation of House for Iqaluit Homeless

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the past 18 months, as the Minister knows, and I appreciate the support that his department has been giving me and the people of Iqaluit who are working on this issue, but like I said, we passed a motion last year with the Baffin leaders and we did it again this year. The reality is, Mr. Speaker, that indeed, the facility that is planned, will not be big enough to handle the capacity that was in the shelter before it closed down. I am wondering if the Minister and maybe some other Ministers in the House, could help coordinate a working group to help me and the people of Iqaluit deal with this very serious and pressing issue over the next couple of days so I can get back to my constituency that something proactively is being done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 57-13(6): Donation of House for Iqaluit Homeless

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I can safely say that the resources we have in the Housing Corporation and the department are ones where they are at the level that we can commit to at this point in time. That is to say that all other resources are spoken for at this time, but we are working very closely with other agencies. You have to remember that there are other communities, Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay, in Nunavut who are dealing with this, in addition to the very severe shortage of general public housing across Nunavut and we are also facing a similar situation in the western Arctic.

The only thing I could add is that we have approached Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and asked them at the Baffin Leaders Summit to allocate their projected surplus into the homeless in Nunavut and, as I recall from the meeting that we had with them, they said they would take it to their board. Also, the mayor of Iqaluit recently sent a strong message to all mayors in the Baffin to ensure that their councils and the housing authorities in the communities were aware of this problem, and that the town of Iqaluit was having a very difficult time dealing with the housing needs of people, in general from outside the Iqaluit area and from other communities. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Question 58-13(6): Rent at Elders' Centres

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, it relates to the high cost of rent for elders staying in elder centres in my particular riding. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that upon retirement at 60 years of age that elders are not required to pay rent. That being the case, why are other elders at the elders' centre required to pay approximately \$720 a month for rent? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. To allow for translation, we will pause momentarily between the question and the

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

Return To Question 58-13(6): Rent at Elders' Centres

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the honourable Member is speaking about elders' facilities where there are additional supports that are provided besides just basic rent. I believe there are meals and some homemaker services. I do not know exactly for his particular question, on which facility, which community he refers to, but I can certainly get that information for him and advise him on that. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 58-13(6): Rent at Elders' Centres

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I realize there are some extra duties in this arrangement such as meals and I believe that a person stays through the night to oversee

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the elders, but at the same token, if we were to take this elder and put them in a residence, pay for the residence, pay for the heat, the power, the upkeep, certainly there would not be that much of a difference between that and housing them in the so-called elder centres. My question to the Minister is, would he consider reviewing the rent, the fee that these elders pay, with a special look at elders or hardship cases? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 58-13(6): Rent at Elders' Centres

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I certainly would be willing to take a look at it. I did want to make the point again that we are talking about extended level care facilities and not just basic

accommodation. There is a difference in that respect, where an individual is or does have 24-hour care available to them. Certainly I do not think there are any financial hardships on the individuals who may be in those types of situations because our support system allows for individuals to not be penalized and not have to endure financial hardships in accessing services from this government. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 58-13(6): Rent at Elders' Centres

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to differ with the Minister because I have spent many visits to the elders' centre in my community and I know, from seeing first-hand that there are hardships. For example, if the fee is \$720 a month and the elder gets \$900 a month through his Old Age Pension, that does not leave a lot of money. My question would be, the Minister indicated that they have a service where they off-set to ensure that there are not any hardships. What formula do they use to make sure that elders do not find themselves in a situation where they have no money to buy, whether it be tobacco or personal supplies and so on? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 58-13(6): Rent at Elders' Centres

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can vaguely recall this issue because it came forward in this House. It was one of the major reforms under long-term care and standardization of the rates that we had in our extended care facilities and we are talking about three years ago. At that time, there was an accommodation made, where I believe, raised the level of disposable income for all residents to approximately \$200 a month, \$150 to \$200 a month range for individuals because all their other expenses, if they were in these extended care facilities, would be looked after by the government. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary. Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 58-13(6): Rent at Elders' Centres

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that did not quite answer my question. I am asking what has been put in place to make sure that the elders are not put in a difficult situation by not having enough funds to buy personal supplies and tobacco, et cetera. What is the formula?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Minister for Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 58-13(6): Rent at Elders' Centres

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is no formula. I said that it was either \$150 or \$200 a month of disposable income that they are allowed, if their income is over and above that of the rental rates. I will confirm the actual number and get back to the Member on that. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral question. Mr. Krutko.

Question 59-13(6): Wildlife Act Amendments

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier with regard to my Member's statement about the whole area of establishing legislation to be able to enact a lot of the Claims Agreements where there are certain sections that relate to items such as the Wildlife Act to carry out activities, such as enforcement by our Wildlife Officers, basically giving the boards and agencies established through these agreements the authority to carry out their rules and responsibilities which are in these Land Claims Agreements. I would like to ask the Premier in regard to the Gwich'in Agreement which was signed off in April 1992. That was six years ago and nothing has been done to date to ensure that the legislation is being drafted and being readied to be passed through the House so that these agreements are ready to be enforced. Without the appropriate legislation, these

agreements cannot come forth and the enforcement arm of this government cannot carry out their responsibilities. I would like to ask the Premier when does he see the Wildlife Act amendments being proposed to this House, to ensure these claims or agreements are being taken care of and the obligations we have as a government to ensure that those agreements are enforced? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Premier, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 59-13(6): Wildlife Act Amendments

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice so I can get the Member a complete and detailed answer.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question is being taken

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as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Rabesca.

Question 60-13(6): NWT Campgrounds

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, referring to my Member's statement regarding the campsites along the Mackenzie Highway between Yellowknife and Rae-Edzo, I wonder if the Minister responsible for Tourism has any studies or anything planned for the future construction of the campsite between here and Rae-Edzo and along the Mackenzie Highway between Yellowknife and Fort Providence? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member for North Slave. The Premier.

Return To Question 60-13(6): NWT Campgrounds

HON. DON MORIN:

Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice so I can give the Member a complete detailed answer. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 61-13(6): Status of Trailcross Facility

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services. It is in regard to my Member's statement and the status of the review of the facility Trailcross. When can a conclusive answer be expected in terms of what type of renovations, if any, will take place or will a new building be constructed? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 61-13(6): Status of Trailcross Facility

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our officials are currently under discussion with Public Works and staff and with the Fire Marshall's office on what types of renovations are required for the Trailcross building. As the honourable Member noted, it is a facility that is well over 20 years old and we think it has out used its life cycle which is coming to an end. It is matter of the cost efficiency necessary whether to renovate or build a new facility that has to be considered. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 61-13(6): Status of Trailcross Facility

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this facility and its fate and its status has been under review now for almost two years and I realize that the wheels of government grind slow and fine but would the Minister please put a date on this, hopefully in this century, that this issue will be on the table with some dates that we can look at and specific plans we can see and address. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 61-13(6): Status of Trailcross Facility

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are two issues here that have to be taken into consideration in respect to Trailcross. First of all, it is the facility itself, the infrastructure that houses the programming. The programming is the other side of the equation here on what needs are going to be required and can be delivered out of the Trailcross facility or the community of Fort Smith in the future. In that vein there is a Child and Youth Services Reform Strategy that is ongoing now to identify the needs of the Western Territory children, both those that are currently being treated in the territories and those that are being treated outside the territories. That is another component before undertaking, knowing what facility has to be put in place and knowing what program is going to have to be delivered.

I will clarify as much as possible to the honourable Member and advise him that in respect to the infrastructure, the facility itself, that one way or another there is going to have to be some renovations take place at a minimal until such a time as a new replacement facility can be planned and put into place as a result of anything that would come out of the operational view of the programs. With that, I think it would be safe to say that within the next 30 to 60 days we can nail down exactly what renovations would have to take place at least on interim basis for that facility. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 61-13(6): Status of Trailcross Facility

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to that response in the next 30 to 60 days. My question now, I would like to switch then to the issue that the Minister has raised with related to the Trailcross actual building is the program review. My concern would be, in fact, that the way it sounds is that this particular review is going to extend long past

the life of this government and in effect, we are going to leave here not knowing what is going to be happening with child welfare services in the west. Can the Minister commit to giving us some sort of an update? They have been working on this now for a considerable length of time as well, and I am very concerned that we are going to be leaving our fate totally in the hands of possibly well intentioned civil servants but without any clear political direction as we leave office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 61-13(6): Status of Trailcross Facility

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HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is, as we all know, a very serious issue and we want to undertake and do it properly. There is a lot involved in assessing what treatment needs are there right now for the children that we have in our care and the needs of those in the territories and outside the territories. I would say that I share the Member's concern on the timing of the matter. I do not know quite frankly, if I am going to be the Minister of Health and Social Services when this review is complete. As it stands now, it is in the next fiscal years' business plan in respect of a strategic direction and strategic plan and initiative so I would think that it would be within a short time-frame of the new fiscal year coming in that this work would be concluded. I cannot be more conclusive than that because I cannot commit because I will not be here, Mr. Speaker, on dealing with this matter. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 61-13(6): Status of Trailcross Facility

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess this particular study then brings to light one of the concerns with this whole issue of transition with division. While the Minister may not be here, the concern will be and as western Members, I would like some assurances that, in fact, it will be addressed

conclusively. I am not sure whether the Minister can address that, maybe the Premier can, that in fact this issue will not be sort of forgotten even though the Minister may be on to greater, bigger and better things in Nunavut. The children of the west and the people of the west will know that their interests and well-being of their children is not going to be forgotten in transition. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 61-13(6): Status of Trailcross Facility

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can assure the honourable Member that will not be the case. That is why we set it out in the business planning cycle and listed it as a strategic initiative of the department. Even though I may not be here, there are other Members of this House, Members of the Cabinet and the Premier who will ensure that any incoming Cabinet Member will take up the initiatives and the staff that is within the department will make sure that is completed. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Question 62-13(6): Economic Development Strategy

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions relate to the discussions we had last week regarding the economic strategy and my questions will be for Mr. Todd, who is in charge of the Financial Management Board. My first question is, prior to advertising of the requests for proposal did any of the government officials or Ministers have an estimate of cost available or prepared for an economic strategy or the economic strategy we are making reference to or part of that strategy?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The honourable Minister responsible for FMB, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 62-13(6): Economic Development Strategy

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I addressed that question in a response to either Mr. Ootes' or Mrs. Groenewegen's questions earlier where I indicated that the Executive had budgeted somewhere in the region of \$400,000 for this work I believe. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 62-13(6): Economic Development Strategy

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is not the question I asked. I would appreciate if I could get all of my questions. I will just repeat my question because it may have been difficult to grasp. What I asked was, if any government officials or departments or Ministers have an estimate of costs available or had prepared for an economic strategy or this economic strategy or parts thereof. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. That was your first supplementary question. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 62-13(6): Economic Development Strategy

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am trying to answer his question as distinctly as I can. I simply do not understand it so I will try again and maybe my colleague could be a little more specific. What I indicated in my response to Mrs. Groenewegen on September 17th was that the dollar value of the proposal with respect to the cost associated with the prime contractor was \$264,883 and that including the sub-consultants thereafter it was a total of \$389,250. It was anticipated that the cost of developing these strategies could be as high as \$500,000 and this not only included costs of the RFP but costs associated with releasing the consultants' report, public discussion and public input as well as some of the work we have to do in Ottawa. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 62-13(6): Economic Development Strategy

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have several other questions. I am going to go on to them. I am just not satisfied with the answer because it did not really answer my question. However, let me carry on with my next

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questions because obviously my supplementaries are being used. In the unedited Hansard of Thursday, September 17th, Mr. Todd stated in part that this economic strategy is to support the initiative of my honourable colleague, Mr. Antoine, in his desire to build roads to resources. Now \$2 million was identified earlier this year to do a transportation strategy and study. This is separate from the economic strategy we are talking about. What aspect is Mr. Bailey looking into regarding the transportation needs that are not being covered in the government's \$2 million transportation strategy? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. I would like to remind all Members and Ministers to be concise when asking and responding to questions. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 62-13(6): Economic Development Strategy

HON. JOHN TODD:

I do not know if the Member was in the House or not but I thought I had indicated but I will try again. Now there is two or three parts to this overall economic strategy. It is a strategy being put together to convince Ottawa to have a new fiscal relationship with the Western Territory to enable us; one, to get into a new tax window as it relates to non-renewable resources; two, to build a public infrastructure to support the non-renewable resources; and three, to give the kind of economic contribution to the private sector and to others to go about doing this work. Mr. Bailey has no involvement with the transportation strategy. Mr. Bailey is working on the component and the details necessary to argue the case for a new fiscal relationship with the federal government. He is re-examining some of the programs we currently are

doing to see if they are effective and can they be changed accordingly. In the meantime, Mr. Antoine and his department, are working on an overall implementation plan for four critical roads which are a critical part of the overall strategy that we are trying to develop to get into the tax window, to develop a non-renewable resource industry, to build roads to resources and to ensure that we become less dependent on the federal government and we can create an economic activity that will benefit all northerners. The only relationship between Mr. Bailey and Mr. Antoine is in the overall picture that I am coordinating. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 62-13(6): Economic Development Strategy

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the requirements of the strategy should be to develop in partnership with and be supported by communities, industry, aboriginal organizations and other governments. The strategy should be developed in partnership with organizations and so forth. Have any public meetings been held with the various organizations in the territories other than Mr. Todd, by the consultants with organizations. In other words, has public consultation taken place?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

Further Return To Question 62-13(6): Economic Development Strategy

HON. JOHN TODD:

There has been significant public consultation on the transportation side of things done by Mr. Antoine. I have had recent meetings with some of the aboriginal leadership about two weeks ago in terms of the overall direction that we are going. I just met with the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce which was a full-house on Friday, explaining where we are heading with this issue. We have recently sent invitations and have been asked to speak to the Alternatives North group, Ecology North, the NWT Chamber of Mines, the NWT Chamber of Commerce, et cetera. There are consultations by myself, who is charged with a political responsibility to move forward on this. We will

be undertaking many of these consultations as we get a little closer to a draft in which people can respond to.

In the meantime, in the early stages of development of this, I did ask a number of well-respected leaders right across the territories if they would meet with me on an informal basis to ensure that I was on the right track. I am pleased to say I did have a meeting with Ms. Cournoyea, who heads up the Inuvialuit Development Corporation, Mr. Willard Hagen, who is involved with the Gwich'in, Mr. Mike Vaydik, from the Chamber of mines, Mr. Gordy Stewart from the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Danny Gaudet who is involved in the Deline area and Mr. Darryl Beaulieu and Mr. Alan Vaughan two weeks ago in an effort to seek the litmus test to see if we were heading in the right direction.

It certainly is our intention, once we put pen to paper and have a draft as to where we should head, that we would have further discussions on this important initiative and move forward in an orderly way in our discussions with Mr. Martin and Ms. Stewart in the coming months. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Honourable Member for Hay River, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 63-13(6): Economic Strategy Process

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are also for the Minister of Finance with respect to the economic strategy. Mr. Speaker, so that the Minister does not waste time, I want to say at the outset that I am convinced that we need an economic strategy. I am pleased that we are obtaining an economic strategy, however, my questions relate to the process by which we obtain that economic strategy, not the strategy itself. I would also like to thank the Minister for his prompt response to the questions that were asked on Thursday and now I have some questions about those answers.

First of all, in a return to an oral question, the Finance Minister says that a decision was made to fund the project internally if possible and if not, return to the House with supplementary estimates. What I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, is this a standard practice and was this strategy not anticipated far

enough in advance that it could have been identified in a budget? Was it an after-thought? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. I hear a couple of questions. Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 63-13(6): Economic Strategy Process

HON. JOHN TODD:

I appreciate my honourable colleague's comments and in particular kind comments with my hopefully quick response to try and answer important aspects of this economic strategy. It certainly is our intention to try to fund this thing internally. It came about primarily, as I said before, because it became clear... I want to stay back a little bit. In my earlier discussions with my Cabinet colleagues and Mr. Martin in particular, he indicated to me 18 months ago that one, we have to balance the budget and two, we need to get two new formulas, east and west. Of course, I was pushing very aggressively at that time the need to try and get into the tax window to generate more revenues for the territories as a whole and make us less dependent. I recognized in the early stages when we were negotiating the two new formulas that we were asking for more money.

In these times, in the late 90's, it is a difficult thing to do, when everybody else is working on less money and deficit strategies. The timing of the issue really comes together with respect to the fact we balanced our budget, that we have two new formulas, we were close to an agreement on two new formulas, and we had an agreement in principle several months back on two new formulas, which then gave us the opportunity to move forward on the most important initiative and that was to get into the tax window. When we start to examine the tax window, it came abundantly clear that a whole variety of other things had to come in behind it. The tax window primarily relates to the non-renewable resource industry.

Therefore, to get the non-renewable resource industry moving more aggressively, there was a need to strategically place some money in a variety of areas to bring about if you want, a coordinated effort and a coordinated approach to how this government was going to move forward in finding a new fiscal relationship with the federal government. This was not something that came out of the blue. This came about because of discussions that were underway with Mr.

Martin and because we had resolved both of the issues, balancing the budget and the two new formulas. It then became evident that if we are going to, certainly for myself, if I am going to leave office as I am in March 31, 1999, we wanted to make sure that we put together a blueprint for future governments that they may wish to enact upon, which would provide them with more dollars and more revenues and make them less dependent on the federal transfer payments. I hope that answers the question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 63-13(6): Economic Strategy Process

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we are getting a clear understanding of the purpose of the strategy. Again, getting more money from Ottawa to invest in the north is a good idea. However, I am concerned with the cost of the economic strategy and how we went about determining the cost of that. If this economic strategy expenditure was not a line item in a budget, then is there any documentation that the Minister could share with us, indicating the components of the ballpark budget of \$500,000 for this strategy and the associated costs with consultation and public relations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 63-13(6): Economic Strategy Process

HON. JOHN TODD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think that is an important question and I will consult with my officials and see if there was a breakdown of the anticipated costs that we had prior to the tender call in respect to the \$500,000 that was if you want, allocated to this proposal. I will provide that to my honourable colleague. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas, Member for High Arctic.

Question 64-13(6): Timeframe for Filling Social Worker Vacancies

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Friday I had a Member's statement on social workers in the communities that I represent. Mr. Speaker, I know there are government programs that are available to fill these programs. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng, how long does the government wait to fill these positions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister for Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 64-13(6): Timeframe for Filling Social Worker Vacancies

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, they advertise as soon as possible if there are vacancies that they are aware of, or vacancies that they know are going to take place as a result of an individual leaving a position and it is a matter of going through that process that sometimes is a timely one, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 64-13(6): Timeframe for Filling Social Worker Vacancies

MR. BARNABAS:

Mr. Speaker, it has been several months delay for the community of Arctic Bay and the community of Resolute that have to share a social worker with Grise Fiord. Why is this happening? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 64-13(6): Timeframe for Filling Social Worker Vacancies

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have not been able to contact the Baffin Regional Health and Social Services Board yet in responding fairly to the

Member's concerns that he had raised last week, but I can envision that the reason why it is probably because they have not been able to find an individual for each of the positions and one social worker may be covering off several communities in order to ensure that some form of service is being provided. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. I have the honourable Mr. Erasmus.

Question 65-13(6): Pay Equity Advertisements

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, a constituent of mine approached me and was fairly indignant that the government had been placing ads in the paper and using government money to provide information through the newspapers on the pay equity and collective bargaining issue. I would like to ask the Minister why the ads were placed in the paper?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister for FMB, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 65-13(6): Pay Equity Advertisements

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There has been a great deal of debate over this whole issue about the government placing ads and union placing counter-ads, et cetera. It certainly was the intention on my part earlier on and still is today, to provide as much accurate, timely disciplined information on the issue that was surrounding either pay equity or the collective agreement. Certainly, that was the only intention. It was then, it is now. If we were required to do it in the future, it will be the same. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 65-13(6): Pay Equity Advertisements

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government had made a final offer and later on it offered to go back to the table and to make revisions to that original final offer. I do not think that this was placed in the ads. Could the Minister indicate what type of revisions he offered to make?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 65-13(6): Pay Equity Advertisements

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. We, first of all, you can only offer up changes to the collective agreement once you get back to the table. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, bad-faith bargaining complaint et cetera, and the fact that we have applied to the justice system for a mediator has delayed the issue. I would have preferred we did not have to take this route, but unfortunately, we have had to. The reality is, we are prepared now, as we were two weeks ago to place on the table, retroactivity for all members in terms of those who have now gone in relationship to pay equity. We were prepared to and are prepared to place on the table simple interest that was not there before. I have instructed the negotiators to sit down with the union and discuss other aspects of the collective bargaining that perhaps will get them to agree to bring forward to the membership for vote on.

The other important aspect that we have indicated is everybody was saying an independent chairperson take a look at the Hay Plan evaluations. We are prepared to do that, we have offered that up as well. I am still optimistic that at the end of the day, the offer that we present to our members on the collective agreement and as well as the pay equity, is a good one and quite frankly I think our membership should take it because you never know what is going to happen in the future. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 65-13(6): Pay Equity Advertisements

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier in the year we had received letters from the union urging us to put pressure on the government to get back to the table and, as well, to take the equal pay issue off the table. Did the government also offer to take the equal pay issue off the table if they could not resolve this issue? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 65-13(6): Pay Equity Advertisements

HON. JOHN TODD:

Well, I do not want to preempt the negotiators, but my understanding of it is that we would be prepared to do that if that was a last resort effort. I want to say today, I want to say this clearly because history will prove that I am correct on this issue. The offer that we have got on pay equity, both in retroactivity and ongoing costs, they will not get a better one if my analysis of the tribunal arguments are correct. I say today, in all seriousness, they should take it to the membership, let the membership vote on this important issue and move on.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

HON. JOHN TODD:

History will prove us correct on this issue, Mr. Speaker, you mark my words.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Final

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supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 65-13(6): Pay Equity Advertisements

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister indicate why the government wants to try to settle the equal pay issue first and then if it cannot be resolved, to withdraw it? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 65-13(6): Pay Equity Advertisements

HON. JOHN TODD:

You know, my desire was, in the early days of this discussion and is today, to put more money in the hands of our employees. I will repeat that, put more money in the hands of our employees. There is not one single down side to this issue. Everybody benefits, both on the front end and on the back end, whether it is in retroactivity or in ongoing costs. There is \$6 million worth of money on the table, in terms of the collective agreement, plus \$9 million if we agree to the pay equity on ongoing costs, plus \$25 million plus in terms of retroactivity. This is a good deal. I say again to you, this is a good deal. Let the membership vote on the issue. It is incomprehensible to me today, as it was yesterday and the day before, as to why the UNW simply will not allow the membership to vote on this issue.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Roland.

Question 66-13(6): Post Division Public Utilities Board

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question will be directed to the Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board. People are aware that the discussions around division regarding the Power Corporation and WCB, but little has been said to date regarding the Public Utilities Board. Can the Minister responsible for that, Mr. Todd, inform the House as to what is happening with the Public Utilities Board? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 66-13(6): Post Division Public Utilities Board

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, as my honourable colleague knows, being Chairperson of the Western Coalition, we still have not come to a consensus or

agreement on the NWTPC and I would suggest that is really an important factor on how the Public Utilities Board will unfold. Assuming, just for argument's sake, hypothetically, if I may say that, that there is a transition plan put in place for two new Power Corporations, hypothetically, then the Public Utilities Board will have to respond accordingly. I am a bit hesitant to put the Public Utilities Board into a whole bunch of work until we see how the negotiations will unfold in respect to the NWTPC because I think everybody is aware that the Public Utilities Board really has a mandate to protect the public interest as it relates to power rates, et cetera. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 66-13(6): Post Division Public Utilities Board

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister is saying there has been no work regarding the Public Utilities Board until a decision has been finalized on the Power Corporation. Is that a fact?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 66-13(6): Post Division Public Utilities Board

HON. JOHN TODD:

No, I am very much aware that the Public Utilities Board will have to respond to the NWTPC discussions that are underway as it unfolds. We are very cognizant and very much in the loop, if you want, what my colleague, Mr. Dent, and others who are in relationship to the developments that are being undertaken with the Power Corporation. We will be ready to respond quickly, effectively with the Public Utilities Board when a decision is made on what steps are going to be taken in relationship to the Power Corporation. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a motion to extend question period to have more time to ask my question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

I am informed you can ask for unanimous consent to extend the question period.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to extend question period.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Nay.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

There is a nay. The request to extend question period is denied. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, return to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Erasmus.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Legislative Assembly that the Standing Committee on Government Operations has reviewed Bill 5, Regulatory Reform Measures Act, and wishes to report that Bill 5 is now

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ready for committee of the whole as amended and reprinted. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Report of committees on review of bills. Are there any further reports? None? Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to Item 3, Members' statements.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to Item 3, Members' statements. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Erasmus, you have unanimous consent. Item 3, Members' statements.

REVERT TO ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 56-13(6): Pay Equity/Collective Bargaining Dispute

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the pay equity and bargaining issue. Mr. Speaker, last spring the union sent MLAs letters urging us to pressure the GNWT to take the pay equity issue off the table and also get back to the negotiating table. Following the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruling, which ruled in favour of the national union, on July 30th I sent a letter to the Minister of Finance. I asked him to go half ways to get back to the table. Since then, other Members have also asked this to happen and since then the government has offered to go back to the table. They have also offered to revisit, to negotiate, to make revisions on simple interest on the equal pay payments that are outstanding. They have also offered to revisit changes in point ratings resulting from a formal employee job evaluation review process and to pay former employees at the same rates as the current ones would be repaid. Finally, they also offered to take the settlement of the equal pay complaint off the table, if that was the only outstanding issue.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the government offer was a good offer. They offered to take the pay equity off the table if it was the only outstanding issue after negotiations. Why not try to fix a system that is bad first and then if you cannot agree take it off the table. As I said, I believe the offer was a good one. The GNWT to me, Mr. Speaker, has come half ways. I believe it is now time for the union to come half ways and to get back to the table. Thank you.

--Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15,

notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. We have Bill 1, Family Law Reform - Statutes Amendment Act, Bill 2, Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Act, with Madam Groenewegen in the Chair.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

I call the committee of the whole to order. What is the wish of the committee, Mr. Barnabas?

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The committee wishes to consider Bill 1, Family Law Reform - Statutes Amendment Act and Bill 2, Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Act. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

We will resume with those items after a short break. Thank you.

--Break

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

I would like to call the committee of the whole back to order. We are dealing with Bill 1, Family Law Reform Statutes Amendment Act. I would like to call on Minister Arlooktoo to introduce the bill. Thank you. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The final bill of the Family Law Reform package is before you today. It is designed to work with the four acts that have already been passed by the Legislative Assembly. They are: The Children's Law Act; The Family Law Act; The Child and Family Services Act; and The Adoption Act. Many of the sections of this bill will make minor changes to the other acts to bring them in line with the

wording of the new Family Law Statutes. For example, wording that deals with child custody and access has been changed in the new acts, so wording changes are required to other legislation. In addition, many sections of the bill replace names of the old Family Law Statutes with the names of the new act.

This bill makes a number of changes to the Child and Family Services Act. Since the time it was passed by the Legislative Assembly, the Department of Health and Social Services has been working on regulations. As work on the regulations progressed, the need to fine-tune some parts of the act has been identified in order to achieve the results that were intended for the bill and discuss with the standing committee. A number of adjustments are included in this bill. They are: Clarifying processes and definitions; Ensuring that the establishment and operation of Plan of Care Committees works as intended; and Ensuring that movement and treatment of a child in the legislation matches the practice. None of these proposed changes will affect the intended policy set out in the Child and Family Services Act.

This bill also amends a number of acts that include common law spouses, consistent with the definition of "spouse" in the Family Law Act.

Finally, the bill brings the Interstate Succession Act into line

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with the new Legislation.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Social Programs for their careful review of the bill. The committee suggested an amendment to clarify a provision of Bill 1. I understand that a motion will be made in that regard later today.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill. I look forward to hearing any comments you may have.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Would the representative from the Standing Committee on Social Programs like to bring forward the committee's review of the bill?
Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The Standing Committee on Social Programs conducted a Public

Review of Bill 1, Family Law Reform Statutes Amendment Act, on Friday, August 28th, with the Honourable Goo Arlooktoo providing opening comments and answering committee Members questions.

The purpose of Bill 1, Family Law Reform Statutes Amendment Act, is to bring 31 other pieces of legislation into line with the definitions and intent of the Family Law Reform Acts already passed by this Legislature and to deal with timing issues should one of the Family Law Reform Acts come into force before another. The Family Law Reform Acts are: The Children's Law Act, the Family Act, the Child and Family Services Act, and the Adoption Act.

A majority of the amendments in this bill deal with making definitions, such as "spouse" and "co-habit" consistent throughout NWT legislation and are of a housekeeping nature. Bill 1, amends the Vital Statistics Act, to allow adopted children and the natural parents of adopted children to receive birth registration and other documents when the child turns 19 years old. Several acts are changed to reflect changes in job titles or acts references as a result of the Family Law Reforms Acts. Again, these are of a housekeeping nature.

The Child and Family Services Act, which was one of the Family Law Reform Acts, was amended to ensure that the legislation matches the actual practices of the department and to provide clarity of the responsibilities of the Plan of Care Committees for the wards of the department. In the opinion of the committee, the changes proposed by the amendments do not change the intent of the Child and Family Services Act.

During our review, the committee also passed four motions to amend Bill 1. Two of the amendments dealt with timing issues and cover contingencies should one or more of the Family Law Bills come into force before the others. The other two motions clear up minor drafting errors in the bill.

Madam Chairperson, we will also be moving a motion at the appropriate time to clarify the definition of "immediate family" by adding the definition of "spouse" as contained in section 1 of the Family Law Act and the Labour Standards Act.

This concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Social Programs. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. If the committee is agreeable, at this time we would like to ask the Minister if he would like to bring in any witnesses?

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

I would, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

The committee is agreed. Would you please ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to invite the witnesses to come in. Mr. Arlooktoo, if you would like to introduce your witnesses for the record, please.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have with me, Mr. Doug Ritchie, manager of policy and legislation division with the Department of Health and Social Services. Diane Buckland, our legislative counsel, with the legislation division in the Department of Justice and Ms. Janis Cooper, also legal counsel with the legal division within the Department of Justice.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Are there any general comments on the bill? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, in regard to the Family Law Act and the adoption side of it, I would like to know what has been done in consultation with aboriginal organizations, where a lot of aboriginal claims groups have basically a register of all the eligible members, which includes children. In order to update that registry there has to be a cooperation between this government through this act and also through the enrolment process that applies under land claim agreements.

I would like to ask the Minister, exactly what has he done to ensure that the claims agreements which have an enrolment criteria, which includes children who may be adopted or have been adopted to fall within the criteria of that land claim organization and be consulted with regard as to what happens with those children, which really falls within the arm of the aboriginal organization that they are associated with? What has he done to ensure that the consultation process with those groups and the land claims agreements are reflected in this legislation?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, as I stated earlier, in my opening comments, many of the amendments are technical and as the response of the standing committee said they are housekeeping in nature and do not discuss or pertain to aboriginal adoption ways, et cetera. I think the discussion is important, but it is not within the scope of these amendments. The only thing I would add to that is, we have been very careful during this exercise and during the exercise that Mr. Ng will discuss later about ensuring whatever changes we make

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do not affect whatever customs and rules there are that pertain to aboriginal adoptions.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, while I feel that, as one Member of this legislature, I think it is imperative that you work with aboriginal organizations with the different court cases that have been dealt with in Canada especially, when you deal with adopted aboriginal people. When you deal with a cultural background where basically families and relatives, which aboriginal groups are sort of known to keep families as a collective where you are related, regardless of who your cousin is. Basically, if you come from one culture or the other, and because of what we see happening with children being adopted, especially with children in the north, I do feel that it is a sensitive issue when you talk with aboriginal children being taken away from aboriginal families and put in non-aboriginal families. I think it is imperative that you do take the time and effort to ensure that the aboriginal groups are involved in all aspects of the people they represent, including children.

There has to be more initiatives made by this government to ensure that Land Claim Agreements and aboriginal organizations, regardless if it is AFN, or Gwich'in Tribal Council or Inuvialuit or whomever, that those people who are listed and enrolled under those different organizations are informed and whomever the individual may be is aware of their

aboriginal heritage and exactly what rights they have under different agreements. We talk about self-government, aboriginal rights to take care of their own problems, I think basically, from the comments that the Minister stated, that he has avoided the question and is saying that we do not think that it is really important. I feel that it is important and that it is being dealt with through this bill, before this bill goes anywhere.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Do you have any comments in response to that, Mr. Arlooktoo?

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, I would respectfully ask that perhaps the Chair make a decision on whether or not this is the type of discussion we want to embark on during this exercise. In saying that, I want to ensure that the Member knows that I believe and I know the government believes those are very important issues and many of them were discussed when we passed the Adoption Act. I know there are ongoing communications between aboriginal groups and the government about these types of issues. Before I make further comments, I would ask the Chair to tell me whether or not this is where we should be going or whether we should stay within the bill?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. I would suggest that the narrow answer to that question is no. The broader issues being raised by Mr. Krutko today are not relevant to the recommended changes that are being proposed to the legislation because as indicated in the opening remarks, the changes referred to, are those of a technical nature which have to do with language and wording as opposed to, perhaps, more the government's involvement in the broader issues that you have raised. Mr. Arlooktoo, I agree, refers to the Adoption Act and these comments are also more specific to a different act than the one brought up here. Having said that, I think your comments are taken under advisement by the Minister at this time. Would the committee agree? Okay. Thank you, that is my understanding of that. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Madam Chair, could I get a legal interpretation exactly what you said so that it sort of falls in line with where

the Minister is coming from? We have legal counsel here, I believe maybe they can enlighten me on the legal side of adoption and how it affects aboriginal rights?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. What I said made perfect sense to me. I am sorry if it did not make sense to you. In summary, Mr. Krutko, the discussion and comments you have raised are not within the scope of the recommendations that are being recommended to the alterations to the act at this time. General comments on Bill 1, Family Law Reform Statutes Amendment Act. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In the act you make reference to the Aboriginal Custom Adoption Act in the aboriginal component of it. In aboriginal custom adoption, how does that work in relation to aboriginal organizations or band councils who may have a registry where individual families where aboriginal people may be represented by a group or groups such as tribal councils, band councils or Metis locals. Where is that listed in this legislation to ensure that when you talk about aboriginal, what agency are you talking about? Are you talking about aboriginal context of the Indian Act? You are talking about a band list, where someone is represented as an aboriginal person because they have a certain number. What is meant by that?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Again, I am sorry, I will have to say that the general discussion and the points that you are raising are outside of what is being considered in this bill. Under paragraph 1, what you are referring to is actually just an addition that information be registered and it does not pertain to the government's overall position on custom adoption. I am sorry, but I have to rule that question is outside of the scope of this bill. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the Minister can identify those sections of the act which refer to aboriginal portions of the act which basically may have some effect on aboriginal organizations or aboriginal people so that I can ask my questions at the appropriate time. Can the Minister identify those sections as he goes through it?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. That is the only reference, I believe, to the Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act and if there are other matters that come up, I think they will be identified easily by you in the clause by clause consideration of the bill. I believe

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at this time, that is the only amendment which refers to the aboriginal custom adoption. I hope that answers your question. General comments? There are no further general comments. Is it agreed that we will carry on with the clause by clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Agreed. Thank you. Bill 1, Family Law Reform Statutes Amendment Act, Clause 1. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Can the Minister tell me in Clause 1, what is meant by aboriginal custom adoption?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, you were quite correct that the only reason that the Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act is mentioned in there has to do with the fact that this amendment will say that a certificate will have to be sent to a government agency once the custom adoption is completed and does not affect the Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act in any way.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In this section, has anyone looked at the implications this may have in self-government negotiations that are presently under way in adoptions with land claim organizations?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. There was no effort or mandate to see if there was any effect on self-government negotiations or anything like that. This is a minor amendment and the main philosophy behind us, or we the government when we deal with aboriginal custom adoption is that we should not interfere with the practices or make changes without consultation. There is no effort here to make any changes to the Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Clause 1. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 2. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 3. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 4. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. On page 7 of the bill. Clause 5. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Continuing on page 7. Clause 6.
Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you. Slow down a bit so we can track the pages. Some of us do not sit on the social committee, so we do not have the advantage of having a chance to go through this bill. If you can just slow down with the pages we would have an opportunity to look at it before you move on.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I will read the act that pertains to each clause as we go through. Maybe that will help identify the clause and also slow down the process somewhat. Under Children's Law Act, page 7. Clause 6. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Page 8, Curfew Act. Clause 7. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Page 9, Dependent's Relief Act. Clause 8. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Education Act, Clause 9. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Page 12, Exemptions Act. Clause 10.
Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Page 12, Family Law Act. Clause 11.
Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Fatal Accidents Act. Clause 12. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Homeowner's Property Tax Rebate Act. Clause 13.
Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Human Tissue Act. Clause 14. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Page 14, Insurance Act. Clause 15. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Interstate Succession Act. Clause 16. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Moving on to page 16, Judicature Act. Clause 17. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Labour Standards Act. Clause 18. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I have been informed that the standing committee has a motion on this specific clause. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

Committee Motion 2-13(6): Motion to Amend Clause 18 of Bill 1: Family Law Reform Statutes Amendment Act

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Bill 1 be amended by deleting Clause 18 and by substituting the following:

18. Section 51 of the Labour Standards Act is amended by

(a)renumbering it as section 51(1); and

(b)adding the following after subsection 1:

(2)In subsection (1), "spouse" has the meaning assigned to it by section 1 of the Family Law Act.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, 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. Clause 18 as amended. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Under the Liquor Act. Clause 19. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Moving on to page 17, under the Maintenance Orders Enforcement Act. Clause 20. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Agreed. Thank you. Page 18, Maintenance Orders Facilities for Enforcement Act. Clause 21. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Under the Marriage Act. Clause 22. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. On page 19, Mechanics Lien Act. Clause 23. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Under Property Assessment and Taxation Act. Clause 24. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Public Trustee Act. Clause 25. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Agreed. Thank you. Residential Tenancies Act. Clause 26. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Student Financial Assistance Act. Clause 27. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Trustee Act. Clause 28. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Vital Statistics Act. Clause 29. I believe there was a motion. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Committee Motion 3-13(6): Motion to Amend Clause 29 of Bill 1: Family Law Reform Statutes Amendment Act

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I move that clause 29 of Bill 1 be amended by deleting sub-clause 7 and substituting the following:

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(7) Paragraph 15(b) is amended by striking out "section 100 of the Child Welfare Act" and by substituting "section 37 of the Adoption Act".

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Vital Statistics Act. Clause 29, as amended. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. On page 22, Workers' Compensation Act. Clause 30. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Page 23, Young Offenders Act. Clause 31. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Also on page 23, Coming Into Force. Clause 32. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. That concludes the clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 1. Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 1, as amended, is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Bill 1 as amended is now ready for third reading. I would like to thank Minister Arlooktoo and

his witnesses. Thank you. We are now considering Bill 2, Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Act. At this time, if the committee agrees, I will ask Minister Ng to introduce the bill.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It is my pleasure to introduce Bill 2, Intercountry Adoption Act. This act implements the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. The convention made several recommendations to create a safety net for children affected by intercountry adoptions and to encourage cooperation between countries to ensure safeguards are respected.

This act is part of a Canada-wide and international effort to protect children from illegal adoptions such as adoptions for the purposes of organ retrieval, child pornography and child prostitution.

In order for Canada to adopt the Hague Convention, every province and territory must enact legislation that implements the convention. Most other jurisdictions already have amended or enacted legislation regarding the convention.

In addition to reviewing legislation from other jurisdictions, the Department of Health and Social Services has consulted with other departments and aboriginal organizations. Particular attention was given to making sure that the Intercountry Adoption Act will not impact aboriginal custom adoption practices. According to a declaration filed by the Canadian government, such adoptions are not within the scope of, or affected by this legislation.

On August 28th, the bill went to standing committee and received clause-by-clause approval. At that time, the standing committee recommended that the federal declaration about aboriginal custom adoption be mirrored in our Intercountry Adoption Act. The Department of Health and Social Services supports that recommendation and a motion was prepared and shared with the standing committee. Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would be pleased to answer any questions Members may have. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The Standing Committees on Social Programs conducted a public review of Bill 2, Intercountry Adoption Act, on Friday, August 28th with the Honourable Goo Arlooktoo appearing on behalf of the Honourable Kelvin Ng to provide opening comments and answer Members' questions.

The purpose of Bill 2, Intercountry Adoption Act, is to allow for the implementation of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. The Hague Convention is a framework for cooperation between countries with children in need of adoption and receiving countries.

The Intercountry Adoption Act will implement all of the provisions outlined in the Hague Convention. It establishes safeguards to ensure that intercountry adoptions are in the best interest of the child. It establishes a system of cooperation among countries to prevent the abduction, sale or traffic of children and provides a process for countries to recognize adoptions made according to the convention.

The federal government ratified the convention in December 1996. Because adoption is a provincial/territorial responsibility it is necessary for each of the respective Legislatures to pass relevant legislation.

In addition, the federal government registered an exemption with the convention that states that the Government of Canada understands that this convention does not apply to aboriginal custom adoption.

The standing committee has no problems with this bill. It brings territorial legislation into line with legislation in other Canadian jurisdictions and in all likelihood will have little effect

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on adoptions in the Northwest Territories.

The committee is pleased to note that the Minister took into account the committee's concern that there was no mention in Bill 2 that it does not apply to custom adoption and we will introduce an amendment to clarify this for all northerners.

This concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Social Programs. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. At this time I will ask if the Minister wishes to call any witnesses for the review of this bill?

HON. KELVIN NG:

Yes, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Minister Ng, could you please introduce the witnesses for the record?

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. To my right, Cathy Praamsma, Assistant Deputy Minister of Community Programs and Services. To my left, Shawn Flynn, Legislative Counsel, Department of Justice. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you and welcome. General comments on the bill? If there are no general comments we will proceed to clause-by-clause. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I do not have a general comment, but I would like to ask our legal advisor what the definition of a custom adoption is?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. MacPherson.

LAW CLERK (Ms. MacPherson):

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. A custom adoption is any adoption that occurs in accordance with aboriginal custom. Under the aboriginal custom, the recognition of Aboriginal Custom Adoption Act that this legislature passed about four or five years ago, as I recall, the decision as to whether an adoption is a custom adoption is made at the local level by adoption commissioners that are appointed to consider applications for custom adoption. In every jurisdiction and region, what is considered a custom adoption may vary because aboriginal people have different definitions of what a custom adoption is in their culture and their community. I hope I am not misstating the Aboriginal Custom Adoption Act, but my understanding is that an aboriginal custom adoption is simply any adoption that occurs in accordance with the custom of a particular community

or a particular group of aboriginal people and that may indeed vary from group to group. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Ms. MacPherson. Mr. Krutko, general comments.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would just like to ask a question of the Minister, especially in relation to a question that was raised in the House regarding an individual from Fort McPherson whose children were abducted and taken to the Czech Republic and she was unable to get her children back. I was wondering if there is anything within this bill that could assist her, especially when you talk about Department of External Affairs and other agencies of government. Is there anything there that could possibly help her in trying to find an avenue or get assistance from this government and other governments to try and find an avenue of her being able to get her children back from the former republic?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, we do not know right now if it is possible. There are certain factors that have to be taken into consideration. First of all, of course, the legal adoption of the Hague Convention would have to take place and whether or not the Czech Republic in this circumstance is a signatory I am not sure of.

Also, the matter is that the events that the honourable Member speaks of has happened already before signing any of these declarations and these agreements, so that is another matter that would be taken into consideration. You also have the matter of what circumstances surround the dispute between the constituent the honourable Member speaks of and her former spouse because that, of course, is a family matter. There is some jurisdiction involved in that regard as well on the custody of the children. It is a complex issue that the member brings up but certainly the intent of this legislation to be adopted to support the Canadian government is to minimize any future episodes of children being unwillingly or forcefully taken away out of the country for illegal purposes. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

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

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, is the department looking at similar legislation so that the events that I mentioned, because apparently there was a court order in place from this government in regards to the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories which gave her sole custody yet the individual was able to take the kids out of Canada and did not bring them back. It was the legal authority of this government through the Supreme Court, but yet our hands were tied because once they were out of Canada, there was no authority or legal avenue that she had to be able to access those children. Is the department looking at such legislation to take into account those type of events where we do make orders through the courts where the court makes a decision on who has custody, yet at the end of the day, there are people who are able to get through the hoops by sneaking them out of the country and then our legislation or our court orders do not mean anything? Is the department considering looking at legislation of that effect to put in place alongside of this legislation?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair,

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I would say that no, we are not looking at any legislation in that respect. If an individual is going to break the law and ignore existing laws, no matter what the laws are, that is going to happen anyways. If he or she plans on taking the children out of the country to evade those laws of our country, there is not a lot you can do about that, if they are not going to recognize that and the jurisdiction that they go to obviously does not recognize those same laws, then your avenues of having to deal with those types of circumstances are pretty minimal as this case has obviously proven. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. General comments? Clause-by-clause is being called. We will proceed to clause-by-

clause. Bill 2, Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Act. Definitions, Clause 1. Mr. Miltenberger?

Committee Motion 4-13(6): Motion to Amend Clause 1 of Bill 2: Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Act

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to move that Clause 1, of Bill 2, be amended by adding the following after subclause 2:

(3) For greater certainty, this act does not apply to the adoption of a child in accordance with aboriginal customary law.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The motion is in order. To the motion. Is the motion just being circulated now? We will just give a moment for the Pages to circulate the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Clause 1, as amended?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 2. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 3. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 4. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 5. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. On page 2 now, Clause 6. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 7. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 8. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 9. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 10. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 11. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

On page 3, Clause 12. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. The attached schedule convention on protection of children in cooperation in respect of intercountry adoption. The schedule?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Bill as a whole, as amended. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 2 as amended is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Bill 2, as amended is now ready for third reading. Thank you, Minister Ng and thank you witnesses. That is everything on our agenda for today. I am going to rise and report progress. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

I would like to call the House back to order. Item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 1, Family

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Law Reform Statutes Amendment Act and Bill 2, Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Act and

would like to report progress with three motions being adopted. Bill 1 and Bill 2 are ready for third reading as amended. Mr. Speaker, I move that the committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Seconded by Mr. Dent. The motion is in order. To the motion. 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 is a meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations immediately after adjournment this evening. Meetings for tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of the full Caucus. At 10:00 a.m. of the Special Committee on Western Identity. At 11:00 a.m. of the Ordinary Members Caucus.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, September 22, 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 7, An Act to Amend the Education Act and the Property Assessment and Taxation Act

- Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act

- Bill 9, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1998-99

18. Second Reading of Bills

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

20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 1, Family Law Reform Statutes Amendment Act

- Bill 2, Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Act

22. Orders of the Day

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

--ADJOURNMENT