



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

HON. SAMUEL GARGAN:

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Good Morning. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 83-13(6): Meet the North - Build a Vision Conference

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to report on the Meet the North - Build a Vision Conference, which was held in Edmonton earlier this week. This conference was more than 150 Northwest Territories delegates actively participating in inviting business and investment in the Northwest Territories. Many MLAs attended, in addition to the Acting Premier Mr. Arlooktoo, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Dent, Mr. Todd, Mr. Ng and myself.

The conference brought together representatives of business, government, communities and Aboriginal organizations in order to:

- help northerners build mutually beneficial relationships and networks;
- educate and inform participants on key northern issues;
- identify northern opportunities and explore solutions to northern challenges; and
- showcase and promote the north.

The conference featured workshops focusing on five major themes. The economic challenge; the tourism opportunity; the challenge of affordable access; our future workforce; and the implications of our changing political landscape. Workshops were lead by leaders from northern business, government and aboriginal organizations.

My Cabinet colleagues and I challenged conference participants to develop concrete action plans. In total, 33 recommendations were presented at the conclusion of the conference, along with commitments for follow-up and action.

Highlights include the following recommendations from the economic challenge workshop:

- Alberta should consider the creation of a special investment fund for northern ventures;
- Southern investors should be encouraged to explore partnerships with aboriginal corporations; and,
- Issues surrounding devolution of natural resources should be further investigated.

In the area of tourism opportunities:

- That a common strategy be developed to market the north as a tourism destination; and
- That a "brand" should be developed to capture the human and cultural dimensions of the north.

In the area of affordable access:

- Strategies should be developed for reducing air travel costs to and from the north; and
- New partnerships should be explored for road and infrastructure construction.

And, finally in the area of our future workforce:

- That local industry should become more involved in training; and
 - That corporations working in the north should be encouraged to develop workforce systems which accommodate cultural needs and diversity.
- Perhaps most importantly, the theme of the changing political landscape provided an opportunity to deliver some clear and straightforward messages to the southern business community. Mr. Arlooktoo's speech on this topic was well received.

Mr. Speaker, the north is open for business. The new north wants to develop its oil and gas, mining and forestry resources but only when development maximizes benefits to northerners by:

- providing sustainable jobs for northerners;
- providing business opportunities for northerners;

- leads to training opportunities for northerners;
- offers partnership opportunities for northerners; and,
- does not compromise our northern environment.

This is the same message that we as a government have been sending to industry and developers for some time now.

The recommendations developed during this conference represent the collective efforts of northerners and southerners working together to identify actions to be taken to advance northern economic development on mutually beneficial terms. Many of the recommendations touch upon issues where our government has already initiated action. For example, in the

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affordable access area, the Department of Transportation is already developing a strategy which will address road access to the mineral rich deposits in the Slave Province.

In the area of tourism opportunity, I am pleased to advise that our officials and representatives of the NWT tourism industry are already working with their counterparts in both Nunavut and Yukon to develop a common strategy.

Mr. Speaker, it is the intention of conference organizers, including the government of the NWT, to further review these recommendations and to investigate and implement appropriate action in each area. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Minister's Statement 84-13(6): Minimum Down Payment Assistance Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to inform this House about a new home ownership pilot program that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation launched December 1st. The corporation believes that this new program will assist this government with one of its most important objectives; that is, stimulating and developing the economy. Mr. Speaker, economic growth in the Northwest Territories requires one thing above all

others. It requires people and people need somewhere to live. Many people are moving between communities for work and wish to put down roots. Every day, workers from across Canada fly into the NWT to work. At the end of their shift they fly out again to their homes in the south.

To qualify for the program a family must not already own a home in the community where they are buying a home, must have financing for the remainder of the purchase price of the home and the purchase must be finalized by March 31, 1999. This program applies in all communities of the Northwest Territories. MDAPP is a pilot program until the end of this fiscal year. After that, it will be assessed to determine if it should be renewed.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT has over 250 private homes that sit empty. Let us give people the chance to buy these homes. With so many homes sitting empty, our construction industry is idle in many places. The construction of new homes which creates employment for northern workers and causes northern businesses to grow cannot occur until these empty homes have been filled.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that homeowners tend to have a greater interest in the prosperity of their community. The government believes MDAPP will create more homeowners and strengthen all our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Ms. Thompson.

Minister's Statement 85-13(6): School of Community Government

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to inform Members about the recent development of the School of Community Government. This is a collaborative effort between MACA, Aurora College, a number of GNWT departments and non-government organizations.

Mr. Speaker, this government understands the many challenges communities are faced with. We have recognized the need to improve health and wellness of individuals, families and communities; reduce dependency on government; and strengthen and develop community governments. In this way,

communities can become more sustainable and self-reliant.

The School of Community Government has been designed with these goals in mind. More specifically, the purpose of the School of Community Government is to improve the capacity of community governments and non-government organizations. In the past, training programs have been available from many different sources. There have been growing concerns that the lack of coordination affects the suitability and availability of training. Mr. Speaker, the School of Community Government will offer a coordinated approach to training opportunities.

MACA is working closely with Aurora College to develop a school which will provide an expanded range of training programs. The School of Community Government will deliver training in broad areas including:

- political development and governance;
- community management and administration;
- works and works management;
- public safety;
- community development; and,
- recreation and lands

Mr. Speaker, to make sure the training needs of community governments can be met, MACA is investing with other training providers such as Aurora College, GNWT departments, Nunavut Arctic College, professional associations and private industries. We expect that a shared approach to this program will allow us to pool our financial, administrative and instructional resources. This will provide increased training opportunities for communities.

Mr. Speaker, the School of Community Government represents

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an exciting opportunity for communities and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Communities will be able to access quality training, tailored to their needs while developing and expanding their capacity and responsibility. I am proud that we are able to contribute to the development of communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Minister's Statement 86-13(6): Justice System Workers

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, working in the justice system is sometimes a thankless task. There are sensitive issues to be balanced such as: victim's and offender's rights, the public right to know versus privacy concerns and finally the perception that the justice system simply does not fit with the people it is supposed to serve. Every day, justice system workers deal with these pressures. I would like to recognize these people by telling you briefly about three experiences I have had in the past couple of months which convince me that justice policies and initiatives, while always in need of constant re-evaluation, are going in the right direction.

Late this summer I dropped by the Iqaluit Courthouse. It happened to be a Friday morning when Justice of the Peace Court was in regular session. I was pleased to notice that courtworker, Enook Petalaussie, was acting as a defence representative. Mr. Petalaussie was born and raised in Cape Dorset. He told me that he regularly conducts first appearances, sentencing hearings, bail hearings and trials in Justice of the Peace Court and also in Territorial Court. I was impressed with his abilities.

I saw lawyer Robert Gorin outside the Courthouse. He was taking a short break before returning to do some more pre-court interviewing. Mr. Gorin is on the legal aid panel of lawyers and I am told that he makes himself available as a resource to courtworkers when he is in Iqaluit.

I was glad to meet Mr. Neil Sharkey, who is the head lawyer at Maliganik Tukisiiniakvik, the legal aid office in Iqaluit. We had a good talk about the lawyer/courtworker mentoring system. This system will be of great assistance to the new court system in Nunavut on April 1st.

I mentioned in the last sitting of this Assembly that the Department of Justice is expanding the bush camp alternative for offenders. I recently visited Charlie Burke's and Gerry Morin's camps. After seeing their camps and hearing their comments, I am convinced more than ever that we are headed in the right direction in this area. These camps are doing effective work. It is my hope that, with help from my

department, they will become even more effective in the future.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to meet all too briefly with justice staff at the Yellowknife Courthouse building. I was impressed with their positive attitude they bring to difficult jobs serving a public that naturally has high expectations.

Mr. Speaker, these are just three examples of how, every day, justice system workers are serving the public. They are deserving of my gratitude and I am pleased to be associated with them. I now ask all Members to join me in thanking these hard-working people who are putting our policies and initiatives into action. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Ms. Thompson.

Minister's Statement 87-13(6): Coaching Development Strategy

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and the Sport North Federation hosted a Coaches and Volunteers Symposium in Yellowknife last weekend.

This symposium was developed for coaches and sports volunteers from communities across the Territories. Approximately 125 Northerners from all regions attended the symposium. Discussions focused on three areas: community coaching, high performance coaching and volunteerism. It is only through the active participation of many coaches and volunteers that more people are trained in this important area. I am happy to inform you that the initial feedback from the participants to the symposium has been very positive.

Mr. Speaker, sport and recreation is more than a pastime. It is a positive and essential contributor to community wellness. For this reason, I am pleased to announce that regional coaching seminars have also been organized for Rankin Inlet on December 4th to 6th; Cambridge Bay on January 15th to 17th; Iqaluit on January 29th to 31st; and Inuvik on February 20th to 22nd. These regional seminars will focus on the delivery of National Coaching Certification Programs for sports chosen by the regional recreation organizations. The training will help to increase the

number of certified coaches available to work with northern athletes.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, many activities are being planned for the winter. These include: regional workshops in sport first aid, the Speak Out Program on Harassment and Sport Development Camps in Fort Resolution, Fort Smith, Hay River, Fort Simpson, Fort Liard, Wha Ti, Rae-Edzo and Fort Providence. This training reflects the department's continued commitment to develop sport volunteers at the community level.

Mr. Speaker, our young people are our future. Their positive development relies on experiencing a good quality of life in their own communities. Sport and recreation contributes in a significant way to the quality of life in the north and coaches are the key to making this work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 208-13(6): Support From Fort Resolution

MR. MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you all know one of the communities I represent in the riding of Tu Nedhe is the community of Fort Resolution. The community of Fort Resolution is the oldest established community in the Northwest Territories. It is over 200 years old. It has a rich culture and it has many very strong family ties. People in Fort Resolution live in a small community on the shore of Great Slave Lake. They have learned from their fathers and forefathers that whenever anybody is in need in the community that they come forward to help. We have seen that many times in our community when we have lost a loved one. We have seen that many times in our community when we have had marriages. The whole community shows up. The community is there to support each other and, once again, they have come through.

I am proud today to say I am the MLA for Tu Nedhe. I do represent the community of Fort Resolution. I have had many elders and other people get up at 5:30 this morning to no knowledge of my own, drive to Hay River, get a on plane to fly here and be here today to hear what I have to say and in support of me. I would

like to thank Dotti Mandeville, Dave McNabb, Ewan Hunter, Jayne Miersch, Wilfred Giroux, Eva Fabien, Rosa and Norma Lafferty, Sharon Lafferty, Henry Mandeville, Arthur Miersch, Toni Lafferty, Jonas Beaulieu, Jennifer Beaulieu, Lloyd Cardinal, Trudy King, Violet Beaulieu and Cara Carriere for making the long journey from Fort Resolution. I appreciate it and with that, mahsi cho. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement 209-13(6): Nats'enelu Craft and Clothing Society

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize an initiative in the Fort Simpson constituency of Nahendeh. Nats'enelu, Mr. Speaker.

Nats'enelu is a Dene word that you and I understand, and Steve. It is a word with the concept of sewing and meeting together to sew. It is founded by a non-profit organization, the Nats'enelu Society in the early 70s. It is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Dene-inspired crafts, clothing and lifestyle items. It was incorporated in October of 1997 with the intent to train and implement the considerable skills that numerous local Dene craft people have.

Mr. Speaker, a Montreal-based designer, D'Arcy Moses, has been providing classroom and practical training to local people in Fort Simpson. There is a wide variety of quality products now available. Research and development over the past year has yielded a number of new ideas which are now in the process of being marketed. This ribbon shirt that I am wearing, Mr. Speaker, is an example of one of the new products that is available in Fort Simpson from the Nats'enelu Society.

Concentration now is based in three areas and it is Deh Cho coats, Dene dolls, Dene lifestyle items such as bush articles used by local hunters. There are seven full-time people in the house-production workers, three part-time marketing and support staff and approximately 25 to 30 homeworkers, where they do piecework in their homes. The three Deh Cho communities should provide bead work, tanned hides, crafts and dolls to Nats'enelu on a piecework basis. All staff are very dedicated to this unique enterprise, Mr. Speaker. They recognize the opportunity that

Nats'enelu presents for the promotion of traditional Dene skills and economic rewards of owning a business.

The year 1999 will be Nats'enelu's most progressive year yet, Mr. Speaker. Plans for expanding the production facilities, training new staff and aggressive national marketing program will make Nats'enelu poised to enter a new era in creating a positive awareness of Canada's Dene culture. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement 210-13(6): Fort Smith Cadet Drill Team

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week the 2748 Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corp of Fort Smith Drill Team made up of Sergeant Bouvier, Private Blythe, Private Grenier, Cadet Beaulieu, Cadet Michaels and Cadet Hogart won a very tough drill competition in their zone against teams from Hay River, Rae-Edzo and the Yellowknife Army and Air Cadets. They will now go on to a regional competition consisting of the best of six zones, stretching from the Yukon to the Baffin Island, which will be held in Cambridge Bay on December 11th to 13th.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish all the competitors attending this very tough competition the best of luck but, of course, I hope that the crack drill team of Fort Smith will bring home the trophy. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Roland.

Member's Statement 211-13(6): Homes Constructed on Wooden Pilings

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this fall in Inuvik, a concern was raised as a result of a home in Inuvik collapsing as a result of the wooden pilings failing underneath it. Mr. Speaker, a large majority of homes in Inuvik, and other buildings, were built with

wooden pilings supporting their structure. I am aware that the Inuvik Housing Authority, alone, has over 100 units that are supported by wooden pilings. I am also aware that Public Works and Services has been looking at the impact that the department faces as a result of wooden pilings that could potentially fail in the near future. As well, I am aware that work has been started on inspections of wooden pilings that support many of the public buildings that are built in Inuvik.

The government is looking into the impacts it faces, but here is

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where my concern lies, Mr. Speaker. Many private homes are also affected by the deterioration of the pilings. Many homes were purchased by employees and residents in Inuvik from this government, as well as the federal government. Mr. Speaker, many of the families that purchased homes access support from the NWT Housing Corporation through their DAP and EDAP programs because many of them could not afford the down payment necessary to qualify for bank loans on their own. Now that they are in their homes, they are able to maintain these homes on their own. Here, Mr. Speaker, comes a twist, the cost of repairing the pilings is costly and unaffordable to many residents in their own homes. To add to that, Mr. Speaker, insurance will not cover the foundation that these homes are built on.

The potential for disaster is extremely serious, Mr. Speaker. I have raised these concerns with the Minister of the Housing Corporation and I look forward to positive results in trying to deal with this potential situation that is in Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement 212-13(6): Proposal For a Yellowknife Mining Museum

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Two weeks ago, about 20 people attended a meeting of an organization known as Spirit YK to review the question of, does Yellowknife need or want a mining museum? The answer among those who attended was a yes. Such a museum is long overdue, especially if one considers

the role mining and exploration have played in the history of the city and of the Northwest Territories. This city really does need a place where visitors, residents and school children can learn about the varied and colourful history of mining in the north. Yellowknife was born from a mining boom and mining continues to be a major part of our existence. This is true not only for Yellowknife, but for the whole of the Northwest Territories.

In a statement I made back in February, 1998, I suggested the Department of Education, Culture and Employment initiate discussions with Spirit of YK members. The idea of a mining museum is good. Everyone, tourists and residents alike, are curious to know and learn more about mining. The popularity of activities during mining week certainly attest to this. Now that diamond mining has started in the Northwest Territories, we have yet another exciting opportunity to show and tell others about our mining activity and history. There are several ideas of where to locate a mining museum. The old mine rescue building is one location. Another idea is to develop a museum out at Giant Mine.

Everyone agrees the museum needs to be interactive. That is what people want. They want to experience, first-hand, underground tunnels and the smell and feel of fresh cut rock. People also agree that, if funding permits, the museum should focus not just on Yellowknife's mining history, but also cover mining ventures in other parts of the Northwest Territories.

Mining is such a huge part of the north's history. It is a shame we do not yet have the interactive type of museum Spirit of YK talks about. It is high time we got started on a mining museum. Already we have 20 interested people willing to spearhead the task and I would urge our government to show its support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 213-13(6): Aircraft Accident in Iqaluit

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and good morning. Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon the Hawker-Siddeley 748 airplane, departing from Iqaluit to Igloolik, was unable, as I understand, to sustain power and ran off the Iqaluit runway. Some minor injuries were reported

but the four crew and three passengers are all safe. Mr. Speaker, emergency services in Iqaluit reacted very quickly to the scene of the incident and by all reports, the professionalism shown was second to none.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank EMO from Iqaluit, the Iqaluit RCMP, the hospital staff, fire and ambulance workers for a job well done. Mr. Speaker, we are now awaiting for investigators to arrive in Iqaluit from the proper investigating authorities and organizations in the south to find out the cause of the crash. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Rabesca.

Member's Statement 214-13(6): Need For Speech Therapy Services

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some time ago my colleague, Mrs. Groenewegen, and myself referenced the need for speech therapists within the remote communities of our territories. Recently in Rae Lakes they opened a daycare centre to help single working mothers with a facility to take their children to during working hours. Now that this facility is opened and people are using it, the community has discovered that many of these young children need speech therapy.

This, of course, is easier to say than actually trying to solve these children's problems. In order for a child to get therapy they must travel to Yellowknife. Once in Yellowknife they must attend therapy for a week at a time. Of course, this is an ongoing thing so every couple of months a parent must drop whatever work they are doing to bring their children into Yellowknife to spend a week in therapy; then go back to the community. To most people this is a very expensive solution to their children's problem and most cannot support this option.

This government must find a better solution. We need therapists out in the smaller communities to address this now, not later in life. It is very important for a child's development that they grow with the ability to talk properly.

I feel Rae Lakes is taking a step to assist in this problem by providing a daycare centre which will help

these children to, hopefully, develop better communications skills by being in a group setting that will allow for them to learn from one another. However, we must go further. This is a huge problem across the

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North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Steen.

Member's Statement 215-13(6): Clarification of Personal Health Situation

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to clarify to my constituents back home exactly what happened as far as my angina attack which I experienced on Thursday, November 19, 1998. For the information of the Members and my constituents it was called an angina attack. It is a very mild form of a heart attack but it is not considered a heart attack. However, I was kept in Stanton Hospital here in Yellowknife for one week while I was waiting for an opportunity to have an angiogram performed in Edmonton which would confirm whether or not I would need an angioplasty. This was performed, Mr. Speaker, on Monday. I was medevaced to Edmonton on Monday and admitted to the Royal Alexander Hospital. At 11:30 a.m., they performed a test. The test confirmed that I needed an angioplasty. The angioplasty was actually performed immediately and I was released at 2:30 in the afternoon from the hospital. I was placed in the Sturgeon Hospital in St. Albert for observation and recuperation. The next day which was Tuesday, I was discharged from the Sturgeon Hospital and returned here to Yellowknife.

I showed up here to session, Mr. Speaker, Wednesday. Unfortunately, I ended up back in the Stanton Regional Hospital at 5:00 that night as I was experiencing a mild case of pneumonia as a result of the angina attack. I was again discharged yesterday. I would like to take this opportunity again, Mr. Speaker, to thank all the staff in the Stanton Regional Hospital, the nurses and the doctors. I do not want to mention their names because I do not want to leave anybody out, but I would like to thank them all for their help, assistance and efforts to ensure that I am back in the House here. I can ensure my constituents that I

think I would be able to stay in the House for the next week or so. No problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 216-13(6): Additional Resources for Beaufort-Delta Region

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is regarding the Inuvik regional powers and initiatives that the Beaufort-Delta are taking on through self-government negotiations and more regional autonomy by taking over programs and services in Inuvik. I think one thing that is needed is resources. This government has to put more human and financial resources into the Inuvik region to offset the implication of land claims being implemented and for negotiations of self-government agreements, transfer of human resources for the hospital, the Arctic College facilities, social services and also education.

Mr. Speaker, we talk about empowering our communities, empowering our regions, but in the last couple of years with the cuts and the downsizing of this government, we have also made a major impact on regional delivery of programs and services. I think that it is critical that this government seriously considers the implication that self-government agreements are going to have on this government to carry out programs and services on behalf of the residents of Inuvik and Beaufort-Delta region. It is critical that this government also looks at that problem now and ensures that the resources and the people are in place to carry out those responsibilities that will come with implementing self-government agreements and also look at the Beaufort-Delta regional government that is presently being worked on by all of the leaders in the Beaufort-Delta, so that they can have a more productive and a more decision-making power base at the region instead of at the central level government. We have to ensure that for the programs and services that are delivered through this House that there are resources at the regional and community levels to ensure that they are carried out properly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. O'Brien.

Member's Statement 217-13(6): Passing of Elizabeth Owljoot

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Nutaraluk Owljoot. Mrs. Owljoot passed away last week at the elders' centre in Arviat at the age of 84 years. Elizabeth was a well respected elder, a talented carver and artist. Mr. Speaker, I would ask my honourable colleagues to join me in offering our sincere condolences to the family and friends back home in Arviat. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 218-13(6): Hall Beach Graveyard

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today regarding an issue that is not new. In 1995 I was bringing up this issue, but up to today this issue that I raised in 1995 is still not being implemented through MACA. In 1968 the territorial government did not have much power, but DIAND in Ottawa was making all the decisions and ever since 1995 regarding Hall Beach residents, moving all the graveyards, and I have raised this issue, time and time again. I still have not received anything from the federal government, even from the territorial government, and at the time the territorial government leader wrote a letter to the federal government regarding the graveyard. I still have not received anything regarding the relocation of the graveyards in Hall Beach. Perhaps this is the last time that I will be raising this issue so I would just like to remind the Minister to look into this issue further. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Enuaraq.

Member's Statement 219-13(6): Heroic Act of Joshua Qillaq

MR. ENUARAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. I rise today to acknowledge the heroism of a youngster in my home community, a Mr. Joshua Qillaq, age 9.

On November 15, 1995 a youngster, Ms. Sally Arreak, age 10, was playing on the school playground. While using the slide, Sally accidentally snagged the drawstring on her hood on the slide. As a result, Sally began suffocating. No one noticed Sally struggling. A few minutes later, which probably seemed a lifetime to Sally, fortunately, an observant young man named Joshua Qillaq came to her rescue. Joshua quickly worked to free Sally. The event took several minutes to resolve. If Joshua did not come to Sally's rescue, Sally may not be alive today.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to commend Joshua for his heroic deed, and take this opportunity to informally recommend him for the Commissioner's Award for Joshua Qillaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

Member's Statement 220-13(6): Violence Against Women

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to finish a statement that I started yesterday. Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak in regard to violence against women. I believe that our world, our societies and our communities would be a much better place the day when we start to treat women as equals, and when women can help us remove the systemic barriers that we all have in place that prevent them from doing that.

In government, in the workplace, in business and in our communities; there is a systemic way in which women are kept and prevented from feeling free, equal, respected and free from living with fear. I know even my daughters have been taught to be afraid of the dark, to walk on the roads alone in the dark, in taking taxis alone, teaching them to learn how to deal

with sexist jokes, remarks, deal with the world and a society where there are still threats of violence made against women, the kind of verbal abuse that continues.

Mr. Speaker, I have a vested interest as I have said, because I do not want my daughters to live in that kind of world. I do not want any women to live in that kind of world. We have young people today that aspire to make a living or live freely without fear. It is our job to continue to try to do that. I know what my mother has lived with. I mentioned that yesterday. I know what my sisters have lived with, my relatives and women right across this country, in the north. It is a great cause to be in support of, to work for a day when all women will be treated equally and can live in a world without fear. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Henry.

Member's Statement 221-13(6): A Change in Leadership

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. Mr. Speaker, on November 26, 1998, Mr. Morin resigned as Premier of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Arlooktoo as the Deputy Premier, assumed the role of Acting Premier. The Caucus of this government, Mr. Speaker, met and decided to hold a leadership committee on Thursday, December 10, 1998, to elect a new Premier for the Northwest Territories. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the process for this election will be a somewhat shorter exercise than it has been the last time around. Last time we elected a Premier, the public and the MLAs had an opportunity to hear about the vision of the candidates that wish to put their name forward for Premier. Mr. Speaker, the public and MLAs have had the opportunity for the past three years to know what the leadership vision is of potential candidates for Premier this time around. To date no MLAs have publicly declared their intention to run for the position as Premier of the Northwest Territories. I would like to call on any Member, Mr. Speaker, who wishes to put their name forward for Premier of the Northwest Territories to do so before next Monday. By doing so, Mr. Speaker, the public and Members of this House will have the opportunity to receive feedback from other MLAs and from the public that we represent and we can be advised

accordingly. Mr. Speaker, I would not issue it as a threat, but if no one has declared by Monday that they wish to seek the position of leadership, I may be forced to do so myself.

--Laughter

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Barnabas.

Member's Statement 222-13(6): Hunters and Trappers Disaster Compensation Program

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to address the availability of the Hunters and Trappers Disaster Compensation Program.

In late spring an unfortunate accident occurred in Grise Fiord. A number of hunters were in pursuit of a whale. Unfortunately, the ice beneath them broke away and they were forced to abandon their snowmobiles and other equipment. As a result they lost all of their equipment.

Mr. Speaker, hunting and trapping is very important to the economy of the north. It provides families with food and a source of income. When these hunters lost their equipment, they also lost part of their capability to support their families. Fortunately, there are government programs that help hunters and their families in these disasters. The program I am talking about is the Hunters and Trappers Disaster relief fund. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, government is really forward-thinking.

Next week I will be addressing this issue further in a letter to the Minister. I hope this fund will be able to help out the families in Grise Fiord who lost their hunting equipment.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

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MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Ng.

Member's Statement 223-13(6): Cambridge Bay Weekend Activities

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I want to speak about some happenings that are taking place this weekend in Cambridge Bay through the sponsorship of First Air and the involvement of the Edmonton Oilers Alumni. Four ex-Edmonton Oilers, Mr. Brian Baltimore, Mr. Brian Benning, Mr. Alan Hamilton and Mr. Dave Lumley are currently in transit to Cambridge Bay. They are going to be participating in a weekend of events surrounding hockey. There is a feast and some entertainment planned for this evening to honour them coming to the community. Tomorrow morning and all afternoon there is a hockey clinic put on by these four individuals for all the minor hockey participants in Cambridge Bay.

I am happy to say that tomorrow evening there is a fundraising game with the ex-Oilers and some Members of this House that have taken up my offer of an invitation to attend and participate. We will be playing against the local oldtimers all-star team in the spirit of fun and fundraising. There is also a pancake breakfast planned for Sunday morning and I would like to say that there are some fundraising activities surrounding this whole visit as well in respect of supporting the library restoration fund and minor hockey. There is going to be a raffle of two return airfare tickets that, again, have been sponsored by First Air; a couple of Oilers tickets and some accommodation in Edmonton to attend the game down there, which I know people are happy with and excited about. In closing, I am sure that all residents of Cambridge Bay will support the initiatives that are going on this weekend and I will be happy to report, Mr. Speaker, next week, on the performance of all Members while they were up in Cambridge Bay. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement 224-13(6): Acknowledgement of Supporters

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in recent days a lot of tension has been paid to the role that I have played in this conflict of interest inquiry and many

accolades have been offered; but, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be wrong not to take this opportunity to thank the many people who have supported me in this endeavour because I have certainly not done it alone.

Mr. Speaker, to the literally hundreds of expressions of support through phone calls, letters, e-mails, cards, donations to my legal fund and personal contacts, I would like to say thank you to my constituents in Hay River who were understanding and supportive of the time and effort that I needed to devote to this; to my close supporters and advisors for their thoughtful guidance; to my colleagues in this legislature who offered support and encouragement. I do not need to name them because they know who they are and I am sure the public knows who they are, as well to my legal council, Mr. Barry Chivers, for taking a chance on such an unusual client and such an unusual case; to my constituency assistant, Ginger Lester, for being right there; to my family, my sister Janet here in Yellowknife and my children Jordan, Jeffrey and Jillian who are my most proud and rewarding accomplishments; to my ever patient husband without whose support I would not have the courage to do what I do and last and certainly not least, Mr. Speaker, to the God whom I serve who defines the very context and purpose of my life, I am always thankful.

I would also like to just express a note with respect to the legal fund and the \$35,000 or so that was raised depending on the decision of the House with respect to those costs and how things are dealt with, I will be seeking input from those contributors as to whether they would like to have their money returned to them or whether they would like it donated to a worthy cause perhaps such as something like the Stanton Foundation for a CAT Scan in Yellowknife or something of that nature. I will be in contact with those supporters on that matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

I would like to remind the Member from Hay River regarding the legal costs. This is a matter that is before the Assembly and the Management and Services Board and she is drawing a real fine line regarding the debate on the legal costs. Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement 225-13(6): School of Community Government

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to speak today concerning the School of Community Government which was recently announced. Mr. Speaker, we all know that the communities have taken on more and more responsibilities and have taken on more programs and services through various forms of negotiation and programs of this and other governments including community government, community empowerment, community justice, self-government and land claims discussions. Because of that, MLAs have spoken in this House and community leaders have talked in various places and through various means saying that they need people trained in the communities. In fact, last spring this House passed a motion saying that MACA should take the lead role and develop a community development training set of programs including a one-year certificate and a two-year diploma program.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to commend the department for reacting to our motion and also for reacting to the requests of the people. The Minister recently announced that they are creating a School of Community Government and the school would provide an expanded range of training programs in broad areas including political development and governance, community management and administration, works and works management, public safety, community development and recreation and lands and that they are investing with other providers such as the colleges, the professional associations, private industry and other GNWT departments.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to indicate that Aurora College is doing a pilot program on community development at their Inuvik campus. I would hope that the plans for this school include a one-year certificate and a two-year diploma program as we had asked for because we need more than short-term courses. Once again, Mr. Speaker, I applaud the MACA department as

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well as their partners for taking this initiative. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I have the privilege of recognizing my wife and my youngest addition to the family, Mitchell Josiah. They are on their way back home to be with the rest of the family. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to recognize my wife, Susanna Barnabas, and my sister, Nuterajuk Attagutsiak, and also my relative, Hannah Kanatsiaq, who are here in this Legislative Assembly today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 249-13(6): Additional Resources for Inuvik Regional Office

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of FMBS in regard to the possibility of re-establishing some sort of position within the Inuvik regional office to assist with the work load that we are seeing. More things are being taken on by the regions through the self-government negotiation process. The Beaufort regional government has been structured to take on and transfer more authority from Yellowknife to the Inuvik region. Can the Minister tell me if there are any possible resources available for the region to ensure that funds are available for more human resources at the Inuvik regional office to assist

with this increase of work that is presently being taken on in the Inuvik region?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 249-13(6): Additional Resources for Inuvik Regional Office

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had better take that question as notice, Mr. Speaker, not because I do not want to answer it, but I do not have all the facts. If there is, in fact, as my honourable colleague says, an additional workload as we move forward on the issue of trying to seek an appropriate process of governance that has been under discussion for some time, we will take a hard look at that. I will take that question as notice and get back to my colleague early next week.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question is taken as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Question 250-13(6): Relocation of Hall Beach Grave Sites

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during my Member's statement, I referred to an old issue which should not just die without any result arising from the concern. My question will be directed to the current government leader, who was the Deputy Premier during the tenure of our prior Premier, and I am sure he is aware of issues ongoing within this government and the responses which I have not received regarding the relocation of the grave sites in Hall Beach.

I want to know how he can help me pursue this matter with the federal government if the need arises. What is the process that I need to follow? For example, if there is an alleged crime or matter that was carried out, which the people are not happy with eventually you have a means of taking it to the courts to have it resolved. Does the Deputy Premier have any answers to solving this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

The Acting Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 250-13(6): Relocation of Hall Beach Grave Sites

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the MLA for his question and for raising this issue because I am sure it is a concern to him and to his constituents from his community. I remember this issue when the Member raised it in the House. I have heard recently that the territorial government had reviewed what happened at that time and asked the federal government for a response to this concern. However, I do not have the response myself at the table at this time. I will pass it on to him so that the Member can pass it on to his constituents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 251-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo, regarding his statement in the House today on the Minimum Down Payment Assistance Pilot Program. I would like to comment that I am very impressed with the program. I think it is an excellent initiative and extremely creative to attract or encourage, as the Acting Premier talked about, those people who are deriving an income from the Northwest Territories but not spending it as much here. My question to the Premier is, Mr. Speaker, how many dollars have been contributed to the program for this fiscal year, which I believe ends March 31, 1999? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Acting Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 251-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for his positive comments. First, perhaps to clarify that

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it is not only a program for workers who work in the north but do not live in the north, but very much aimed at workers. If I could use an example of a family that lives in Coppermine and working at BHP, but does not have the down payment in their savings right now, this will give them an opportunity to buy their home in Coppermine through this program. Mr. Speaker, the total amount of the program is expected to be about \$2.9 million, some of which will be from existing funds; but the Financial Management Board will be putting forward a supplementary appropriation for consideration by this House for a total amount of \$1.695 million. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 251-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Premier for that. The Premier used the example of someone living in Cambridge Bay, I believe, and certainly that would have the opportunity to expand the program. That individual is spending money in the territories now. My second question, Mr. Speaker, is there are a number of employees working and deriving their livelihood from the Northwest Territories, who as the Premier noted are leaving all the time. A number of these employees, probably the largest one comes to mind is BHP and Diavik. I am wondering, has this department taken any steps to make sure that these employees know of the program and have available documentation to make applications for it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 251-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is the type of program that we had talked about for a number of years, but one of the triggers was the BHP mine and the concern as I recall, was raised by the former Premier of these fly-in and fly-out workers, and those workers that we wanted to have stay here in the north. They derive their income from the north and we wanted them to stay here and live here. So, the company that the

Member mentioned is certainly a company that was thought of as a possible target and their employees. The information package that I have provided to the House and to the Members is a similar information package that we are giving out to real estate agents, companies, housing authorities and the like. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 251-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe a number of times when government has initiated programs that there has been criticism that the process of application is long and cumbersome. Could the Minister advise the House and the people of the territories that this will not be the case in this particular situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 251-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is correct. One of the criticisms of the Housing Corporation programs, the EDAP program and others is that the application process is quite cumbersome in some respect, necessarily so. For this program, it is much more simplified, perhaps mostly due to the part that it is more open and there are less restrictions, partly due to the fact that it is a smaller amount that we give out as a grant. The answer is, yes, it will be a lot simpler to apply and to qualify for this program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 251-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I assume that there would be an application form. In the event that the application form is correctly filled out and the required information is provided to the department officials, does the Minister have a time frame of when the monies could be made available to the applicants? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 251-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The money is available now from the pot of money that is being used from existing resources and the additional monies will be made available, if and when the House approves them, during the supplementary appropriation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 252-13(6): St. John's Ambulance Services

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for Minister Ng, Minister of Health and Social Services, in regard to St. John Ambulance services provisions in the Northwest Territories. As the Minister knows, I have raised this question a number of times in regard to funding for that organization. Some three years ago, the funding for the organization was reduced and in an association like other organizations, I think that was only fair to approach it that way. Last year they were reduced from \$100,000 to \$50,000 and this year they were reduced to no funds at all. That is a concern to the association because of their work that they do.

The Minister in a reply to me dated yesterday stated that he was turning down our request, our further request from the Yellowknife MLAs to reinstate some funding. My question for the Minister is, in regard to the reasons, and the Minister states that non-government organizations that are considered to be providing basic service receive funding. My question for the Minister is, what does he consider and can he give me an example of basic service? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 252-13(6): St. John's Ambulance Services

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a basic service is in respect to delivering something that would be directly related to Health and Social Services program. I use, for example, off the top of my head, the NWT Mental Health Association, to deliver a service and providing an Aids and HIV information line. They have a contribution agreement from us to provide that type of service. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 252-13(6): St. John's Ambulance Services

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, it is because Aids NWT has a contribution agreement with the department, but I want to point out to the Minister and lead up to my question, then that St. John's Ambulance has always provided in all communities in the Northwest Territories first aid training and that is done on a voluntary basis, if I understand correctly. The concern I have is, what is the difference between St. John's Ambulance being regarded as non basic and the HIV information helpline as being a basic service? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 252-13(6): St. John's Ambulance Services

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess it is an interpretation of what would be a basic service in the respect of first aid training which is not a specific health and social services program, although I recognize the importance of it, versus something like the HIV/AIDS Awareness Program which we feel is an

important aspect of health programming. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 252-13(6): St. John's Ambulance Services

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I consider the work of St. John's Ambulance in all communities in the Northwest Territories to be an essential service. It certainly has been for the last 20 years and it really surprises me that we cannot get support for this, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Minister is, to his knowledge, what other services are available to be provided other than St. John's Ambulance in the communities for safety and first aid training? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 252-13(6): St. John's Ambulance Services

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have the specifics of what other organizations or companies do that; I am aware that there are companies in the private sector which provides first aid training and safety awareness. I will get that information for the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 252-13(6): St. John's Ambulance Services

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that there are not enough, at the moment, private sector operators to provide service in all communities. I am wondering if the Minister will undertake to survey the communities throughout the north, to see in what fashion they consider St. John's Ambulance service necessary. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 252-13(6): St. John's Ambulance Services

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can commit to taking a look at that, I do not know the extent of how we can determine that, but I will figure out a mechanism to do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 253-13(6): Hay Job Evaluation System

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Finance. I have received a concern from a constituent in Hay River. My question has to do with the job re-evaluation process that took place. Some positions were deemed or assigned, a lower pay scale than what is currently being paid to an employee in that position. Mr. Todd has previously provided assurances in the House that these GNWT employees would not see a decrease in their salary scales as a result of that evaluation process. It would seem that since then there has been information in the public that, in fact, this was just a two-year moratorium and after two years those affected positions would see their salaries decrease. I was wondering if the Minister could clarify that for us. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 253-13(6): Hay Job Evaluation System

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding of the policy or the decision on job evaluation was that those employees that say, around pay level 22 and under the new system went to 18, would be red circled. I have got to check with my department, to see if, in fact, there was a sunset clause on it. I am not familiar with that but if there was, I will report back to my honourable colleague as quickly as I can. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 253-13(6): Hay Job Evaluation System

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MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe this is a very important question that needs to be clarified because it is part of what the employees understood in accepting these changes. I would like to have that clarified as soon as possible. I am sure Mr. Todd would not mind telling me how quickly he might be able to respond to that for me. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 253-13(6): Hay Job Evaluation System

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I agree with my honourable colleague that it was an important component to get an acceptance, if you want, of the job evaluation system. It was never the intent, at least not mine anyway, as Finance Minister, to penalize anybody in this important exercise that we undertook with respect to the Hay Job Evaluation system so I will look into it today. Given the agenda for today and Monday, report back on Tuesday. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 254-13(6): Update on Land and Resources Dispute

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for RWED, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could give the House an update as to the status of the dispute that centres around the Dene band in northern Manitoba and also Saskatchewan regarding the land rights, fishing and hunting rights. My understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a dispute regarding the land that is currently to be encompassed in Nunavut and the Dene band are saying that this land actually belongs to them. I

wonder if the Minister could give us an update on the situation.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 254-13(6): Update on Land and Resources Dispute

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, there are aboriginal peoples living outside of the boundaries of the Northwest Territories who have claim to lands and rights within our borders. This has been unresolved for a great many years. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine, would have more information regarding the status of these First Nations' initiatives to clarify and define the rights that they possess. I would ask the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs to provide us with that information in his capacity as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 255-13(6): Aboriginal Language Community Contributions

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education. The aboriginal language translation and interpretation services provided by the Language Bureau was privatized in 1997. In June, 1997, the Cabinet authorized a reallocation of the budget formerly used for these services or about \$1.437 million to be allocated to the language groups. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that there is only \$350,000 from the original \$1.437 million available to the aboriginal language groups in the Northwest Territories. Given that the Minister has stated that the closure of the Language Bureau was not a cost-cutting exercise, I am wondering why only \$350,000 is available for the several different language organizations and groups in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 255-13(6): Aboriginal Language Community Contributions

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we were discussing this issue in the first instance, we had estimated that the privatization of the interpreter/translator corps would free up approximately \$500,000. In fact, what it has freed up for distribution for language communities is about \$450,000, not \$350,000, as the Member has mentioned. The Member is correct that not all of the money that was being used before could be freed up as we still have statutory requirements to translate materials. What happened was, over the course of two years, the department tracked how much, for instance, the Department of Public Works used the interpreter/translator services and allocated a cost to those services and transferred that money to the Department of Public Works and Services so they can continue to source those services as they need them. In doing that, the total amount that was left over after we allocated all the monies to the different departments, was about \$450,000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 255-13(6): Aboriginal Language Community Contributions

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the privatization of the Language Bureau, the way I understand it is that, indeed, when we had interpreters and translators available to this government on salary, indeed, it was cheaper for the government. Now it is costing them more money to go to the private sector and, indeed, some monies have had to come forward from different departments to pay for these funds. My follow-up supplementary question is, has any money been made available or given to the Inuktitut language group in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 255-13(6): Aboriginal Language Community Contributions

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do know that, as of last week, there had been three agreements signed with aboriginal language communities. I do not believe that any of these was with the Inuktitut language community. I will have to check on that and get back to the Member. There were I believe, three contracts under negotiation. It may be in process if it has not taken place yet. I will endeavour to provide the Member with an answer within the next day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 255-13(6): Aboriginal Language Community Contributions

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what is the process for the language groups to be able to get access to this money? If the Minister could explain that process and, indeed, how much money is available per language group? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 255-13(6): Aboriginal Language Community Contributions

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The process is that the language communities can apply to our department for the funds. We have run ads in newspapers across the Northwest Territories. We have written to various organizations advising them of this possibility. In response to the second part of the Member's question, the amount of money that has been allocated per language community is \$50,000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 255-13(6): Aboriginal Language Community Contributions

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the answer just given by the Minister, am I to understand that, indeed, each language group, for example, in Nunavut would it be NTL, they have to submit some type of proposal of how they will use this money and then the department will review the proposal and then submit the allocated \$50,000, if that was the amount? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 255-13(6): Aboriginal Language Community Contributions

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are expecting that the proposals will come into the department for allocation of the money, demonstrating the group is representative of the language community and yes, how they will use the money. The money was in our budget for promotion and development of aboriginal languages. We would expect to see those criteria addressed in the proposals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 256-13(6): Nunavut and Manitoba Land Dispute

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following up to my earlier question, I wonder if Minister Antoine, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, will provide the update I was seeking regarding the land dispute between the Dene band in northern Manitoba regarding the land that is encompassed in Nunavut? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 256-13(6): Nunavut and Manitoba Land Dispute

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Dene Schineyeya in northern Manitoba, there is a dispute

right now with them and the federal government. These matters are currently before the federal court in litigation of Chief Simon Samuel versus the Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Tunngavik Federation in Nunavut. As such, it would be probably inappropriate for me to comment directly on these matters at this time. It is a complicated issue and, if need be, I will gather all the pertinent information and provide the background information to the honourable Member asking the question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Rabesca.

Question 257-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regarding the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation's statement, regarding the New Homeownership Pilot Program for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, that he alluded to. Is it geared mainly to purchase a new homeownership along side, the same statement, this morning he alluded to, across the Northwest Territories, there are approximately over 250 private homes sitting empty and he alluded to say let us give the people a chance to buy these homes. What I am trying to get at is that maybe the Minister is telling us that this program is only intended to, or not intended to buy new homes, or is it intended to buy used homes? I would like to have the Minister's clarification on this, please. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Acting Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 257-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. MDAPP is geared towards the purchase of existing homes. The homes I talked about that are sitting empty in communities across the Northwest Territories, including the Member's communities and that, I think, counterbalances, in a way, the other program that we have, EDAP, the Expanded Down Payment Assistance Program, which is more geared towards the purchase or the building of a new home, although it could be used for existing homes and, also, the money that we set aside for

social housing. It is towards the purchase of existing homes that are sitting empty in these communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Roland.

Question 258-13(6): Addressing Inuvik Foundation Problems

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question would be directed to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. In my Member's statement, I raised concerns of the situation that has come about in Inuvik which will affect many residents, as well as government departments, and

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it is regarding the wood and piling situation. I believe there are other communities this would affect as well, but I like to get some information from the Minister. I have spoken with him and his department raising this issue and I know that work is undergoing right now regarding the cost impact to residents. I would like to know from the Minister if there are other avenues that are available for residents in my community that they might be able to seek financial support for doing the necessary repairs that are required? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 258-13(6): Addressing Inuvik Foundation Problems

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an issue I have discussed with the Housing Corporation and other government departments. We now are starting to realize the complexity and maybe the potential high cost in having to deal with the problem and also the seriousness. The Member, in a committee meeting a couple of weeks ago, told us about an incident on August 19th where a home actually toppled over because of the pilings being eroded so badly and consequently, the town, the housing authority and the Housing Corporation, after a survey, found that it was quite widespread and fortunately, fairly unique to the Town of Inuvik.

We have started several actions. One is we have set aside \$450,000 that would be provided to the Inuvik Housing Authority to start developing a plan to start making repairs to the problem. There are three other avenues available that we are looking at. One is through EDAP, which has a section in it that can be used to repair homes. Another one is our emergency repair program and finally, the third one which we will need the support and assistance of the Town of Inuvik and the housing authority and the MLA, is approaching the federal government to see if there is a way of perhaps obtaining some federal disaster relief or some kind of program like that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral Questions. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary To Question 258-13(6): Addressing Inuvik Foundation Problems

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for his response and I am interested in what approach should be taken, especially with the last item he mentioned being that the possibility of looking to the federal government for some source of funding. Could the Minister inform me if the process was necessary? Do I need to go back to the Council of Inuvik and residents to begin something there? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 258-13(6): Addressing Inuvik Foundation Problems

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a situation where all the parties need to work together to make as good a case as possible to ask the federal government for some relief and some resources. It is difficult to say at this point what the response might be, but my suggestion would be that the attempt be coordinated and that yes, the MLA being in contact with the town would be certainly a good move. I will make sure that whatever actions we have taken is given, the correspondence, et cetera, is given to the MLA and to the town. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary To Question 258-13(6): Addressing Inuvik Foundation Problems

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for giving me the information that he will provide me with. Could he inform me if the department could work with me and possibly come up to the Town of Inuvik and we will arrange that meeting at that time and trying to pursue this issue further? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 258-13(6): Addressing Inuvik Foundation Problems

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a possibility of myself or at the very least, sending my staff to Inuvik. I do have staff in Inuvik that have been working on this issue and perhaps if I could clarify by pointing out again, who is doing what. The Housing Corporation, at this point in time, is trying to deal with repairs and damage to eroding piles to the public. Public homes to social housing units that we own and upright. MACA, I understand is taking a lead on dealing with working with the town on their infrastructure. There are also the additional private homes. The private businesses, after the survey, we found after testing the piling they had used many years ago, had not been treated and were none of the correct types. In saying that, I will work with the Member to see what the next step we could take. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 259-13(6): Collective Bargaining and Pay Equity

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is addressed to the Minister of FMBS. It is in regard to the UNW, the collective bargaining process and the pay equity issue. The Minister indicated yesterday that he intended to approach the UNW on an alternative way of possibly dealing with the pay equity issue. Could the Minister elaborate on that please so we have a

clear understanding of what this innovative way might be? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 259-13(6): Collective Bargaining and Pay Equity

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it has been the argument over the last five or six months that the pay equity issue is not on the bargaining table and, in fact, not a collective bargaining issue. There was some dispute particularly with myself if in fact that was true.

We have asked our justice and legal people if, in fact, the pay

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equity issue, if it is not a collective bargaining issue, can it be a sidebar issue, that we can take direct to our employees indicating to them on an individual basis what the impact will be if we can reach an agreement on a pay equity proposal that we have on the table; outlining on an individual basis to each employee, what the retroactive pay would be, what the result would be on their ongoing pay cheques if you want, and ask them whether they agree or disagree with this proposal.

Our proposed choice of action is that we would go with the UNW, our partners in this bargaining process, and ask them as agents for the staff to take this out. Our lead negotiator has written to the UNW president about this issue and I am hopeful that we can get it resolved to the collective bargaining proposal on the table, and come to an agreement as to how we can provide our employees with the information on an individual basis of what pay equity, retroactivity, and ongoing means to them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 259-13(6): Collective Bargaining and Pay Equity

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister clarify whether the information being sent to the employees would it be, in fact, information or would they be voting on an individual basis or deciding on an individual basis whether they accepted the offer that was put to them? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 259-13(6): Collective Bargaining and Pay Equity

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I would be hesitant at this stage of the discussions to sort of pre-empt the discussions that are underway right now with my staff in the UNW. My position has been clear from the very beginning, and that is I fundamentally believe that the pay equity issue that we put on the table, the Hay Plan Job Evaluation System, is a fair one. I have consistently said I would like to get the money in the hands of our employees. So, it would be premature, I think for me to say today how those discussions will unfold.

I will say that I would encourage the UNW to work with us and to see if we can come to an agreement so that each and every one of our employees understands what the net fiscal benefit is to them by accepting the pay equity solution that we put forward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 259-13(6): Collective Bargaining and Pay Equity

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister indicate whether, in fact, it is essential or mandatory for the union's concurrence or is it just something that would be nice to have that you could still possibly proceed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 259-13(6): Collective Bargaining and Pay Equity

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times if you ask two lawyers for one opinion, you get two. The opinion of our lawyers and our legal people is that if pay equity is not a collective bargaining issue, then we have the right and are obligated to, and I feel very strong about that, go out directly to our employees and show them and demonstrate to them what the pay equity proposal is and ask them if they agree or disagree with it.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 259-13(6): Collective Bargaining and Pay Equity

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister indicate potential timelines for this particular issue just dealing with union, not actually carrying out the advance of information to the individual members, but is it anticipated that trying to resolve the issue with the union so that we could proceed or not is going to take any great lengths of time, given our shortening mandate as a Legislature? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 259-13(6): Collective Bargaining and Pay Equity

HON. JOHN TODD:

Well, if I was to take an optimistic view and if there was an agreement reached that we do have the right and the mandate, as we believe we now do, then we could move very quickly to go out there and advise our people that is what we are doing. However, the less optimistic view is going to be that the UNW will actually want to examine the letter sent by our lead negotiator. I would imagine they will seek legal counsel and we are going to bring it forward, I believe, next week. From my personal preference as a Finance Minister, we will be able to move quickly, as I have said many times here. Given the track record and the history of discussion and debate on this very sensitive pay equity issue, we will just have to see how events unfold. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 260-13(6): Status of Grise Fiord Office Building

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last year I made a statement on the condition of an office building in Grise Fiord and, to date, I still have not received any response from the Department of MACA whether it is going to be renovated or if there is any funding available to it. Could the Minister of MACA update me as to what is happening with this building? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Ms. Thompson.

Return To Question 260-13(6): Status of Grise Fiord Office

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Building

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can say that there has been a lot of responses in regard to the question that was asked by the Member. Last year, the department was working with the community and as I stated before when he asked me the question, when there is a community transfer to the hamlet, there is a negotiation process that goes with the transfer and, if the hamlet does not want the building, it is up to them. I do not know the details up-to-date, but I do know that the regional office in Iqaluit was dealing with the issue and I will have to take the question as notice. I do not have the details in front of me, but I do know that the department responded to the community for that particular building the Member is talking about. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question is taken as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 261-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for Mr. Arlooktoo, Minister of the Housing Corporation. I wonder if the Minister could tell us if the grant program, the Down Payment Assistance Pilot Program, that he has announced, if that program is available in all communities including the community such as Yellowknife? Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 261-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answer is yes, the program is available in Yellowknife, and in fact, in the survey of homes that sit empty, the City of Yellowknife had the highest number. In discussion with realtors and bankers, the response was very positive that for a place like Yellowknife, this would be a program that would work well. In short, yes, it is available here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 261-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is there a limitation on the number of down payment assistance that will be provided other than the time limit of March, 1999?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 261-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The limitation will be the total number of dollars that are available, but I would suggest that for the initial period right now that all applications from all communities will be given the same consideration, but as the program winds down

and as the money is used up, I think there will have to be some consideration as to where the greatest need is, but at this point in time, all applications are being considered limited by the total amount of money in the program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 261-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could tell us what the total amount of money there is in this particular program? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 261-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The total amount of money is allocated by estimating the approximate number of homes that would be sold and those that are suitable for selling through this program. For the western Arctic, it is in the total of \$1.9 million, that is, 190 homes estimated, and 73 for Nunavut for a total of \$1.095 million for Nunavut for a total MDAPP program of \$2.995 million. As I indicated earlier, subtracted from that existing resources which is being used immediately, additional funding that would be requested through this House of \$1.695 million. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 261-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if there is a flood of applications, are individuals or families considered on a first-come first-served basis or are there other criteria which determine who gets access to this program? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 261-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, it is on a first-come first-served basis, but you still have to qualify under the criteria and there are some principles or goals that I had talked generally about and I will just repeat three of them. The program is targeted towards encouraging present NWT residents who lack the savings required to make a down payment to buy a home, also encouraging businesses to relocate their employees and their families to the north permanently by making housing more affordable to them and towards encouraging individual's families who might live elsewhere in the NWT to move to communities for employment or training opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 262-13(6): Contracting with Former Employees

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the

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Minister of FMBS and it is regarding Minister's statement 77-13(6), contracting of former employees. I would like to ask the Minister in light of the report that he tabled and in regard to the possibility of striking a committee within the government to look at that report. Is there any possible way that he will consider looking at some sort of independent....

MR. SPEAKER:

I am sorry, Mr. Krutko, I have to rule the question out of order. This is an item that is going to be discussed in committee of the whole regarding the conflict of interest. The question is out of order. Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 263-13(6): Status of Iqaluit Health Facility

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the Minister of Health, Mr. Ng, could update the House at this time on the negotiations and progress to date on the construction of the new Baffin Regional Hospital? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 263-13(6): Status of Iqaluit Health Facility

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, about two weeks ago, myself and the assistant deputy minister of Health and the director of the financial management services were in Iqaluit meeting with the board chair and the trustees through a teleconference. After that time, since I arrived back, the staff stayed in Iqaluit and they have come to an agreement on the functional program which outlines what services are going to be available and how those services will be delivered within the space of the hospital. The projection is that the functional program that was agreed to is going to amount approximately to \$31 million. So, that was agreed upon. Right now, the functional program is being designed based on that agreement so that it can go out for proposal for preliminary design. So that work is ongoing now in finalizing the details of the functional program as agreed upon. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 263-13(6): Status of Iqaluit Health Facility

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if through the negotiations and the meetings in Iqaluit two weeks ago, if there is indeed, an agreement with the Nunavut deputy minister for Health and if, indeed, Mr. Anawak's office, on the dollar value and the process for construction of the hospital? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 263-13(6): Status of Iqaluit Health Facility

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the senior staff in the department have been fully advising Mr. MacRury, the Nunavut deputy minister of health, of ongoing discussions and negotiations in respect to this issue. It is my understanding that there is a comfort level with the monetary figure that has been reached to date. I would like to caution and remind all Members that the final approval will be either through the Interim Commissioner himself, if it is prior to March 31, 1999, or failing that, April 1st and post April 1st, with the new Nunavut Legislature for final approval from any financial commitments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 263-13(6): Status of Iqaluit Health Facility

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there was a concern with the construction of the hospital and the financing of the project with the Auditor General for Canada. I am wondering if that concern has been alleviated or rectified? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 263-13(6): Status of Iqaluit Health Facility

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am advised, my colleague, the Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial Management Board, it is our understanding that that issue has been resolved in respect to the treatment of P3 projects and how they are treated on the balance sheet of governments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 264-13(6): Reducing the Student/Teacher Ratio

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent. I believe Mr. Dent is in receipt of a letter sent to him and also to Mr. Todd and Mr. Arlooktoo from Range Lake school parent advisory group. They raise a number of interesting comments and requests in that regard to education funding. The main request from this parent advisory group could be applied to all classrooms and teachers in the NWT. Their main request is looking for additional funding to reduce the student/teacher numbers in the classroom. My question to the Minister is, what hope can the Minister of Education provide to the parents of children in the Northwest Territories that indeed, something can and will be done about reducing the student/teacher ratio in the classroom? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 264-13(6): Reducing the Student/Teacher Ratio

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have not yet seen the letter to which the Member refers, but I can certainly respond to the question. I would say that I have informed my Cabinet colleagues that as a first priority, we need to try to find increased funding to deal with special needs in the classroom and, secondly with the pupil/teacher ratio. At this point, we have not been able to identify any additional funds to

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put into those programs, but Cabinet is very aware of the need and will continue to look for sources of funding that could be applied to those needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 264-13(6): Reducing the Student/Teacher Ratio

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that. I am encouraged that there is at least some work carrying on. The Minister's department also has a component of culture and while I would publicly recognize that as an important aspect of the department and for the whole mosaic of the Northwest Territories, I am wondering if the Minister has given any thought to reallocating some of the funds attributed to that portion of it. I am talking particularly about items such as the production of CD's or department funded projects such as this until such a time as we get education levels in the territories raised to what I think everybody would accept as a higher standard. Would the Minister consider reallocating some of those funds on a temporary basis to provide assistance to the teachers in the classroom? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Question period is over. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 264-13(6): Reducing the Student/Teacher Ratio

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when the department's allocation was reduced in the deficit reduction program, all of the areas of the department were looked at to determine what level of reduction they could withstand. In fact, the reductions were not applied equally across the board. The reductions were applied ranging anywhere from 25 percent to zero percent. In the area of special needs in the formula, funding was increased in spite of the fact that the department's total allocation had been reduced. I must say, we are talking about a significant need here. It is not one that can be met by moving the amount of money that we have, from the programs that the Member has referred to.

We have heard from people across the north that we cannot let the arts programs be totally cut as this government goes through reduced funding allocations. I have not heard from any other Members of this House that they would like to see that happen. I do know that when we appeared in front of the standing committees to present our business plan, there has been a recognition that we have had to cut in the areas like culture, more than in areas like special needs and that has been supported by the Members. There has been no support for complete elimination of cultural programs.

It is important to point out that culture has to be reflected, not only as a separate part of the department, but in the work in the school. Schooling is only effective if it reflects the cultures of the people who are being schooled. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that suggestion is workable. I am certainly prepared to raise this issue with the standing committee when we next discuss our business plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Legislative Assembly that the Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development has reviewed Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Public Highways Act, and the Motor Vehicles Act, and I wish to report that Bill 19 is ready for committee of the whole. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5), and have Bill 19 ordered into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Mackenzie Delta is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5). Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Krutko, you have unanimous consent. Bill 19 will be ordered into committee of the whole for today. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Barnabas.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 47-13(6): Photos of the Government Office in Grise Fiord

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a document that was received by me from the Department of MACA dated November 17, 1998. It refers to the condition of the office space that I mentioned in my Member's statement and question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 28: An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, December 7, 1998, I will move that Bill 28, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole

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of bills and other matters, Tabled Document 37-13(6): Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, and Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Public Highways Act, and the Motor Vehicles Act. By the authority given the Speaker by resolution 11-13(6), the committee of the whole today is permitted to sit beyond the normal sitting hours until it is prepared to report progress. Mr. Ningark is in the Chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I would like to call the committee to order. Under item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters, we have Tabled Document 37-13(6): Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, and we will deal with that after we take a break. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you.

--Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I would like to call the committee back to order. I have a short statement that I will read. We are dealing today with Tabled Document 37-13(6): Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. I would like to take this opportunity to remind all Members of the process adopted by this House in resolution 12-13(6) for the consideration of this report.

1. That the debate in committee of the whole will be restricted to the sitting days of Friday, December 4, 1998, and Monday, December 7, 1998;
2. That the Member for Tu Nedhe is permitted up to 90 minutes for initial comments on Tabled Document 37-13(6);
3. That all Members are each permitted up to 45 minutes for initial comments on Tabled Document 37-13(6);
4. That at the conclusion of Members initial comments, each of the recommendations will be moved as separate motions; and,
5. That for the purposes of debate on each motion, Members will be restricted to a maximum of ten minutes each to speak to the motion.

I would also like to remind the Members to conduct themselves at all times in accordance with the rules of the House and in keeping with the dignity of the Legislative Assembly. By resolution of 12-13(6), I recognize the Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Morin.

MR. MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank all the Members of the Legislative Assembly. I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak here today. It has been a long ten months. Each and every one of you were told in a Caucus meeting the other day to read the report. To come into this Legislative Assembly with an open mind. To come into this Legislative Assembly with a fair mind and do not come into the Legislative Assembly with conclusions being made already.

When I come in here today, I ask for two things, that is fairness and justice, nothing more and nothing less. Some have told me you are dealing with politicians. Some have told me that there are some that would come into this House with their mind made up. What did I say in return. I said, in my heart I have to believe that every Member comes into this House today with

a clear conscience. They leave their politics at the door. They read the report. They came in here to listen to what I have to respond to in that report. That is all I can say and that is all I expect.

Last Thursday, I resigned as the Premier of the Northwest Territories. I did that for two reasons. One. I did not want to call on any friend, I did not want to call on my friendship with anybody to cloud their response to this report. Two, I wanted to debate this report very clearly and the process of how this report came about. I have been able to achieve that.

Back in 1995 when we first became Members of this 13th Assembly, we all came here, 15 new Members and the rest of us with some experience to the Caucus to start looking at some of the things that we had to do as a government. One of the tasks before us was to change the conflict of interest legislation and to pick a conflict commissioner. That task was given to the Management and Services Board, they came back and recommended to the Caucus, a person to sit in as a conflict commissioner in the Northwest Territories. At that time myself and a few other Members raised a concern. We raised a concern that no sitting lawyer in the Northwest Territories should sit as a conflict commissioner. It would be unfair to that person and it could perceive to be a very bad thing in the future because that person would have to sit as the conflict commissioner and there may be Members who had concerns about that. After debating off and on that issue for three days in the Caucus back in 1995, I was finally assured by the law clerk back then that if a complaint were laid against a Member, they could successfully oppose Anne Crawford sitting as a conflict commissioner. If a complaint was laid by a Member that felt that the conflict commissioner had a bias, they could ask for a different conflict commissioner. I was told that. That is fact, back in 1995.

Now we move to February, 1998, where I had a conflict complaint laid against myself. At that time, we had to gather a lot of information to put towards the conflict commissioner. Subsequently it went to a hearing and the commissioner heard the hearing, then made a decision after meeting with her lawyers separately, made a decision to take it to a public hearing. She saw at that time that there was something to investigate so she made the decision to take it to a public hearing. Once again, I raised the concern about bias, once again I raised the concern that I did not think it was a fair process. Once again, it was overruled. During that process there, it was observed at that time that a commissioner counsel,

that is, a commissioner's lawyers, would meet independently then with the commissioner in their own room and then invite our lawyers in after to deal with it. I do not think that leaves a very good perception to people when the prosecutor is meeting with the judge. Then we went into public inquiry.

Shortly after the commencing of the inquiry my solicitors, my lawyers attempted to interview one of the witnesses. At that time the commissioner overruled and said you are not allowed to interview a witness while the witness is under oath. Later on the commissioner would change her direction and allow her own lawyers to interview witnesses while they were under oath. I am advised that throughout the inquiry private meetings were held between the commissioner and the commission counsel. I think that in itself would show bias.

Also, as Members know, you cannot believe everything in the press. The commissioner made a decision to put the public inquiry on the Internet. When the public inquiry was over all the information was on the Internet for the public to access that in the Northwest Territories and throughout Canada, except for two things, Mr. Mrdjenovich's lawyers' final arguments, my lawyers' final arguments. They were never put on the Internet so people

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can get the facts. The only times those were put on the Internet is just hours before the final report came out. Why would that be? Because then everybody would skip over those final arguments and go right to the final report. That is working the public fairly well. I can go on and on and on about the details of the public inquiry. What I saw sitting there that would blatantly show that the public inquiry, I thought, was carried out in a biased manner. It set out to prove a point and it tried its best to prove a point. As far as the public process goes, I do not want to waste a lot of my time on that issue.

I would like to take my time today to address the report of the Conflict Commissioner. There are many interesting things in this report. The number one thing in this report, the first agenda to be addressed is the bison herd in Fort Resolution, and then it goes on to address Nova contracts. Because the commissioner, the report says there is no conflict in either one, I will brush over those for now.

I will go right into the Fort Resolution office complex. I guess this started in June of 1995, when my

community expressed an interest of building a mini mall. At that time, I worked with the chief and the subchief and supported that project from day one. They did the work and then came back to us with that work at a later date. Prior to May 16, and this mini mall was supposed to be built on the same land that Treaty 8 was signed, that was very important to the band in Fort Resolution. That was the intention, to build a mini mall with a store in it, offices and retail space for other people. That was what the main intent was at the beginning of this project. That is how the community was proceeding as well. This was going along quite fine until the negotiations for the Bay store ran into some problems in negotiations with the Northern Store. Prior to May 16, 1996, I received a call from my Chief, Don Balsillie. At that time Chief Balsillie told me that they were having trouble with the Northern Store. He asked me at that time if I was interested in selling our land in Fort Resolution. I advised him I was not interested at all in selling our land. I encouraged him at that time to go and deal with the Northern Store, try to come to an agreement with the Northern Store that is the best for our community. At the same time, I advised Don Avison, who was the principal secretary to Cabinet at the meeting. Don Avison's job as principal secretary also included giving Ministers and myself advice on conflict issues and he had done that to many, many Ministers.

On May 16th, there was a Cabinet meeting. I was advised at that time by Mr. Avison if Chief Balsillie approached you to sell him your land, do not go to the Cabinet meeting. Stay away from that meeting because you may be perceived to have a conflict. So the May 16th Cabinet meeting, I walked in there prior to the meeting starting and I told the people there at that time that I have a conflict on item 6 and come and get me after it was done. On May 24, 1996, the band made an offer to Larry Jones for his land in Fort Resolution. I did not know anything about that.

Approximately on May 26th, to the 28th, Chief Balsillie called me again. At that time he asked me once again if I was interested in selling my land in Fort Resolution. I told him I was not interested in selling my land in Fort Resolution and he continually said that, if we do not get access to that land, this project is in jeopardy. At that time I told him I would consider it, but I would have to check because the biggest problem I had is this may be perceived as a conflict if I was to sell him our land in Fort Resolution. At that time I talked to Mr. Avison again and I asked Mr.

Avison for advice on how I should handle this situation.

Mr. Avison wrote a letter to Mr. Fournier, the then Conflict of Interest Commissioner, and he wrote that letter approximately between May 28th and June 6th. In that letter Mr. Avison requested the Conflict Commissioner to assist us in what we were to do to sell the land. The letter goes further to our brief conversation on May 28, 1996, I write to seek your advice regarding a matter which the Premier has asked me to raise with you. He goes on for quite some time how the Deninu K'ue Band Council of Fort Resolution have been involved in the development of a plan to build commercial space in the community of Fort Resolution. At one point they had arrangements to develop their proposal in association with the Northern Store, which as you know does business throughout the Northwest Territories. The Northern Store was to have occupied a significant amount of the space and the balance would have been made available to office space. As the GNWT would likely be one of the occupants of these facilities if, in fact, they were constructed, it goes on to say the land is owned by the Premier and Mrs. Morin, and the very bottom of the first page which I tabled yesterday, the Premier has started to think that perhaps he should accommodate the band. That is when I started to think that I should accommodate the band. I still had not made a decision to sell the land. I could not make that decision until I got advice from the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner wrote back to us on June 6, 1996. He laid out four things.

- The land be sold at a fair market value. Fair market value would be established by an independent appraisal.
- The Deninu K'ue Band Council will have to provide a letter detailing that after due diligence they have been unable to locate any other suitable land.
- In the event that the transaction does take place and the GNWT does, in fact, become an occupant of the building to be constructed, the Premier, if the matter arose in Cabinet would declare a conflict, the nature of it and excuse himself from the meeting.
- It follows, of course, that outside of Cabinet he should have no involvement with any aspect of the matter.

That is exactly what I did, Members of the Legislative Assembly, I followed that advice to the complete

detail. The report on the other hand, describes the selling of land as a complicated transition, to myself I believe it is fairly straightforward. I did declare my interest in Cabinet, I confirmed that I received a letter.

That we confirm and respect his Cabinet decision in the above issue, Premier Don Morin declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting room taking no part in the decision or the discussion.

It is very clear in our conflict legislation that if you are not in a meeting you do not have to declare an interest. I did that, I walked into that Cabinet meeting room in the morning when that decision item was on the paper. I knew already that it would

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raise concerns. So I walked in and stayed out of the meeting. I did not even take part in the meeting and the minutes also reflect that, that the Premier came in after that item was discussed. How could I even be in a meeting to declare a conflict if I was not there? I did stay out of the meeting and I did do exactly what that letter says. So then we move on, I did that.

Now I get another phone call from the Chief again and he says once again, if we cannot buy that land, this project will not go ahead. At that time I told Mr. Avison to write to the Conflict Commissioner and get advice. He did do that. The Conflict Commissioner sent us some advice and I followed all the advice that the Conflict Commissioner sent us. Was I in conflict in selling of the land in Fort Resolution? The report says I was not in conflict for selling of the land in Fort Resolution. I had every right, myself and my wife, to sell our land in Fort Resolution. The report goes on to also say that, I was in conflict with how I dealt with it after I sold it. What was I supposed to do? I knew I could not talk to people about this. I knew I was suppose to stay out of the Cabinet meeting room. Why would I go into a meeting if I was supposed to stay out? I did not go into that meeting and I did not talk to people about it. After the Conflict Commissioner wrote back to us and told us what we were suppose to do, I instructed Mr. Avison to talk to the band, and that is in testimony as well that the Chief gave, to talk to the band and tell them what the Conflict Commissioner said. Mr. Avison was to talk to the band and tell them if they were still interested or if they were interested in buying our land in Fort Resolution, they would have to go and get an independent appraisal. They would have to provide a letter saying they exhausted all avenues of looking for other land in the community. They did both those

things and they sent it to us. I, on the other hand, had to withdraw myself from the whole process and I did that. Mr. Fournier told me to do that and I did that. In his letter, he says in here:

It follows, of course, that outside of Cabinet he should have no involvement with any aspect of the matter.

This is why Mr. Avison and I agreed that my wife Gladys had to deal with this matter and she dealt with this matter. After Mr. Avison talked to the Band in Fort Resolution, the subchief of Fort Resolution came to Yellowknife. My understanding is they received an appraisal on the land approximately on July 12, 1996. They came to Yellowknife on July 23, 1996, and made an offer to my wife, which she accepted. One thing this report is silent on, and I did everything I could to report that properly, and it is reported properly, but one thing this report is silent on, is the FMB meeting. The FMB meeting in August. Was Don Morin in that meeting? No, I was not. Why? Because it shows, clearly, and that evidence came out through me into the inquiry. The Conflict Commissioner's lawyers would not bring that evidence forward because they knew it would help to exonerate me. They knew it would prove that I did everything possible to declare my conflict. In the August FMB, it is clear in the minutes that I declared my conflict, left the room and came back after. That is when the money decision was made and the government to declare the conflict. I have done everything possible in this process to declare a conflict.

Also in this report, it goes on to say that I did not take proper action to inform my office of how they are to deal with this. I took the proper action. Who was the person tasked with dealing with conflicts from Ministers? It was the principal secretary of the day. He was the person tasked because he had legal experience. We all used him for that. He was to deal with this issue.

The report goes on to say that Mr. Danny Beaulieu phoned to have a meeting, I believe it was around July sometime. We cannot stop people from phoning our offices. Even when you MLAs call our offices, what is the first thing that happens when you talk to staff? The staff automatically get a briefing note. The report goes on to say that I used my office to influence the decision. The office never influenced any decision of this government. The office, through the principal secretary, asked for information. That was it. They asked for information. There was no evidence that says we influenced the decision. On the Fort Resolution office complex, I am not in any

conflict for selling my land. What is alleged is that I am in conflict for the way I handled it after I sold it.

Would anybody, in their right mind or any MLA in this House, walk into a conflict of interest, would walk into it intentionally? I do not think so. I know I would not. I would never do that intentionally. I tried everything that I knew to follow the rules. The rules of the day were very clear to me. The rules of the day were laid out by Mr. Fournier, and I followed those rules.

In hindsight, after reading this report, and the Conflict Commissioner says a memo should be sent to all the people, I agree with that. It should have been but was I told to do that then? No. I was told three specific things to do. The land to be sold at a fair market value. I did that. The Deninu Ku'e would have to provide a letter detailing after due diligence they have been unable to locate any other suitable land, I did that. In event the transition does take place, the GNWT does, in fact, become an occupant of the building to be constructed, the Premier of the matter raised in Cabinet would declare a conflict and the nature of it and excuse himself from the meeting. Cabinet meeting, I was not in the meeting. I walked in before it, I told them I had a conflict, call me when that item is done. I took care of that.

The FMB meeting that is not in this report. On August 16th, declared a conflict, left the room, came back after the item was dealt with. It follows the course that outside of Cabinet, he should have no involvement with any aspect of the matter. I did that. I asked Don Avison, the principal secretary to deal with it and get my wife to deal with it, as well. That is the advice I got from the Conflict Commissioner of the day.

I submitted all of these documents to declare it at the end. These documents are true documents. There is nothing deceiving or nothing unusual about these documents which I submitted to Mr. David Hamilton, as Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. This report raised issues with the second paragraph of the November 19th letter. My wife dealt with this matter, but did so in accordance with the advice which we sought and received from Mr. Fournier in the capacity he then had as Chief Conflict of Interest Commissioner. I did ask for that advice. I did receive it and I asked my wife to deal with it. It is very clear, in this last paragraph, that I did do that.

As far as I am concerned, am I in conflict with the way I declared I submitted these documents, I do not think so, Mr. Chairman. I have done everything possible. You will also have to put in your mind, would a

reasonable person, an MLA, each and every one of you, would you actually, intentionally walk into a conflict? I do

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not think so. I know I would not. I did everything possible under that issue to try and make sure that everybody knew that I was declaring a conflict.

On the house, Mr. Chairman. On the house. The report says the Premier acknowledged that he had discussed and taken political heat over the house with Mrdjnovich and they began their discussions about the construction. In fact, Mr. Chairman, I said that there may be political heat at the time or about the time the lease was signed. The reason I said that, Mr. Chairman, is that I know that anybody sees a politician moving into a new house, that is the political heat you are going to get. You all have to admit that. Some will believe that politicians should live in tents. I do not think so. I rented this house on 3 Otto Drive with the best of intentions. On the house on 3 Otto Drive, how did I end up there?

Did I intentionally go to rent the house to get myself in a conflict? I do not think so. I looked around this town for a house just like other Ministers are supposed to look around this town for a house. I looked all over the place for a house, I never did find a suitable house for myself and my family. After I had seen one house, up by where Kelvin lives, of Nova Construction's, I found out at that time that house would not be suitable as well. At that time, Nova Construction, through Mr. Mrdjnovich, offered to look at building a house and he found some land that was quite acceptable to us. He found the place to build. I told him at that time that I had a budget to work with to rent a house. That is all the money I had to work with. I looked high and low for another house to accommodate myself and my family. I could not find one. Mr. Mrdjnovich agreed to build a house and he agreed to do it approximately within my budget.

What type of housing market is there in Yellowknife at the high-end rental rate? There are not that many houses out there that you can rent at the high-end rental rate. The only thing in evidence about the rent is similar to the rent that I am paying is Stefan Simek's house. The rent on that house is \$3,000 a month. The rent that I am paying is \$2,800 a month. Lauchie MacDonald, the expert who was called in, he testified that this was not a custom house, that it was an average, normal, big house. He also testified that the rent was within range. He did do that. Other than that,

there is no evidence. There are 3,800 pages of transcripts, 17,000 documents. There is no evidence about the high-end rental market in Yellowknife. How come there is no evidence, because there is basically very little in the high-end rental market. Who, in their right mind, would go and rent a house for \$2,800?

There is a certain level, once you hit it, you are going to go buy a house. Because we as Ministers of the government have a temporary accommodation allowance, that puts us in a very unique situation. It puts us in a situation where we have to go out and rent. That is what I did. On the rental of that unit, at 3 Otto Drive, did I pay enough rent? Did Mrdjenovich make enough money? Should I have asked him the cost of land? Should I have asked him the cost of construction? Should I have asked him the cost of coverage, for the light fixtures, all those things? I do not think that was proper of me to ask that. All I asked him, how much is the rent? He told me the rent was \$2,800 a month, so I agreed to pay that. What more should a renter ask? Should I have went to the Conflict Commissioner to ask? I do not think I should have. I went there when I was selling something, I went there when we were selling land to get advice, because I believed that I needed advice when you are selling land. Should you get advice when you are going out to purchase or to rent? I did not think I had to. I still do not think, today, that I had to.

Would a reasonable person be able to separate fact from rumour on this transition? I think a reasonable person would be able to. During the inquiry, and this report says that Nova Construction makes 8.8 something percent profit on this unit. That seemed to be good enough for the lending institutions, that seemed to be good enough for the banks, the banks lent him the money. That was good enough for Hydro Quebec on their investment, but it is not good enough for this report. The report says that he should have made at least ten percent. What would be ten percent of \$2,800? What would be the rest of 1.2 percent? It would work out to approximately \$33.60.

One other thing that was also introduced is that I get an accommodation allowance, a temporary accommodation allowance, just like all the other Ministers. If I choose to pay out of my own pocket, more money than that, that is my choice. I get the \$35,000 a year from the government, temporary accommodation allowance, every Minister from out of town gets that. Is that a benefit? Some may see it as that. The report saw it as that. I think it is a temporary accommodation allowance, but I also pay, out of my own pocket, an additional \$6,000 a year, out of my

own pocket, to rent that house. We pay over \$40,000 a year to rent that house.

How would I ever think of getting into a conflict when I go out to rent a house, I am paying more than my rental accommodation, and it is costing me money out of my own pocket to house my family in Yellowknife? That was my choice, but it should not be perceived as a conflict. It should be perceived as a person who made a choice and made the right choice, to pay, and I have paid for it. I cannot see, Mr. Chairman, how anybody, any reasonable well-informed person, can make a conclusion or have a perception that I would be in conflict. I am renting a house, I am paying for it. What more can I do?

Now we turn to one of my more favourite subjects, the Lahm Ridge Tower, the famous Lahm Ridge Tower. What was the complaint? Did Don Morin use his influence? Was Don Morin involved? What did Don Morin have to do with the Lahm Ridge Tower? That was the complaint. What did I have to do with it? Zip, nothing. I said that a year ago just about. A year ago is when that started. I told you all, I had nothing to do with the Lahm Ridge Tower. Seventy-five witnesses interviewed, 45 witnesses called to the stand, 17,000 documents, 3,800 pages of transcript. Was Don Morin involved in the Lahm Ridge Tower? No. That is what it took.

Has the answer changed since a year ago? No. I am still not involved in the Lahm Ridge Tower, but alas, I am still in conflict. Why am I in conflict? Because I stood up in this Legislative Assembly, I stood up in the Legislative Assembly to defend the government. That is my job. What did I do when I first heard about the Lahm Ridge Tower? I did my job. That is what I did. I asked for a briefing note immediately from the department. I got the briefing notes. I read the briefing notes. I did not see anything wrong with that. The questions kept coming. I asked for a meeting with the people involved, the bureaucrats, the civil servants. They told me what happened. They said this, this,

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this, a good deal for the government. I still think today that was a good deal for the government. I did my job. Then I came into this House. I stood up and defended the actions of the deputy ministers, I defended the actions of the Ministers and the government. That is the job of the Premier, but I am in conflict for that. Why am I in conflict for that? How was I to know when I stood over there just about a year ago and defended the government, I am

intentionally in conflict for that? I never heard such a ludicrous thing. How can you be intentionally in conflict for doing your job?

I do not negotiate contracts with deputy ministers. I leave that up to Lew Voytilla. He is the guy that takes care of that end of it. What do I do when deputy ministers are hired? What do I do before, when I used to interview them once a year to see how they are doing in their department? I would always assure them. As long as you do your job, follow the policies and the programs and do that right and follow the policies of the government, I will protect you as a deputy minister, that is my job too. If you do not, then I cannot protect you. I always assured them of that and to this day and this day as well, I am still standing here and I will protect them for past actions because it is not right. When a man gives his word to another person, he should stick by it, and I do.

I stood up and I defended the government and the deputy ministers on the Lahm Ridge Tower, but did I influence the decision on the Lahm Ridge Tower? Low and behold, no, I never interfered in the decision. There are Ministers responsible for that. They did not interfere in the decision, it was a decision made by a deputy minister. He had the authority to make it, and he made it. I still end up in a conflict situation because I ended up standing up in the House. According to this report, I did that intentionally. Once again, would a sane person walk into a conflict with his eyes open? Answer that question to yourself. Put yourself in my shoes, would a sane individual actually walk into a conflict? I do not think so.

Post-employment relationship with Roland Bailey. The report goes on to say, it is clear from the evidence that Mr. Morin was aware of the relationship between two of his most senior staff, senior advisors, however, there is no indication that he took any steps to address any potential conflict or appearance of conflict that might arise from that relationship. What are the rules that we follow? What were the rules that we were following then? They sign on deputy minister contracts, total confidentiality. You all know Roland Bailey. You all know my past principal secretary and EA, Ferne Babiuk. You cannot ask for more professional people than those two. I take people at face value and I believe that they did nothing wrong. I know they signed the contract and I know they stuck by that contract. This report goes on to say that the deputy minister negotiated Mr. Bailey's employment contract directly with the Premier. I have never negotiated one employment contract with any deputy. That is what Lew Voytilla's job is, to negotiate that.

Not mine. We just make the decision to hire them. They are the one who deal with them after that.

The report goes on to say that because of my relationship with Mr. Bailey, that would put me into a conflict situation. Because of my relationship with Ms. Babiuk that would put me into a conflict situation. Once again I ask you to ask yourself, would a person put themselves in a conflict situation on purpose? I do not think so. I am a person that was born and raised in the Northwest Territories. Friendship means a lot to me, but it also means that just because you do have friends does not mean you abuse your friendship. Friendship means respect as well. Total respect. I have told each and everyone of you, I never called on your friendship to help me out here. That is how much friendship means to me. I would never put that in between any of us. That is how I carry out my duties. I would never ever call on anybody's friendship and I do not expect my friends to call on their friendship with me for any favours as well because if they attempted to do that, they would no longer be my friend.

There are other issues in this report, other issues I did not even know I was being accused of being in conflict. I did not know it until the report came out. I was wondering at some point, when I was on the stand, why is this lawyer asking me these questions? I was wondering about that. I had no idea when I was on the stand that they were investigating requests for visa, fishing trip, what other one was there, inaccurate documents. No idea at all, when I was being questioned on the stand. They did not let us know. They did not have the decency to let us know that we were being investigated for that.

What about the request for a visa? Here is a territorial resident that phoned my office to ask for assistance because his sister-in-law was going through a very hard time, lost her husband. We worked, the office worked with our MP, Ethel Blondin-Andrew, to request a visa. That is our job. We have to do that. As MLAs, people come to you and ask for help. Do you ask them, are you a Dene, Metis, non-aboriginal, are you my friend or do you just ask a simple question, how can we help? That is the question I always ask, how can I help? Irrelevant whether they are your friends or not, that is our job to help people, but once again the report goes on to say that because I used my office, I am in a technical breach of the conflict.

Was Premier Morin's fishing trip with Roland Bailey in the spring of 1997 a benefit? Was it directly or

indirectly connected with the performance of his duties of office? Could it erode public confidence or trust in the integrity and partiality of the Member?

Well, Mr. Chairman, how did that fishing trip come about? Mr. Bailey told me that he was going that weekend to Plummer's Lodge to go fishing. At that time, I had just finished dealing with an elder and some of the elders in Lutsek'e. I asked Mr. Bailey if Mr. Plummer would mind if I come in there to look at the airstrip because there is a graveyard at the end of the airstrip. The elders had concerns that the airstrip might possibly be over that graveyard. Mr. Plummer gave me permission to go in there to take a look and that is what I did.

Do you know that I have been invited to Plummer's Lodge many times before that. I never did go because I had no reason to go. I have been invited on trips to Edmonton to go golfing on other things. I never go because I had no reason to go and this one, I had a reason to go. I wanted to see for myself because that is a very serious thing if a runway is built over a grave. I went in there and looked and satisfied myself that the graves were all off on one side. I did catch a trip and I did not pay for it. Why did I not report it? Because I thought I was doing my job as an MLA. Why would I have to report it? According to the tone of this report, what if I did pay for that trip? What if I did pay for that trip out of my constituency fund? Maybe the findings would

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have been that I am still in conflict because I subsidized a fishing trip for Roland Bailey. I do not know, but I do know that I would not intentionally put myself into a conflict situation. I would never do that.

Inaccurate documents. Document 246 turned out to be less than an accurate replacement for the minutes of May 16, 1996, Cabinet meeting. They asked that question on the stand. They asked me that question. Was it meant to be a replacement for the Cabinet minutes? I told them at that time, read the document, it is exactly what it means. We confirmed that in respect to the Cabinet decision on the above issue, Premier Don Morin declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting room taking no part in discussions or decisions. That, my friends is exactly what happened. I okayed this document. I never myself asked anybody to sign it. I okayed it because it is the truth. That is exactly what happened. All the evidence that was in the inquiry says that is exactly what happened too. So, this is not an untrue document, this is

absolutely the truth, this document. I cannot agree with this report's finding on this issue.

The authors of document 246 failed to identify on the face of the document the date and reference of the meeting. Also, when was the document produced? May 15, 1998. My Cabinet colleagues have been to many meetings. When was the meeting? May 16, 1996, two years before that. When did it come to light? October, 1998. I have no control over my friends, no control on any person's memory, but this is one incident that happened within one and a half minutes in a three-year span and people are asked to remember exactly what happened. They all agreed. I was not in that meeting room.

Then the report goes on to say, it is not accurate that Mrs. Morin dealt with the matter at this suggestion that the transition was handled by Mr. Morin. The suggestion even stronger because Mr. Morin decided to enclose the only document his wife dealt with, the offer to purchase. They asked for the other documents, we gave them the documents, the cancelled cheque made out to Gladys Morin, the offer to purchase and the acceptance all made out to Gladys Morin. That is accurate. The offer to purchase tendered with the letter is in itself inaccurate because it states that the land was in Mrs. Morin's name. The land, in fact, was in Mr. Morin's name. There is no clarification on this inaccuracy in the disclosure statements. Who developed the offer to purchase document? The lawyers, that is who developed it. They are the ones who offered to purchase the land from my wife. I did not know it was not in my name. I know that the land was in my name, but it made no difference to me. Everything we own, we own together regardless of whose name it is in. I did not know that was there. Mrs. Morin did not deal with the matter in accordance with the advice which we sought and received from Mr. Fournier. As this suggests, that Mr. Fournier advised that Mrs. Morin should be involved. Mr. Fournier did not advise that she become involved. Mr. Fournier did advise in his final paragraph. It follows, of course, that outside of Cabinet he should have no involvement with the aspect of the matter. That is the advice I got. Mr. Avison then said I cannot deal with it, your wife has to deal with it. So my wife did deal with the issue.

The letter from Andrew Butler. It was undated. Yes it was. It came from someone who had very little to do with the actual negotiations. I do not know that. It contained the following falsehood, all discussions and arrangements were with Gladys Morin. Don Morin took no part in the matter. This again, absorbs the

actual transition. Again, it gives the impression that Mr. Morin had some reason or desire to hide the deal with his involvement in it.

Once we got the advice from Mr. Fournier on how to deal with this land issue, that is when Mr. Avison was given instruction by myself to deal with it and my wife was also. When does the transition of land happen, how does that happen? People have to give you a written offer. They did that. The subchief of Fort Resolution came into Yellowknife, he gave a written offer in July to my wife. She accepted the offer and the deal was done. That is how it was done. I had no involvement in it. After we had decided to sell the land I had no involvement in it.

Once again, Mr. Chairman, the Commissioner states that document 246 turned out to be less than accurate replacement for the minutes of May 16. The document was not intended to be a replacement for the minutes of May 16. I have indicated and I have been ostracized for replacing a document that I considered to be true, before the Ministers and having the Ministers sign this and return the same to myself. I presented the Ministers with the document and I knew that document was true. I did not seek to influence their signing of the document and it has no control over whether they had a specific recollection of that or not.

Once again, would a person put themselves in a conflict of interest position intentionally? I do not think so, Mr. Chairman, I do not think any Member of this House would. There are many, many issues to be dealt with in this conflict report. They go from the house, Fort Resolution office complex, post-employment relationship with Roland Bailey, other issues that I was unaware of until the end, the visa on the brother's death, and the fishing trip and the inaccurate documents. This report, Mr. Chairman, as far as I am concerned is a very biased report. There are so many things in this report that are inaccurate that say that I did things that I would not do. Many times in this report the evidence that was given during the public inquiry is intentionally missed in this report as well.

When we sold our land in Fort Resolution, we did not want to sell that land. We had no intention of selling that land. The only reason we sold was to help the band move ahead on their project. Once we agreed, I sought advice, I took the advice, I followed the advice. I would not put myself in a conflict position. I would not bring that type of situation to my family, my

community or myself intentionally. It is absurd to think that I would do that intentionally.

The house in Yellowknife. Maybe the report thinks that Don Morin does not deserve to live in a big fancy house in Yellowknife and not pay for it. Maybe the report thinks that ministerial temporary accommodation allowance is a benefit that politicians do not deserve. I do not know, but that is the policy of the day. That is the policy we use and I pay the extra \$6,000 a year out of my own pocket for that house. My family are comfortably housed in Yellowknife. How can any reasonable person knowing all the facts, think that I would have a conflict for doing that? I ask you that? How would they even think that? All I did was rent a house. I needed a house just like anybody else. I took care of the government interests. I put into that a 90 day

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acceptance clause so that the government did not have any long-term lease. What did I do wrong there? I went out, I rented a house. That is what I did. I knew that I was going to take political heat over that house because any Member, politician moving into a big house would take the heat. I subsidized that house as well. I am the one who pays that \$6,000. You do not hear me complaining about that, but it is true. So I do not believe that I am in a conflict in that house.

The Lahm Ridge Tower. Did I have anything to do with the Lahm Ridge Tower? Did I influence that decision? No, I did not and that was the complaint. I did not influence the Lahm Ridge Tower deal. It is as simple as that. I said that a year ago, I will say that today. I did not influence that deal. Once again, was I supposed to know last February the new Members were asking questions in this House, when I stood over there and answered those questions that that would put me in a conflict situation? I intentionally stood up there right in front of the whole Northwest Territories and put myself in a conflict situation? I do not think so. I would not do that, I would do my job. I never back down from doing my job and I thought that was my job and I still think that today.

The post-employment relationship with Roland Bailey. When we came here in 1995, we had a tough, tough job ahead of us as politicians. We had to cut over \$200 million from the government, \$200 million from our budget. The government asked this man to help us do it, to oversee it and he did and we managed to achieve that. He did not like the job. He said that on

the testimony. Worst job he ever had in his life. So he decided to leave. He resigned as a Cabinet secretary and went out on his merry way to go back into the private sector where he had come from. I was accused, Aurora Fund, did Don Morin influence the decision to hire Roland Bailey to manage this Aurora Fund? No, I had nothing to do with that. Did not even know about it until after it happened.

How about this petroleum products privatization, request for proposal. Did Don Morin have any influence over that? Was Don Morin involved in that? No. Did not even know about it until after it was done.

Lahm Ridge Tower. Did not know about that until after it was done. Does a man have a right in this Northwest Territories to go out and make a living after he leaves government? From what I am hearing, maybe not. I do not think that we as northerners who stand here daily and say, we have to hire north, we have to promote aboriginal people, we have to work amongst ourselves in the north to make the north a better place, then what happens when we do that, when somebody did that? He gets ostracized for that.

Yes, that is right, I went to Asia, as the Premier, I was requested to go to Asia to promote the Aurora Fund. I was requested by then the Finance Minister, John Todd. I think that was about a two week trip. Did not want to go. Why would I take two weeks to travel over there to Asia in that hot country and sweat and try to promote the Northwest Territories. I went. I went to promote the Northwest Territories. That was my job and I must have done a pretty good job because we sold out the fund, but, low and behold, I travelled with Roland Bailey, my friend. I am in conflict again. We have to be realistic. We have to have reality. My lawyer said during his closing comments:

This public inquiry is like Tarzan swinging through the jungle grabbing from vine to vine with his feet never touching the ground where reality really is.

Sometimes I think that way too. So I am not intentionally in conflict with my relationship with Roland Bailey. I have told you already, each and every one of you what friendship means to me. I am a northerner, been brought up in a big family. I know what friends are. I have told you already that I would never call on friendship for any favour, just because you are my friend and I would expect none of my friends to do that as well, and they never have because they would not be my friend if they had.

You know you go back to the original thing. Bison, the bison herd in Fort Resolution. From the undisputed testimony of all witnesses, Mr. Morin was the contact person for the interests of the DKFN and those of Mr. Mrdjenovich and the buffalo herd were the first made known. Both the DKFN and Mr. Mrdjenovich contacted Morin about their interests in the bison. Now this is the one right here. Listen well. He provided the necessary information to interested parties to allow them to put together a deal which was for the benefit of his constituents. I will tell you how that happened. I was going through the airport in Yellowknife. Mr. Mrdjenovich walked up to me, he had just come back from Norman Wells, I believe. This Hanging Ice bison ranch was in the paper. It was public knowledge and he says, is the government interested in selling that ranch in Fort Smith? Yes, we are. Well, what do you know about it? I do not know much about that buffalo ranch. Go see Joe Handley, he is the deputy minister of Renewable Resources. Go see him, he will know all about it. It is his department.

My Chief calls me, he says is the government interested in selling the buffalo? I said yes, he said, well who is all interested in it? So I told him. Mike Mrdjenovich, a businessman from Norman Wells, the Town of Fort Smith, HDA of Fort Smith, the band and the Metis of Fort Smith, as well as, that was it, that is what I told him. He says, well what do you know about it, I said I do not know a lot. Phone Joe Handley, he knows about it, he is the deputy minister of Renewable Resources, and that is what I did.

What did I do, according to this report? He provided all the necessary information to interested parties, to allow them to put the deal together for the benefit of his constituents. I think that is stretching it very far. People are allowed to come up and talk to you. People are allowed to ask you, as a politician, information on the government. Also, in the bison part, she finds that Chief Balsillie and the subchief are very questionable witnesses because it looked like they were trying to protect me, that I had no involvement in the Buffalo herd, in selling them the Buffalo herd. I did not have any involvement in the selling of the Buffalo herd because I was far too busy and they did not need my involvement. They are quite capable of doing that on their own.

Now we go back to this report and how the process happened. I have told you, time and time again, that I had a problem with the process. I said that from day one, 1995 is when I raised that concern. I was assured, by the law clerk, I was assured that if any

Member had a conflict or there was a conflict allegation against them, they can get an independent Conflict Commissioner. Then we moved on. Then I got into this process. I do not think it is a fair process. I think the process was biased,

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I have raised some concerns through this report. It is a 150 page report. There are so many concerns throughout it that I cannot raise them all in this opportunity, but I will raise them as we come from issue to issue.

What I will say, is during the past three years, I enjoyed representing the people of the Northwest Territories and I did that in the best way I knew how. I am proud of being a northerner. I am proud of being from Fort Resolution and I was proud to be the Premier of the Northwest Territories and representing the people. I did not ever, ever go out and be deceitful. I am an honest person. I never go out and lie to people. I deal with people straight up and you all know it. Some of you may not like my politics, some of you may disagree with me and I will disagree with you, but when I do, you will know it, because I will tell you straight to your face. That is how I am. I do not go around and talk about people. The question you have to ask yourself, Members, and it is a test that has never been put to all these questions, it is a test that was only put to item number two, and that was Nova contracts. The test was, can a reasonable, well-informed person separate rumour from reality in respect to this allegation? If you put that same test to them all, after you know the facts, can it pass that test? I do not think so.

Mr. Chairman, I must say that the last ten months have been trying months for myself and my family, but it has made us stronger. I will assure you of that. I never, ever thought I would stand up in this House and say thank God for Jeannie Marie Jewell, but I say that today. She made me tough to one extent and when I get re-elected next fall, I will say thank God for Jane Groenewegen, as well.

What have I learned? I have learned that processes are flawed and legislation could be flawed as well. I have learned that you can be on a train and you can be doing down the track, not liking your destination, but no way to alternate. I saw it through that public process. I saw what was going to happen. I could not change it, I had to go down that road. Now, I am here today before you, finally, people who are reasonable, people who are fair and just. Listen to what I have to

say, read it in Hansard, and I will answer any questions you have through your debate. You have an opportunity through your debate, to ask any question, ask them and when I respond in my ten minutes, I will answer them. I am telling each and every one of you, I have to go back to the last one, I think it is the conclusions in here, somewhere. I cannot find it, but in the conclusions, Mr. Chairman, this report basically says I knew I had a conflict, I walked right into the conflict, I intentionally did the conflict. Each and every one of you know me. Am I that stupid to do that? I do not think so. I have made mistakes in the past and I will make them in the future, I do not make mistakes intentionally. I did everything I could, as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, as your Premier, I did everything I could to avoid conflict.

In the selling of the land, I went the extra mile to avoid that conflict. Even to me, I did not like to do that. I did not like to sell the land, not because I wanted to keep it forever, it is because it would have been perceived as a conflict. In the end, the report says it was no conflict, it was just how I dealt with it, but I tried my best. I tried my very, very best to avoid a conflict. I have been through that before. I did not want to go there again. I worked hard with the advice I got from other people, from the principal secretary, to avoid conflict. I worked hard to make sure I did everything according to the rules and I still believe I did.

I do not accept the report, Mr. Chairman. If, in fact, there was a breach inadvertently, maybe an error in judgement, but made in good faith, I can accept that. I do not accept that I will do anything to harm the people of the Northwest Territories, my family or myself. It is my duty to serve the people of the north and I have served the people of the north for the past 11 years. I never make mistakes, and I will say it again, I never make mistakes deliberately, or with an intention to mislead or be devious.

Mr. Chairman, once again, I will tell you all. Friendship is important to me, but I do not abuse friendship. Those who are my friends do not abuse friendship. I came into this job 11 years ago to represent the people of Tu Nedhe, Fort Resolution and Lutselk'e. I worked very hard in this Assembly to represent those people. I worked four years as an Ordinary Member. I worked four years as a Cabinet Minister and three years as a Premier. I worked to represent the people of my riding. I worked to represent the people of the Northwest Territories. I take my responsibility very serious. Maybe sometimes, too serious, according to my wife and kids. I spend too much time maybe on

my job. My sister asked my son the other day about myself and him and he told her. That was kind of a waking for me. My youngest, he says, you know, when I get up in the morning, I do not know if my Dad will be home tonight, I do not even know if he is in the territories or in the country. Maybe I do take the job too seriously, and maybe I will have time now to spend with my family.

Mr. Chairman, in the end it is up to you, all MLAs, how you take this report. If you can believe that I would walk into a conflict with the full intention of doing it, then accept the report. If you believe that I am devious, a liar, or not an honest person, then accept the report. If you believe that there is any bias, if you believe that I stand before you today speaking the truth, and telling you exactly the way it was, then do not accept the report. I have worked hard on relationships, I have worked hard on behalf of the Northwest Territories people and I will continually do it, no matter where I sit in this House.

It has been an interesting year. It has been a little bit of a tough year, but we will get through that. I know, when I came into this job, I had not intention of misusing my job. I came here for one reason and one reason only, and that is to work on behalf of the people of Tu Nedhe and for the people of the Northwest Territories. That is what I have done.

Once again, I will say to you, if you believe that I would intentionally put my family and myself through this, to go into a conflict position, then I must be insane because I would never, ever do that. I am here to work as an MLA, I am here to work with the people of the Northwest Territories. I love the people of the Northwest Territories. I would never abuse my position to benefit myself. I have tried my best to make sure that the public sees, as well, and anybody that knows me, knows I would not do that, that I would not abuse my position. People interpret things, people look at things differently, but in reality, if you see something move in the bush, do not pull the trigger until you are sure it is a moose because it might not be. That is reality.

Can a reasonable, well-informed person separate rumour from

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reality in respect to these allegations? I believe a reasonable, well-informed person can separate reality in respect to all these allegations. If, they were to get the facts and they sure could not depend on CBC

North or CBC Newsworld, to get those facts. I will tell you that right now. I have learned that over the last three years.

I came here today to tell you my side of the story. I have not had a chance for ten months to talk about this. That is fine, but I thank you all for giving me the opportunity today to talk to this issue. You know, I read this report and its 150 pages, I read it once, I read it twice, three times, four times maybe and there was something wrong with it. I could not figure it out, what was wrong with that report, until two nights ago. I finally figured out what was wrong with this report, there was the one test that you put to everything, a reasonable, well-informed person, but there is also another test.

The reason I could not figure out what was wrong with it, is because it was not there. It was silent. What was it silent on? It was silent on us, the northern people. It was silent on the northern society. Is it a big deal in the Northwest Territories to sit down and have coffee with the Premier? I do not think so. Is it a big deal to play pool with the Premier? I do not think so. Know the taxi drivers by name, know the waiters by name, know everybody. One time I told my friend, Mr. Kakfwi, I can go from Fitzgerald to Tuktoyaktuk and back and not want for a bed because I know people up and down the valley and I have been able to meet other people clear across the Baffin and made friends with them all. I love the north, that is what is missing in here. No reality about the Northwest Territories.

We are a small number of people. Everybody knows everybody. It was said to me, that you know, out of all those people that come as witnesses there, out of these players in this, eight of them are clients of one law firm in this city because everybody knows everybody. The report is silent, totally, totally silent on the northern society. It is supposed to reflect how we live today. It is supposed to reflect that we know everybody. It is supposed to reflect that we are unique. We brag to other people. We go south and say, we are the greatest place in Canada to live because everybody knows everybody, it is small, people help each other, work with each other. That is what our northern society is about. This report, Mr. Chairman, does not even reflect what northern society is. It never even mentions it once. That is what I found to be the biggest problem with this report, for myself, when I was reading it.

Once again, colleagues, I tell you, today that I am a believer and I believe in my heart that every Member of this Legislative Assembly came here to work on

behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories. I believe you are all fair people. I believe you are all just people. So I leave you today with that thought in your mind. I will listen to what you have to say and I will try my best to respond within the rules of debate. I tell you one thing for sure, that Don Morin is not a liar. Don Morin is not deceitful. I am an honest man. I have been brought up to be an honest person. I have been taught not to steal. I have been taught not to be disrespectful to people, and I never have. Since I was 14 years old, I have been standing on my own two feet. Since I was 14 years old, I have been making my own living and I never ever asked for anything from anybody in life and I never, ever asked for a favour, because I do not need it. I can stand on my own two feet. I tell each and every one of you, as well, think clear, because you are supposed to be here today, I asked you at the beginning, leave your politics at the door, it is my life you are dealing with, my family and my friends. I ask you to come here with a clear conscience and deal with it. Deal with it in fairness and in justice, nothing more, nothing less. Thank you. Mahsi Cho.

--Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Item 3, I will repeat item 3, that all other Members, other than Mr. Morin, is permitted up to 45 minutes for initial comment and we are dealing with Tabled Document 37-13(6). The floor is now open for comments and statements on this tabled document. Members are indicating. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am just wondering if you were considering taking a break right now. If not, I could proceed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. You should proceed now please.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First off, I would like to deal with the section of the report which addresses the matter of the Fort Resolution office complex and a Cabinet meeting where a proposal for a negotiated lease related to that complex was discussed. Mr. Morin talked about this in his discussion. Document 246, is a letter which was submitted to the commission inquiry in spring of 1998. That letter is

included in the report on page 35 and was signed by Mr. Todd, Mr. Arlooktoo, Mr. Ng and me.

Mr. Chairman, unlike Ministers Arlooktoo and Todd who spoke to their signing of the letter at the Conflict of Interest Inquiry, I was not called. I had hoped to follow Mr. Arlooktoo yesterday, when he spoke to the issue, but when he was ruled out of order I could not. I welcome this opportunity to speak to this issue in the House. Mr. Chairman, while some will see carelessness, a lack of attention to detail, I can understand why this letter might be a bigger issue in some people's minds.

I was interviewed by CBC last Thursday, the day after the Conflict Commissioner's Report was made public. That interview aired on NorthBeat last week. As I said during that interview, I would not sign the same letter today. I should have taken more time to check the details of the letter. I should have asked for revisions or clarifications in the letter before signing it. Mr. Chairman, when I first read the letter I was thinking about whether Mr. Morin had discussed the issue or influenced the decision at that meeting. Mr. Chairman, the letter was presented to me, as the Commissioner noted, as truthful and accurate.

Premier Morin was not in the Cabinet meeting when the Fort Resolution deal was discussed. That was my recollection at the time I signed the letter and it bears repeating. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner was satisfied that that was indeed the case. Now while the Premier was not present when the matter was discussed, and the Conflict Commissioner noted, "that is both important and a sign of good faith", she also concluded that not being present may not be enough. I understand this point and I take the lessons that go with it. Even if Mr. Morin told me

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that he would not be in the Cabinet meeting until after we dealt with Fort Resolution issue, that does not disclose the nature of the conflict, nor does it get into the official record. I do understand that both are required.

Mr. Chairman, I should have reviewed the minutes of the meeting personally to ensure that my memory was accurate before signing the letter. So, Mr. Chairman, yes, it was a mistake to sign the letter in which the details were not accurate. Putting myself in Mrs. Groenewegen's shoes, I can understand how she would see signs of a conspiracy. I apologize to Mrs. Groenewegen for not being more careful at the

time and for signing a document that could give her that impression. I apologize to my constituents and to Members of this House, for not being more careful in checking the details before signing the letter.

Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier, I know there will be some who can accept that. Others will not and I will have to prove myself to them. I have spent over 20 years in the north in public service and business. During that time, I have built up a strong record of honesty and integrity. I know most people will keep that record in mind in considering this issue. Make no mistake, I believe the voters deserve and will continue to demand rightfully, that we, as elected leaders, must live up to the highest standards in disclosing and avoiding conflict of interest. So would I sign the same letter today? No. Did I lie or try to mislead the inquiry or the public? No. Am I perfect? No. Nor will I be perfect tomorrow or the next day. Those are honest answers, Mr. Chairman. I am human like all of us. I did not knowingly sign a false document. Mr. Chairman, the people who voted for me to represent them in this House know my record for honesty, fairness and hard work. Mr. Chairman, I take their trust seriously.

Mr. Chairman, I would now like to turn and look at the report in general. I must say that this has been a long and difficult process for all of us. I know the personal toll on those directly involved, Mr. Morin, Mrs. Groenewegen, and what it must have meant to their families. We can all learn some lessons from this inquiry and their suggestions for change to government policies and procedures that must be considered as a result of the report. Mr. Chairman, I accept that elected leaders and legislators must be prepared to be held to an even higher standard of accountability than most. We are entrusted with a great deal of authority and with that comes greater responsibility for our actions than is expected of other people. The consequences for elected leaders not being seen to live up to their trust requirements, must be appropriate according to their actions.

Mr. Chairman, I have had phone calls from constituents suggesting that the conflict inquiry has taken up a lot of our time and a lot of our money, and that we should move on as quickly as possible. Most have told me that they see Mr. Morin's resignation as Premier as punishment, punishment over and above the reprimands recommended by the Commissioner, even though she noted that his resignation would be concurrent with reprimands in most other jurisdictions. Mr. Chairman, as many have urged in this Assembly in the past week, we must focus on restoring

confidence in the Assembly. In the rest of the 13th Assembly, we must focus on stability. The Assembly and this government must get on with the work that needs to be done in the next year. That is, get on with the final preparations for the creation of two new territories, set the stage for a renewed, less dependent fiscal relationship with the federal government, and, with claimant organizations, and the federal government, continue to work towards the settling of land claims and the conclusion of self-government negotiations. Mr. Chairman, a stable government is very important for the economy so banks and investors remain confident and willing to invest in northern business.

Mr. Chairman, as we consider this report I would urge Members to be mindful that we are exercising one of the most serious responsibilities that we have as Members. We have the authority to judge and to impose punishment with respect to this matter. In doing that, we must consider the best interests of the people we represent. We must consider the implications on the public, on our government and on the Member. Mr. Chairman, in considering this report it is important to remember, and I know there have been some who have suggested that we should really examine in some detail what has been recommended as punishment for the Member, but it is important to point out that the commissioner said that, had the Member used the opportunity of being Premier to put cash in his pocket, that she would have recommended that he lose his seat. The implication is that she does not believe that he has put cash in his pocket. Mr. Chairman, we should adopt or accept the report and move on with the important business of government.

One important step has already been taken with the establishment of a committee of senior Government of the Northwest Territories staff, to review and recommend changes to the procedures followed in the Government of the Northwest Territories to ensure conformance with conflict of interest legislation. Mr. Chairman, we must agree to act on the recommendations this group brings forward and move quickly to restore public confidence in this government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Comments from the membership at this time. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if the committee would like to take a short break, then I will begin my comments after the break. I would be conducive to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do we wish to take a break before Mr. Picco makes his general comments? We shall take a short break.

--Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I would like to call the committee back to order. We are on 37-13(6), Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. Each Member is permitted up to 45 minutes for initial comments on the tabled document. I have two names on the list, Mr. Picco and Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, last weekend when I was home in Iqaluit I spoke to numerous constituents concerning the Conflict of Interest Report by Ms. Crawford. Indeed, I have had public service announcements on CBC Radio in Iqaluit and also ads on the local cable television and I have had copies of the report available at my office. I have asked for feedback from the constituents. As of today, I have

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received something like 70 e-mails, numerous phone calls and faxes. I guess because the public service announcements, Mr. Chairman, have been on CBC radio, I have received faxes from across the territories, including Arviat I might add.

Mr. Chairman, policing your own is very difficult in any walk of life and that includes politics. For example, here in the Northwest Territories, and I will specifically refer to Breakwater Project in my riding, where there is a limited number of contracts. I knew the scope of the project and budgeted amounts before being approved in the budget. It would have been very easy for me to call a supposed blind trust partner and say, bring in extra C7 caterpillar, bulldozer and bid x number of dollars on the said project. Here in the Northwest Territories the conflict of interest filings are done by each Member with an honour system. That is to say, Mr. Chairman, they are not being checked by a third party or an independent person. The reality

is, the public at large has so much current cynicism towards politicians that not only do you have to be perceived to be clear of conflict, but you also have to demonstrate it almost on a daily basis.

Mr. Chairman, allegations of conflict could be made for example in the Northwest Territories by anyone in the general public at large. That could end up having x number of complaints of conflict, causing the government to be impeded in its legislative agenda. Also, since we have no party politics here in the Northwest Territories, a complaint becomes non-partisan. It is not a Conservative against a Liberal or a Liberal against an NDP for example. It can become personally based. The optimum would be to find legislation that is not onerous enough to stop government from doing its job, but is officious enough to carry on the mandate required of disclosure to the public at large, so it allows the public trust to be fulfilled, without hamstringing the government.

Now I say this in all seriousness. When we look at the approach being brought forward in legislation, and what has been written about in the public at large over the last couple of years and indeed, Mr. Chairman, over the last couple of weeks and months here in the Northwest Territories. I would like to give a couple of examples. An example, Mr. Chairman, is the formal federal Cabinet Minister, Mr. John Crosby. Mr. Crosby, in his recent biography talks about the implementation of the blind trust policy in the federal government. Which he said, matter of fact, did not work because the blind trust of course is only blind to the person who cannot see it. It is not necessarily blind to the person involved in it. That was Mr. Crosby.

As politicians, we are trusted with guarding the public purse. Indeed, my friends and fellow politicians, the cynicism out there suggests in a political way that sometimes the position we are in puts us in a conflict. I believe Mr. Morin referred to that earlier in his statement. In our jurisdiction, that conflict is quite prevalent because of our small population number, as Mr. Morin said, and the number of contractors that can do public work and public contracts. When you bring up an idea or subject like this, as politicians, it can be very touchy.

The reality is unless you have an alternative solution to the problem it is hard to debate it. I do not have a solution to the problem of how you would disclose without a third party to investigate the claims being made. When I filed my conflict of interest guidelines, or if I filed my conflict of interest guidelines, and I say

my wife is holding x number of shares in a corporation in which I have a fiduciary interest, there is actually no one to check to see if indeed that is correct. It is on an honour basis. So Mr. Chairman, I think this speaks to the whole area of concern today.

What is our intention with conflict of interest legislation and conflict of interest guidelines? In fact that is the issue. Our intention is to somehow demonstrate to the public we are no better and no worse and we are making the appropriate, ethical decisions, based on the decisions we are making. Aside from the issue of what our intention is in dealing with conflict of interest, we should not lose sight of the fact that conflict of interest legislation is designed for disclosure, Mr. Chairman.

The fact is we were elected and required to disclose what our assets and income are. For better or for worse, in most cases most of our electors do not know that, but we are forced to file public documents which indicate where our interests are and where they lie. A judgement can be made, based on our disclosures as how and whether we are, Mr. Chairman, voting appropriately, and that includes taking ourselves out of a meeting and declaring a conflict of interest when that type of item comes up.

Mr. Chairman, what kind of legislation do we have in place that deals with the politician who lays up treasures in heaven in anticipation of the day when he or she is going to get out of office and maybe reap the benefits of that? I do not know, Mr. Chairman, because we do not cover that in our legislation. When you are in a position to enhance the prospects of certain companies, and then after you are out of office or out of employ of the government of certain companies or placing yourself on various boards of directors as appreciation for your help while you were in office, what legislation is there in place to deal with that? I think that is also an issue.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to quote just briefly here from Speaker Glen Hagel of Saskatchewan. Mr. Hagel, the Speaker of Saskatchewan had something profound to say this summer when I was at a meeting with him. I would like to quote "Wise indeed is a Member who, when anticipating being accused of something, heads it off by getting to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner first and asking for a private, written ruling on something you anticipate may be coming down the pipe. As we know in this modern day and age where public officials are accused of being in conflict of interest, the public judges us to be guilty until proven innocent. Often it is just the

passage of time by which it becomes clear later on that a Member was not in a conflict of interest but the accusation itself was enough to kill their political reputation. We should be seeing the Conflict of Interest Commissioner as somebody we can go to in advance to provide ourselves with political assurance."

Mr. Chairman, the inquiry demonstrated a haphazard following of policies, misleading statements given in this House by Ministers, less than complete responses during the inquiry. What are we to take from that? What does the public think, Mr. Chairman? These are dark days for all residents of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Out of chaos comes opportunity. Opportunity to do the right thing. To demonstrate we have learned from the report and indeed stop this behaviour before it goes on to the two new governments. Indeed that is

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what Mr. Dent alluded to earlier.

Mr. Morin stated that he declared a conflict of interest at the May 16, 1996, meeting concerning the Fort Resolution project. The minutes of that meeting does not show that. Mr. Avison, who attended the meeting, does not remember any declaration made by Mr. Morin at the meeting. Mr. Avison was at that meeting. So we have contradictory evidence. Evidence that contradicts itself throughout this report. Mr. Chairman, each Member has to decide the validity of the report and vote with their conscience and vote and accept or reject the report, based on the facts as presented.

On page 70 of the report, Mr. Chairman, and I am reading from the July 28th briefing note, leasing the Lahm Ridge Tower. It suggests that the DPW was induced to negotiate by the power of substantial cost of savings of which there were none relative to all the February letters coming forward. In responses to an oral question asked by Mr. Ootes, not only on the 6th of February but also on the 11th and 12th of February, 1998, by Mr. Antoine, it states which is clearly not true, departmental officials were not engaged in negotiations about the lease extension or about the Lahm Ridge Tower, prior to August 3, 1997, with individuals outside the department, other than the owner, Mr. Marceau.

In response to an oral question by Minister Antoine on February 4, 1998, and that was document 7951 in the report, Mr. Chairman, it states untruthfully the

negotiations on lease extensions took place exclusively between Mr. Dixon and Mr. Marceau in the superintendent's office, supplemented by a few phone calls between the two. Neither Mr. Mrdjenovich or Mr. Bailey were involved in negotiation. That was untruthful.

Mr. Chairman, the point here is that indeed the contradictory evidence presented by Ms. Crawford in her report begs us as Members to ask certain questions. When the report came out last week, Mr. Chairman, and indeed here in the public in Yellowknife, downloaded onto Internet, not only here in the Northwest Territories but across Canada. We have had national editorials in newspapers.

I guess we have to ask ourselves what do we do about it? Who do you believe in the report? We have heard from Mr. Morin and it is very difficult for any of us in this House to take one person's word against the other. What I have tried to do in the report and I have had it for a week, I had it the first night and Mr. Morin talked about reading it three or four times. Indeed I have read it five or six times. From the statement today, from some of the information I gathered on researching this topic, you can see I must have read the report, it is hard for me to judge what is being said is right between one or the other party. I can only go on the collaborative evidence that has been presented. The documents, the documentation, the thousands of issues paper being put forward by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

What has come out of this report, Mr. Chairman, is indeed, some serious concerns with the way this government carries on business. We have policies, Mr. Chairman, to run the government. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner said there was nothing wrong with the legislation, and indeed, Mr. Chairman, there is nothing wrong with our policies. The problem is, Mr. Chairman, it seems like the policies were not followed.

When I look across the floor of this House today, to my friends over in the Cabinet, indeed, when some of the questions were being asked, some of them knew that the policies were not being followed. Indeed, some of the questions that came up in the inquiry were not answered very well, as reported by Ms. Crawford. What does that mean?

Mr. Chairman, that is a rhetorical question. What does it mean? Mr. Chairman, what it means is that there are serious concerns in here. There are serious concerns that need to be debated and there are

serious concerns that need to be addressed. Will they be addressed by us, today and on Monday? Probably not. They will be addressed at a higher court, Mr. Chairman, and that higher court is the court of public opinion. I do not think it is going overboard to state that public opinion today, and the cynicism surrounding politics and politics in general, is at an all-time low. That is what we have to remember. I will accept the report as presented and I will be prepared to vote on the recommendations when presented in this forum. I would ask, Mr. Chairman, that indeed, the Members who speak to this today, and as Mr. Dent and Mr. Morin have already, remember that is what we are here for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. I have Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I take absolutely no pleasure in this particular situation, or matter. It is an issue that has to be addressed, but I do not think any of us are going to come out of this with a bounce in our step, or we should not, or feeling good about this. I would just like to briefly clarify what I see as the role as I have come to understand it of this Assembly, in us as MLAs.

Our role is to accept or to reject the report in the findings and the recommendations of the Commissioner. It is our legislation. The Commissioner is the person we appointed, for better or worse, she is an officer of the House. We are not here to redo, or attempt to redo the work of the inquiry, nor are we in a position or do we have the time, from what I understand, are the tens of thousands of pages of transcripts and evidence and such, to be able to do that, in fact, in an effective way.

Like Mr. Dent said, we have to finish this debate, accept the report and move on. We have a lot of work to do before us on other issues in a very short period of time, all of which has a direct impact on our constituents. We have after today, I think five sitting days left of this 13th Assembly. This is an issue that is not to be diminished, but we also have to put it into perspective of the need of government to continue to deliver the services and programs to the people we represent. We cannot continue in gridlock or paralysis at the highest levels. We have to be able to move ahead on all the issues that we have laid out before us to complete before our terms are up.

The Commissioner laid out her findings of conflict very clearly and everybody, I assume, has read them, as I have read the report. She also clearly laid out what she sees as the preferred consequence. That is her comment that in other jurisdictions, Ministers would no longer have their portfolio, based on the findings she has presented to us.

Mr. Morin, in my opinion, did the right thing. He resigned as

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Premier to allow the government to continue to allow this process to move ahead and out of respect for the office, and respect, I believe, for the need to maintain the integrity of the office. The question has been posed, is there a bias? There well may be, depending on how you read this. I do not see myself in a position to determine that. Once again, I see that as a legal question. As I indicated, we do not have the time for me to decide if there is bias. To sit and review the vast amounts of transcripts, is a physical impossibility, nor do I think it is our position to do that. Mr. Morin has paid a price. There are some other issues laid out in this report that are noteworthy. Very clearly, according to the commissioner, there are some administrative and bureaucratic issues at the highest levels.

The one issue which struck my eye was the veracity of information of briefing notes. We all know in this House, know how heavily we depend on information provided to us by staff. The implication in the report is that Ministers in this House stood up on the basis of information provided to them and made statements. In actual fact, the information given to them may not have been entirely accurate or factual.

To me, this is an incredibly serious issue and is one of the cornerstones that our government is built on, the relationship between the politicians and the bureaucracy and the trust factors. Can we take everything in the report as gospel? That is yet to be determined. Which is why I concur with the idea of striking a working group of senior civil servants to review this particular report and some of the serious issues raised in here. What I have to point out, again, that the committee's work will not be seen as credible and its work will not be accepted, if it is not overseen by an independent third party of stellar qualifications and integrity. Very clearly, we cannot expect the senior civil servants, some of whom whose actions may have been called into question by this report, to take the hard look, or be seen to take the hard look at

the processes and departments that they run, to come back with possibly critical recommendations. I would encourage the Cabinet to proceed with this but make sure that we do it in such a way that it is accepted.

I would hope that, at the end of the day, when people have spoken their piece and voted on these motions, we can move on. It is important that we conclude this report. Once this report is concluded, there may be other issues arising out of this report. My own position, at this point, is that I am prepared to debate that, should the need arise. I am not looking for, and nor do I think the territories as a whole, would benefit from further human political sacrifice on what some people may think are capital offenses outlined in this report.

I look forward to hearing the rest of the debate. We have to take the steps necessary, but I would like to just close in commenting and making clear that the former Premier, Mr. Morin, resigned prior to this report coming to this House and being tabled. I think that is how it worked, prior to us, at least, being able to debate this. That does not detract, in my opinion, from what I read into the commissioner's report, in terms of what she saw as a consequence. I do not think we should and nor do I think we can hang a person twice.

This has been a very tough issue, it is a long year to the people involved, that I know. I can relate to that from my own experience of being involved in a court case. The vast majority of northerners want to see this issue dealt with so we can move on. I hope that by the end of Monday, we will be taking the steps necessary to do just that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Are there any further comments on Tabled Document 37-13(6)? Mr. Rabesca.

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Discussion on Conflict of Interest Report. I have reviewed this report, as we all have, and it grieves me to think that the Member from Tu Nedhe may have betrayed his position and the people of the Northwest Territories.

We voted for him as Premier because we had confidence in him to do the job, and to do it well. Mr. Morin is the Member for Tu Nedhe, his riding is one of the smallest ridings in the Northwest Territories. As a result of this fact, I believe, this has provided the

Member with a good working knowledge of what was, and is, needed in the smaller communities of the Northwest Territories. If it were not for his knowledge and working experience of the smaller communities, we may have not seen decentralization and devolvement of the programs we have witnessed over the course of this Assembly.

Mr. Morin had the vision needed to encourage small communities to take on responsibilities that previously were only provided by a central government, quite often not for the betterment of the community residents. It was also through Mr. Morin's actions that today we have a more receptive government dealing with land claim settlements. Mr. Morin has guided us through very difficult times. When we first started, this Assembly had a large deficit with no real direction. We also had division looming in the background, and again, no real direction to follow. Through his leadership, the smaller communities across our territories have become more responsible. At the same time, we have been able to produce a surplus in the books, as well as host many interesting and innovative issues. Mr. Morin cannot be forgotten for this.

We have this report that shows he may have used his position for personal gain. In the report, it states eight different events that he has gained from personally. I have thought long and hard, as to what we must do to this Member and what else this Assembly can do to reverse the negative effect his perceived actions have had on the Government of the Northwest Territories, as well as the entire Northwest Territories.

This is very serious. It is the first time in Canada's long history to have a Premier resign as a result of a conflict of interest inquiry. This will be a black mark that this Assembly will be remembered for, which is unfortunate considering we have done many good things during this Assembly. We should be proud of these accomplishments. We have a surplus. This alone, was a great effort and all regions have been affected. We have provided for a relatively smooth transition leading towards division. Both of these are very difficult tasks. We took it on and now we are realizing the efforts we put in.

To get back to the report at hand, Mr. Morin had been wrong with his actions; however, I feel that his advisors were equally as wrong by not providing him with the correct and professional advice that they were hired for. If Mr. Morin would have been

advised at the very beginning of this exercise, he more than likely would not have wasted all the resources we have spent to date.

According to the report, it states he has been found guilty of violating five different sections of the Conflict of Interest Act, on eight different and separate issues. I feel the Commissioner has done her job to the best of her ability and has provided us with a very good and honest opinion. It is now our job to accept or reject this report and move on with the other many issues that we have. As for any further reprimand, in regard to the Member for Tu Nedhe, I feel we cannot go any further than what has already happened. Through the Member's own actions, he has done the honourable thing by resigning from his position as Premier and that is what the conflict of issue stems from. I do not think it is prudent to go any further. It appears that his riding supports Mr. Morin and his residents have the final say. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Rabesca. Are there any other comments at this time to Tabled Document 37-13(6). Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, for one, have had an opportunity to review the report and I feel that this report has come to a juncture in our history where, basically, these events have not only occurred during this 13th Assembly, but it has occurred in previous Assemblies. Hopefully, we can avoid it from occurring in future Assemblies. I am talking about the whole perception that the public have on government and decisions that government makes when it comes to contracts, leases, who is getting appointed to boards and agencies, and also looking at the role that Cabinet Ministers and Members of this House, play.

When we all took office, we swore allegiance and there are some clear rules that we know we have to follow. One of them is declaring issues in any instance that we feel we may have a conflict, in which the process is spelled out, regarding the conflict of interest guidelines, that we all agreed to follow.

It is critical, from this experience that we have had in the last three years, with the deficit reductions we have made and how we have seen how people are able to manipulate the system to make personal gains, by not only who you are, but who you know.

We have to realize that we do have a role to play in regards to representing our constituents. I believe that role is to ensure that we benefit our constituents as a whole and not benefit individuals, groups and companies. We have to realize there are certain guidelines in place that, basically, restrict the role of government and Cabinet when making decisions and those guidelines have to be followed. The guidelines I am talking about, are in regards to the guidelines that, basically, are in place from former government employees. Yet, we see and hear of how former government employees have left the government and find themselves with contracts, or appointed to special boards after an election. The public perception of government is, in order to get anywhere in the territories, or in government, you either have to know someone in government, or have access to someone with power. Power lies in the hands of those people that, basically, have control over other people. The people I am talking about, are people in Cabinet and people who have access to decisions which are made in cabinet, like principal secretaries, deputy ministers, and assistant deputy ministers. There have to be some clear guidelines regarding the role we play in the limelight of our public lives. Once we become a politician or work in the public limelight, there is a stamp that is nailed to our forehead that says, what can you do for me, not what can I do for you. I think that is what the public has a real problem with.

In my time in this House, I have raised several issues, especially how contracts are being awarded and how programs and services are being cut. One thing I feel is lacking, is why is it that not only this government, but previous governments have gone through a similar process? Is it a question of trust, or is it a question of lack of trust? We have to ask ourselves, what role do we play to ensure the trust of the people that elected us is seriously being considered, and not considering the interest of individuals. There are a lot of people out there that wish they have opportunities because of who they know or, basically, how they are able to get ahead.

In my statement today, I made reference to consideration of an independent review of the policies and guidelines that govern this government, regarding decisions that are made by government and at what time does the interest of the public be perceived as hazy.

There are a lot of issues that were raised in this House three years ago, which at that time, if it was headed off and there was a process in place to allow for those issues to be dealt with before it went any

further, I do not think we would be here today. I believe that if we were up front, honest and, basically, said maybe we made a mistake, maybe we should go back and review a lease or maybe we should go back to see if all the guidelines and principles that this government followed, has been followed by an independent person outside of government, so that bureaucracy did not govern itself, that someone outside of government has the ability and knowledge to conduct such a review. I am talking about people who have done it as a career like judges and former judges. The people can make a ruling based on fact and also the information that is in front of them, to determine how those policies and procedures are carried out.

In this case, a lot of policies and procedures have been broken. It is critical that we have such an independent review in regards to the process, the review of this investigation and the outcome of this investigation by some sort of independent individual or individuals.

Mr. Chairman, I, for one, feel sorry for Donnie because I see Donnie has been used by certain individuals because of his position within this government and because of having friends, or friends of friends, who knew the system. The system was used in a way which was an advantage to an individual or individuals. Because of that, we find ourselves here today because of the system, not the individual, but the system. It is important that the system has to change as soon as possible and the rules have to be either tightened up, or put in the way that we have public processes which, basically, makes the public feel they are part of the process, either through contractual arrangements where we talk about the lease that was good for government. In the light of one person, it may not be good for government in the light of another person. It is critical that we have some clearer guidelines and a process for public involvement in those guidelines, to ensure they are involved in

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all aspects of the decisions made by this government.

There was a comment made about a certain individual that received certain treatment regarding a lease. I, for one, still strongly feel that there is an argument about the lease. I was one of the individuals that, basically, jumped on it when it became public because of the contacts I had with the Dene Development Corporation. The Dene Development

Corporation was also talking to the Department of Public Works about getting into long-term leases by purchasing government assets, or assets to lease to the government, but they were told outright that the government of the day was not interested in any long-term leases. Then, for the record, I find that not two months after the fact, the discussion with DDC was in May, in July, we find out that Mrdjenovich and Bailey are in discussions with Lovely on such an arrangement. I found that totally unacceptable.

We talk about open government allowing people, corporations, aboriginal organizations and interested groups to be more involved in government, to take a more of a role of involving themselves in business and in the public infrastructure and community initiatives. Yet, in this case, a group of people which consisted of a large portion of the western population, was excluded from that process to benefit two individuals. I still feel there should be a review on that lease and that there should be a call for tenders to open it up for other people to acquire such space through a public tendering process. All people in the business of renting real estate, or, basically, office space, will have an opportunity to bid.

Another item that was mentioned, is a question about a visa which was given to Mr. Mrdjenovich's relative. I have stood up in this House on a particular matter of an individual, a constituent of mine, who had her children abducted from the Northwest Territories and taken to the Czech Republic. I received no help whatsoever from this government to try to find a way of getting them back into Canada and into the Northwest Territories; yet, I find it amazing that this individual had such power and influence in getting one of his relatives into Canada. It is critical that on such issues and items, as much effort was put into an individual, or a group of individuals, and people that we serve in the same sort of energy so that we can serve all people fairly.

The question about the fishing trip with Mr. Roland Bailey, I believe it is clearly spelled out in section 76.4, in regards to disclosure of benefits under the conflict of interest guidelines that that should have been disclosed at that time because the disclosure documents itself.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I, for one, feel that there has to be a review of all aspects of government, not only of an individual, and that there has to be changes in the government and the way government made its decisions and also who were involved in making those decisions. There has to be a clear open public

process regarding how these guidelines are being implemented and who are implementing these guidelines.

I do not see how it is possible to allow an inmate to sit on a committee, looking at the parole guidelines that are in place, similar to governments establishing guidelines to basically regulate themselves and then say these guidelines are good for everybody else because we reviewed them. It has to be done by someone outside of government who does not have an interest in government but also has a background in law to understand how those guidelines were suppose to work or should work in a context of the public interest that it serves.

It is critical for us as Members of this Legislature to realize that we have spent many dollars regarding this inquiry, into other public processes and yet it is the little people that we serve who are out there asking for help or assistance in trying to find a job, or are trying to ensure a health community or a healthy lifestyle for the people they serve or the people in the communities that they live in. I think for us to get back to the principle of dealing and serving the people who elected us, and get away from the notion of helping those individuals who have access to information and using that information to benefit themselves and their friends, we would not be in this position today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I have the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, approximately three years ago, we the Members of the 13th Legislative Assembly, appointed Anne Crawford as the Conflict of Interest Commissioner of the Northwest Territories. Her qualifications were that she was a practising lawyer, residing in the Northwest Territories, further she had previous experience as a Conflict of Interest Commissioner for the Northwest Territories. Not all Members of this House supported the appointment of Anne Crawford, but the majority did. The fact is, Mr. Chairman, Anne Crawford was appointed the Conflict of Interest Commissioner for the Northwest Territories by the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

The job of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, among its many duties, is to interpret and investigate

allegations which are brought before and decide if these allegations are sufficient to conduct an inquiry. Everything went well with the appointment for approximately two and a half years. Then the MLA for Hay River, my colleague, Jane Groenewegen, brought allegations of conflict of Interest against the Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Morin on February 16, 1998. On November 24, 1998, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner released the results of the subsequent inquiry to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. All residents of the Northwest Territories now have access to that report. The report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner is damning of the actions of Mr. Morin. Within 24 hours of the release of the report, the then Premier of the Northwest Territories, resigned. On the day of his resignation I was a Member of the resource committee meeting in the media room. Rumours were already floating of an impending resignation. I was pleased with those actions, it was a good start.

A good start for government to begin the process of healing a broken trust. At the Premier's news conference, I was surprised that he did not resign his seat. I had assumed from the rumours that the resignation was for the Premier and his seat as a Member for Tu Nedhe because of the damning degree of the report.

Mr. Chairman, I was one of the MLAs who defeated a motion to have Premier Morin remove himself from office during the inquiry process. I was convinced by the Member for Tu Nedhe and other Members that the charges were trumped up and without

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substance. In future, Mr. Chairman, I will automatically demand a Member in a similar situation, step down during the process.

At the outset of the inquiry, Mr. Morin called the Conflict of Interest Commissioner biased and asked Anne Crawford to remove herself from the process. Now the report has been delivered and Mr. Morin says that the report is biased and full of inconsistencies. The fact is, that the residents of the NWT are now \$1 million poorer. Mr. Chairman, I did not need the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's Report to know that Mr. Morin should resign and did the only thing he could do. For the record, I voted for Mr. Morin when he ran for Premier.

I lost my confidence in Mr. Morin's leadership of the government of the Northwest Territories at the

beginning of the inquiry. The report for me, nails that coffin closed. Mr. Morin spoke earlier today in his statement, and I understand how difficult the past year must have been for himself and his family. However, Mr. Chairman, even under attack a leader must always lead and conduct himself with dignity. Mr. Morin's dignity as the Premier of the Northwest Territories went out the window early in the process of the inquiry. First it was his request to videotape his accuser, Mrs. Groenewegen, to show his constituents, but worse, he wanted to operate the camera himself. Mr. Chairman, these actions are not the actions of a leader of government, not one I can support.

Mr. Morin has now asked the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories for a judicial review of the findings of the Conflict of Interest Commissioners Report claiming among other points, bias on the part of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. I do not need the results of that review, I have had feedback from more constituents in Yellowknife South on this issue than I have had on any other topic that has come before this House in the past three years.

I have heard individuals in this building, and indeed noted experts in the topic of conflict of interest legislation, say that the language used in the report was in some areas harsh. Let me assure Members of this House that the comments I have received from the public on Mr. Morin's actions both during the inquiry and as a result of the inquiry, make the language in the report seem modest.

In closing Mr. Chairman, we retained the services of Anne Crawford, to perform a job of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, and I accept that report and I will have more to say on this topic when each of the seven recommendations of the report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's are dealt with in this House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Are there further comments on Tabled Document 37-13(6), Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Mr. Chairman, unless there are other individuals who wish to make their comments today, perhaps they could indicate, otherwise I would recommend that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Ootes, are you making a motion to report progress?

MR. OOTES:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. I just want to make sure before I make the motion that we ensure that all those Members who wish to speak today have had the option to do so.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there any other Members who wish to make a comment at this time? You will have another opportunity on Monday. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress for today.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. I will rise and report progress to the Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. Good evening. We are on item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 37-13(6), Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Special Committee on Nunavut Legislation at 4:00 p.m. this afternoon, tomorrow morning, at 9:30 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure and at 10:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Resource Management. On Monday morning, at 9:00 a.m., the Standing Committee on Government Operations and at 11:00 a.m. of the Ordinary Members' Caucus.

Orders of the day for Monday, December 7, 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

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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 Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 28, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act

- Bill 32, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4 1998-99

18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 37-13(6): Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner
 - Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Public Highways Act and the Motor Vehicles Act
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. This House stands adjourned to 1:30 p.m., Monday, December 7, 1998.

--ADJOURNMENT