



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

6th Session

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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. Barnabas. Good afternoon. Before we proceed today, I wish to inform the House that I have received a letter dated December 7, 1998, which is in accordance with section 76.05 of the Nunavut Act, from the Interim Commissioner of Nunavut. I would like to read the following letter received.

Dear Speaker:

Re: Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act

The formal creation of Nunavut is now less than four months away. As we continue our preparation for this historic event, it is necessary to amend certain statutes duplicated for Nunavut to render those statutes appropriate for Nunavut. This bill reflects the determination of all parties to ensure uninterrupted service for the people of Nunavut in the critical area of electrical power generation and delivery.

As required by Section 76.05 of the Nunavut Act, it is with pleasure that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories the passage of the bill entitled Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act, during the Sixth Session of the 13th Legislative Assembly.

Yours sincerely, Jack Anawak, Interim Commissioner.

--Applause

Order of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 88-13(6): Petroleum Activity in the Western Arctic

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The western Arctic can expect significant petroleum exploration and development activity during this coming winter.

I recently visited Fort Liard and was very impressed by both the number of opportunities available from exploration activity and the energy vigour with which the community is pursuing them. Fort Liard is not only benefiting from drilling activity near the community, the band has also recently signed a contract with AEC West to provide camp services to the company's BC drilling program near Max Harnish Lake. This activity is providing jobs and business opportunities to residents of Fort Liard and to those of other Deh Cho communities.

The Sahtu also expect significant exploration activity this winter. Both AEC West and Grey Wolf Exploration will conduct seismic exploration in the area. This will generate about 500 weeks of work. Murphy Oil will continue drilling on its lands near Norman Wells and I am expecting further announcements of work in the very near future. In the Mackenzie Delta, the Inuvialuit Petroleum Corporation will continue work on the Ikhis Gas Project. This project, valued at \$35 million, will generate 350 person years of employment over its term.

Mr. Speaker, the petroleum future of the western Arctic is very bright indeed. This industry continues to show promise as a major component in our economy. In order for Northwest Territories residents and businesses to rightfully take advantage of that potential, we will continue to insist that northerners have greater control of the benefits that result from oil, gas and mining development. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Ministers' statements. Ms. Thompson.

Minister's Statement 89-13(6): Report on the Municipal Legislation Review

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, later today I will be tabling two reports of the Municipal Legislation Review Committee, "Empowerment Through Community Government Legislation - Nunavut and the Western NWT".

Over the past three years, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has been working in partnership with the NWT Association of Municipalities on a review of municipal legislation. This review was undertaken to improve the legislation so that community governments can better serve their residents.

Since the review began, this Assembly has passed three bills which brought about much needed changes to the legislation. In addition to the amendments that were made last year, the Municipal Legislation Review Committee has recommended substantial rewrites of the Charter Communities Act; the Cities, Towns and Villages Act; the Hamlets Act; and the Settlements Act. The committee has recommended further amendments to the Local Authorities Elections Act and the Property Assessment and Taxation Act. A legislative proposal based on these

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recommendations was considered by Cabinet and the Standing Committee on Infrastructure earlier this year.

With only a few months remaining until the creation of two new territories, this Assembly would not have had enough time to give full and proper consideration to such important and complex legislation. As a result, the government decided not to proceed with the drafting of a bill.

However, to ensure that the recommendations and proposals of the review committee are available to be considered by the governments of the two new territories, the committee has produced a record of its work in the form of this report entitled, "Empowerment Through Community Government Legislation". This report includes detailed drafting instructions that will assist the governments of the two new territories to undertake further consultation, or to quickly prepare bills to implement the recommendations as they see fit.

Mr. Speaker, communities across the north have asked for more flexible legislation. Modern legislation

should recognize that communities are unique, and should allow for differences in how they set their priorities and tackle issues of concern. New legislation is needed to make it easier for communities to make the best use of their human and financial resources. At the same time, there is a need to build in safeguards to ensure the territorial government can still identify and assist communities in difficulty. Where possible, the legislation should be made easier to use and understand. The review committee's recommendations and proposals are addressing exactly these things.

I would like to congratulate the review committee on an excellent job, and thank them for their dedication and commitment to this ambitious project. I would like to especially recognize the contributions of NWTAM President, George Roach, and former NWTAM President, Dennis Bevington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased with the accomplishments we have made so far. I strongly believe the recommendations and proposals in the review committee's report can provide a solid foundation for the future of communities and their residents in both new territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Ministers' statements. Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 90-13(6): Meeting of Apprenticeship and Occupational Certification Board

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. The Apprenticeship and Occupational Certification Board met in Yellowknife last week. The board members are from across the Northwest Territories. They represent both employees and employers. They are all excellent advocates for education and training programs to support northerners in their work.

It is important that we recognize the role of trades people across the north. We need only to look around this Chamber at the woodwork, the glazing and the upholstery to understand the skill and value of the work done by trades persons. Our communities rely on the skills of, for example, carpenters, plumbers, line persons, heavy equipment operators and mechanics. Many of the businesses that supply our needs and employ our sons and daughters are owned and operated by northern trades people. We

should reflect on the importance of trades and celebrate their significance.

The recent discussions by the members of the board echo many of the concerns I have heard from Members of this House. First, we must continue to improve our education system so that interested young women and men can access and participate in trades. Second, we need to better inform the public about the importance of trades in our communities. Third, we must continue to work with industry to ensure that our programs meet the changing needs in the workplace. Over the past few years, in close consultation with the board, we have made important strides in supporting increased participation in trades and certified occupations. The establishment of the Schools North Apprenticeship Program (SNAP), the increasing offerings of the Women in Trades and Technologies (WITT), expansion of career Counselling Services, and post-secondary diamond industry skills training all open up good opportunities for northerners.

I would like to publicly thank the members of the Apprenticeship and Occupational Certification Board for their work and dedication. It is through a strong partnership between employers, labour communities and the government that we can most effectively establish the programs and services needed to support northern trades. Merci.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Ministers' statements. Mr. Antoine.

Ministers' statements 91-13(6): Transportation Employee Wins National Award

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Assembly, I wish to take a moment to report that a member of our staff at the Department of Transportation, Mr. Curtis Mercredi, took the award for second place at the National Airfield Maintenance Technician "Rodeo" held recently in Winnipeg. Curtis came first at the Territorial "Rodeo" held earlier this summer in Hay River. This qualified him to compete in the Nationals.

Curtis has been with the department and the Yellowknife airport since 1987; first as a trainee and then as a permanent employee in 1988. A father of two children, he was born and raised in the Northwest Territories and is a long-term resident of Yellowknife.

He has represented the Yellowknife airport in a number of regional rodeos and competed nationally before in 1992.

The "Rodeo" requires competitors to run equipment through an obstacle course designed to resemble situations they would encounter during regular airfield maintenance. Once all operators have completed the course, the technician with the highest combined total points is named the overall winner.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation is proud to have employees like Mr. Mercredi on its staff. His success proves the quality of training the department provides in making sure that our public transportation system gives northerners the best service possible. I know the Assembly will join with me in

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congratulating Curtis on his award and a job well done in representing the Department of Transportation and the Northwest Territories. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 226-13(6): Pressures on the Nursing and Teaching Professions

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My concern today is how to maintain, enhance and improve our professional workforce. Specifically in two of our front-line professions: teaching and nursing. Both professions continue to provide services to the public while facing employer-imposed hardships - inadequate wages, reduced benefits, substandard housing, and stressful working conditions.

These translate into challenges with retaining and recruiting teachers and health care workers in the north. For both teaching and nursing positions, the vacancy rates over the last few years have been in the neighbourhood of 20 - 25 percent. That is three to four times the expected vacancy rate of seven

percent. That sort of vacancy and resultant turnover rate points to a crisis situation.

Both professions show the same three major causes for the high staff turnover: inadequate wages and benefits, substandard housing and stressful working conditions as I mentioned earlier. The stressful working conditions which nurses and teachers face every day are partly due to high staff turnover, but also relate to increased demands for services.

More and more of our nurses are taking on duties that normally would be a doctor's responsibility. Although they are to be commended for this, it is a tremendous workload that demands more skills and work experience. Whether our nurses can adequately handle this added stress is one question, but the other question is, are they being fairly compensated? Are we paying them nurses' wages for doing a physician's work?

Pat Thomas, President of the NWT Teacher's Association, in the association's fall newsletter, says that teachers are already feeling stressed and burnt out in September. Large class sizes, lack of teacher and student supports contribute to this situation, but also there are increasing incidents of student behaviour problems and harassment incidents.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement 227-13(6): Meeting with President of NorthwesTel

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during our last sitting, my colleague from Yellowknife North and I raised some concerns in this House about NorthwesTel's service. Today, we had the opportunity to have lunch with Mr. Boorman, the President of NorthwesTel, our northern telecommunications company, as he referred to it. He gave a compelling overview of the state of telecommunications in the north and some of the huge challenges facing us, if we want to, in fact, keep a northern telecommunications company.

He spoke of competition that is formally going to start in the year 2000, but in actual fact, has started already through the back door of an eroding revenue base, as a result of these kinds of activities, of the

tremendous infrastructure that has been built up in the north that no other company would possibly be able to duplicate or maintain. He also recognizes the need to do some improvement of their image with the public and make them aware of the gravity of the situation, as we approach competition in the year 2000, on a formal basis.

The bottom line, he told us very clearly, was if NorthwesTel is not profitable, NorthwesTel will not remain in business. If NorthwesTel does not remain in business, then the services we have come to rely on will be in jeopardy.

Mr. Speaker, they are going to be taking advantage of some opportunities to, in fact, try to adjust that situation and make a more level playing field. They are going for a rate consolidation, and in about six to eight months, they are also going to be looking to CRTC for a telecommunications subsidy, I would assume, sponsored or paid for by the larger telecommunication companies across Canada.

Mr. Boorman also offered to meet with the MLAs to give them a full and detailed briefing of the situation and to solicit the support of this Assembly. Without our support, as the government of the day of one of the major users of that system, the job they will have will be even more difficult.

My colleague, Mr. Erasmus, is committed to, in fact, following up with a letter on behalf of the western MLAs sometime in the new year to arrange such a briefing. I would like to encourage my eastern colleagues, as well, to take advantage of that opportunity. Unless we work together, the system we have invested so much money in, the DCN, and the system NorthwesTel has invested so much money in, will be in jeopardy. It is something that we cannot afford. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Rabesca.

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Member's Statement 228-13(6): Violence Against Women

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about violence against women. Mr.

Speaker, yesterday we witnessed a memorial for the 14 young women who were murdered in Montreal nine years ago. Every year since this tragic event took place, people across the country have taken part in the memorial service. It is good to remember all the tragic events that have taken place as a result of women being abused. The reason I say it is good to remember these events, those who are affected, this affects women every year across our country.

I see changes coming, in my community, young people are changing. They do see the wrong that some have done. Young adults, men and women, are also changing. They see that there is no need for any form of violence against other people. Support groups are helping both men and women to heal, however, change takes time.

By supporting memorial services like we saw yesterday, and by talking to the community, we can realize change. This is a very serious problem that affects all of our lives. We must keep striving to protect, and educate, so that, one day, we will cure this terrible problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 229-13(6): Delivery of Alcohol and Drug Treatment Programs

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today about a particular problem still occurring in a lot of our small communities. It is the right for communities to deliver programs and services on behalf of the residents they serve. Mr. Speaker, I am talking, in particular, about alcohol and drug programs and who has the right to refer clients to an alcohol and drug facility in Yellowknife or Hay River.

Mr. Speaker, the TI'oondih Healing Society have been serving the people of Fort McPherson, the Mackenzie Delta and the Northwest Territories, for over six years. Just recently, they were told by an alcohol drug program specialist in Inuvik that they were not going to be allowed to do it any more. Mr. Speaker, in consultation with the Inuvik Health Board, they are unaware of such a decision.

We talk about community empowerment, healthy communities and healthy people, but this is one

initiative that I feel is critical in our communities, especially the smaller communities, where we have a high alcohol and drug problem, problems in regard to violence, and also problems ensuring we have healthy people to take on the initiatives of empowering our communities. We have to ensure that we have healthy students and healthy children to attend our schools and universities.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today, saying there has to be a better effort made by this government to ensure that the communities' needs are met and that the communities do take on the initiative to take on programs and services, have the resources, and the ability to do it without being restricted by bureaucrats, either at the regional level or here, at headquarters in Yellowknife. I think it is essential, Mr. Speaker, that this be allowed to happen without the restriction of individuals or senior people in government telling the communities or agents who deliver these programs and services, what they can, and cannot, do. If it works, work with it. If it is broken, fix it. Mr. Speaker, please allow our communities to control programs and services in our communities. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Enuaraq.

Member's Statement 230-13(6): Northern Encounters: Circumpolar Fine Arts Festival

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to bring to the attention of the Members of this House, the territorial government, and the many talented citizens of the Northwest Territories, information which I believe may prove to be of some use.

Northern Encounters 1999, is a circumpolar fine arts festival that is to be held in Toronto, during July of 1999. This festival, which is held every two years, celebrates the arts and culture achievements of eight circumpolar nations. This festival helps to present and promote the Canadian public and the world. A group of geographically and culturally diverse Canadians, northerners whose talents and accomplishments in a number of disciplines have brought recognition and admiration from around the world.

As 1999 is the year of Nunavut, and the 50th anniversary of the first sale of modern Inuit art, Northern Encounters provides a tremendous

opportunity to promote the Northwest Territories, its people and its artistic achievements, along with the Nunavut celebrations and the Inuit art anniversary. I would like to encourage the Government of the Northwest Territories, the people in positions to assist the selected artists and those interested in exploring and supporting Northern Encounters 1999, as fully as possible. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 231-13(6): Suicide in the Northwest Territories: A Descriptive Review

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services released a document summary, Suicide in the Northwest Territories, a Descriptive Review. This document is a plain language summary and technical report entitled, Suicide in the Northwest Territories, a Descriptive Review. It was a joint project between Sandy Isaacs and Janie Hawkin of Laboratory Centre for Disease Control, or LCDC, in Wellington, Duff and Guelph Health Unit. Susan Keil, the Department of Health and Social Services, and Kathy Menard, office of the Chief Coroner, both of the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Department of Health and Social Services invited the LCDC to work together on reviewing data and identifying subgroups of the population who are at most risk of suicide and describing the circumstances surrounding the suicides. The study defines suicide as follows: when a person

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takes his or her own life with the intent to do so. The report was submitted on March 31, 1998, to Health and Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, suicide has touched many of our families. I found the document to be quite thorough. It dispels some of myths around suicide, for example, that drugs or alcohol used prior to the suicide was not a major factor as some have felt. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that Members, and the public, review the report. I would like to thank Minister Ng and his department, for commissioning the review and, indeed, it is a good starting point to help us address this very serious concern. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Ms. Thompson.

Member's Statement 232-13(6): Recognition of Legislative Pages from Aivilik

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to introduce in this Assembly, students from my riding who are acting as Pages, Ryan Netser, Trevor Thompson, Darrin Bruce and Kenny Saviakjuk. They are probably the last student Pages before we divide the territories from my riding. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Barnabas.

Member's Statement 233-13(6): Rescue Efforts in Arctic Bay

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share an incident that happened in Arctic Bay regarding a child who was saved by a brave constituent. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, July 14, 1998, a foster child of Leah and Joseph Okdalak was playing on the ice patches in Arctic Bay. Ililuq Pudlat, age 11 years old, fell into the freezing water approximately 7:40 p.m. and could not get back on the patch of ice. When Ikiluq yelled for help, my wife and her brother, Jayko Tatatuapik, heard him and immediately tried to help him out, but they had a very difficult time so they yelled for help.

Mr. Matthew Taqtu was working beside his house and noticed the incident. He took a rope and went to assist them. Mr. Taqtu threw the rope to the child. Because of the freezing cold water, the child lost his strength and was unable to reach the rope, which was thrown to him by Mr. Taqtu. Mr. Taqtu could not reach the child, so he tied the rope around his waist and jumped into the water and saved the child. Mr. Speaker, if had not been for Mr. Taqtu's quick actions, the child would not be alive today. Because of this act of courage and bravery, I would like to nominate Mr. Taqtu to receive the Commissioner's Award and I would like to thank him personally. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

Member's Statement 234-13(6): Candidacy for Premier Position

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is just to inform Members of the Legislature that I have decided today to let my name stand for Premier later this week. The decision to run is a result of careful consideration and discussions with many of you, also with my family and my constituents. In addition, as you know, there has been a tremendous amount of support for my candidacy from the public at large.

The north and our government are at a critical stage in a critical time because of the final drive towards division. It requires stability, continuity and strong decisive leadership. We need to quickly restore public confidence and to revitalize our public service. I am offering my services to you and the people of the Northwest Territories out of a strong sense of duty. We have deep concern about the future of this government and the job that we must do together to address the challenges before us. I believe I have proven my leadership over the years.

My experience is extensive and most importantly, I have never been afraid to tell you where I stand on any issue and to explain my reasons for the positions that I take. Today I wish to focus on the issues before us, mainly the Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. Later this week, I will speak in the Legislature here. When we have our leadership committee on Thursday, I will respond to your questions to give you additional information on my views and my positions. I look forward to your support. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Members' statements. Mr. Ng.

Member's Statement 235-13(6): Hockey Weekend in Cambridge Bay

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report on the hockey weekend that took place in Cambridge Bay. With the sponsorship of First Air and members of the Oilers Alumni Association, whom we happen to have in the gallery with us today, Mr. Brian Baltimore, Mr. Al Hamilton, Mr. Doug Hicks and Mr. Dave Lumley, they arrived Friday afternoon in the community of Cambridge Bay. There was a feast with music and culture activities that evening at the community hall to welcome them. On Saturday they held some hockey clinics and skating clinics spread out over three different venues over the course of the day.

Of course, on Saturday afternoon my colleagues and I arrived in Cambridge Bay to complement them and make up the MLA Oilers in getting ready for hockey night in Cambridge Bay. We took on a local oldtimers team, Mr. Speaker. We had with us of Members of this House, we had Jiving Jim Antoine who was dancing in and out amongst the opposition players as he scored on a few occasions. He was the leading scorer of the MLA representatives there. We had Mighty Mike Miltenberger who was a dependable stay-at-home type of defence man. Although I think he probably had to do that by default because his partner was Al Hamilton, who every time he got the puck he was up the ice, and Mr. Miltenberger was standing there pondering on what to do in those situations. We also had Fluid Floyd Roland, who was the other rushing defence man of our defence core. I think

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he must have been watching Al Hamilton because every time Mr. Roland got the puck he would try and take the puck and go up the ice in a rush on every occasion. It led Mr. Lumley to ask me the question, does Mr. Roland know what a pass is? Of course, Mr. Speaker, there was yourself, Stomping Sam Gargan.

--Applause

Mr. Gargan, as Members who were there know, made a valiant attempt to stop the opposition from coming out of their end by trying to stand in front of the forward and of course Mr. Gargan got flattened right on his, I do not know if I can say this is this parliamentary language - got flattened right on his ass. As he lay there on the ice, I was quite concerned about the possibility of a medevac for our speaker, but he did not require that. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

Yes, just with regard to the comment there, it is only when you say your rear-end that it is unparliamentary.

--Laughter

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

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and honourable colleagues. I will amend the record to say the speaker's rear-end in this case. Mr. Speaker, and then there was myself, I was wondering, Mr. Speaker, why I was the only Member of our team that was constantly being covered while in front of the opposition net. I knew it was not due to my scoring prowess and I quickly learned at the intermission that the main goal of the local oldtimers was to keep me off the scoreboard. I ended up being double-teamed and hooked and held and tripped. I did manage to draw one penalty, Mr. Speaker, and I did manage to get a couple of opportunities on goal, and it was only through great saves I might add, that I was kept off the scoreboard? Our team, Mr. Speaker, was rounded out by Joel Otokiak and Thomas Sugassak, a couple of local oldtimers and we had goalie Troy Oakoak for two periods and Walter Haniliak for the final period. I can say also one of the highlights of the day for me was when I was coming on to the bench panting and huffing, a ten year-old sitting at the bench said to me, boy you are a slow skater, I should be playing instead of you. Mr. Speaker, the bleachers were full. There was standing room only, we estimated that there were probably close to 400 individuals that have come out in support of the evening. There were door prizes, autographed jerseys, autographed sticks, a 50/50 draw, t-shirts and all sorts of things that were given away. The grand prize of the evening was two First Air tickets along with two Edmonton Oilers tickets and accommodations at Edmonton House that was won by ten year old Kevin Kanayuk. There was also an unexpected auction of a Team Canada sweater and I would like to advise Members that our honourable speaker got into the heat of the bidding with a local individual, Bobby Maghagak, and the speaker ended up prevailing at \$180, but I would like to commend him because the next day he turned that jersey over to the individual who he was bidding against so thank you for that, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

On Sunday, there was a minor hockey pancake breakfast that again, was well attended by over 100 people in the time that we were there. The Oilers were taken on a snowmobile trip, dog team rides and a tour of the Kitikmeot Foods facility in Cambridge Bay. In closing, I would like to say that the proceeds of the fundraising activities went towards the May Hakungak Library Restoration Fund and to minor hockey. I would like to thank Mayor Wilfred Wilcox and the hamlet staff, Bill Lyall, the master of ceremonies that evening, all the local businesses that provided sponsorship, the over 100 individuals who volunteered in cooking and cleaning and helping out, the community, of course, for their great support, my MLA colleagues for taking up the invitation to participate, the Cambridge Bay oldtimers, of course, who were a part of the whole process and finally last but not least, First Air and Julia Mott, who was the main coordinator and the Oilers Alumni which I will recognize at the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. O'Brien.

Member's Statement 236-13(6): Passing of David Tagoona

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I raise on a very sad note. I would like to acknowledge and I know this may come as a shock to you and some of the Members here, acknowledge the death of Mayor David Tagoona of Baker Lake. Mayor Tagoona was in town this weekend on meetings and while here passed away. Mayor Tagoona was a well respected community leader who gave much of himself to the community and his family. He will be greatly missed. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you join with me to offer your condolences and prayers for the family. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement 237-13(6): Support for Civil Service

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of our civil service. Mr. Speaker, recently there has been a lot of discussion in this House, a lot of questions and answers, concern about former senior employees being possibly in conflict by getting contracts through confidential information that was gained through their jobs.

Mr. Speaker, our civil service is the backbone of this government. We rely on them to do our research, to provide us with that information, to give us advice and to deliver our programs and services. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I wish to reassure our civil service that the discussion in this House is not meant to infer that they are all crooks. The discussion in this House is meant to try to ensure that there is a fair process in awarding GNWT contracts so that private industry of all our former employees have a fair chance of getting every contract we put out. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all our Members here to join me in showing our appreciation for our civil service. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Item 5, recognition of

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visitors in the gallery. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like my colleagues here today to join with me in welcoming Members of the Aurora College Employment Skills Program. They are here today with their instructor, Sharon Morrison. The students are Simeonie Nutaradiuk, Ada McGillivray, Meda Shannahan, Mary Ann Williams, Patricia Weir, Lori Martin, Basil Kayinik, Deryk McClland, Patrick Alexander, Roger Lucas, Robert Alaingayok, Kerry Guin and David Berketa. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors from the Gallery. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize, today, Mr. Johnnie Manning, who is the member of the board of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association and also the Member of the Nunavut Implementation Training Committee. This week he is, until Thursday, my acting executive assistant alleviated from his usual duties as my constituency assistant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors from the gallery. Mr. Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again it gives me great pleasure to recognize Julia Mott, Manager of Sales and Marketing for First Air, members of the Edmonton Oils Alumni, Brian Baltimore, Al Hamilton, Doug Hicks and Dave Lumley. Welcome to the Assembly.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Pasha Bruce in the pink sweater up there, from Coral Harbour, and also my son, my buddy, Randy, in his jacket over there, he cannot wait to get out of this place. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to recognize Sir John Franklin students. They are here on a social studies program. They are studying democracy and the political processes. Their teacher is here with them, Bruce Madore and I would like to introduce the 15 students who are here. Andrew Bishop, Ryan Bonnell, Merrill Cooper, Jared Cowan, Amanda Fahie, David Harbicht, Kristin Keller,

Nelson Mack, Kurt Minault, Carrie Morgan, Kelley Morgan, Brandee Penney, Elka Marie Savas, Jennifer Vachon and Pranav Verma. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and welcome, two residents of Yellowknife South, Mr. Ed Jeske, who is retired but been a public servant for the GNWT for a number of years, and Mr. Joe Ouellette. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize the Oilers, again and Julia. It was a pleasure meeting and playing hockey with you in Cambridge Bay and I hope we can do it again in January in Fort Simpson. I also would like to recognize Cheeko Desjarlais and her son, Cree. Cheeko is a long-term northerner with extensive experience in the media. She was up there, and if she is up there, I would like to recognize her. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Mr. Bill Powless, long-time northerner and also Rocky Parsons, a well known northern aviator and also a long-time northerner.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. For the rest of the people who have not been recognized, welcome to the Assembly.

--Applause

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Picco.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 265-13(6): Health Benefits Agreements

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. It is my understanding that new residents of the Northwest Territories receive health benefits on their health cards from their own jurisdiction for the first three months of residency in the Northwest Territories. I am wondering if that is correct. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 265-13(6): Health Benefits Agreements

HON. KELVIN NG:

Mr. Speaker, I am not exactly sure of what the time period of coverage is. I will get that information and advise the Member. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 265-13(6): Health Benefits Agreements

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when the Minister is getting that information, I wonder if he could follow up, indeed, on the same area. I have had some calls from constituents who have been informed, if they are living in Nunavut on a temporary basis, let us say on a contract from September to June, for nine months, they are not eligible for the NWT Health Care card. That seems to me, to be a conflict with the inter-jurisdictional agreements and arrangements we have with other jurisdictions, provinces and territories. Could the Minister speak to that or at least, follow up with the other information that he has? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 265-13(6): Health Benefits Agreements

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe, but I have to confirm it, that the inter-jurisdictional agreements allow for a one-year transition, but I did not want to give him the wrong information. That is why I said I would find out exactly what the time period was and advise him on that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 266-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for Mr. Arlooktoo, Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation, and it is with respect to the program he announced last week on the Minimum Down Payment Assistance Pilot Program. There is some concern that the public has raised with me and that is, who will be eligible for this program? I wonder if the Acting Premier could tell us who exactly is eligible for this? The main question is, are Cabinet Ministers or Members from this Legislature eligible for this particular program?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 266-13(6): New Down payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated earlier last week, the new program is designed to be more open and flexible than other previous programs, however, I am not certain whether or not Members of the Legislative Assembly would be eligible or not. I know there are very strict guidelines about Members and Ministers entering into contracts with the government. This is an issue that was raised with me earlier this morning and I have asked my principal secretary to check into the issue. Once I have that information, I will provide it to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 266-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have thought that the Cabinet would have dealt with that situation before announcing this program. Again, it is one of the areas that I think the public will demand that Members of this House not participate in programs of that nature. Certainly, Members of the Cabinet, who have a responsibility for introducing programs. My second question, Mr. Speaker, is, has this money been budgeted for this program in the Housing Corporation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 266-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, as I indicated last week to a similar question, there are two parts to the budget of the new Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program. One is a little over \$1 million from within existing resources that the Housing Corporation has been able to allocate for the start-up of this program and an additional amount of \$1.6995 million, I believe, that the Financial Management Board will bring forward to this House in the form of a supplementary appropriation request. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 266-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will that supplementary appropriation come before us this session?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 266-13(6): New Down Payment Pilot Program

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I will have to check on that, but I believe so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 267-13(6): High Arctic Water and Sewer Services

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation)Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am raising an issue of the question that has been raised to me. I have been talking with the hamlets in my constituency and I would like some clarification regarding the sewage system. I would like to know if the Minister of MACA.....GNWT has been taking off so much percentage and 25 percent have been taken off in some of these, so I would like some clarification from the Minister of MACA, regarding these issues. Thank you. (Translation ends.)

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 267-13(6): High Arctic Water and Sewer Services

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do

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not have all the details in front of me so I will take that question as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 268-13(6): Contracting Services from the GNWT

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Acting Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo, and it is to do with the

question around contracting back the services from Nunavut and that potential. There has been much discussion and, I believe there was a list circulated of services which the Nunavut government would require the Government of the Northwest Territories or other jurisdictions to perform. My question is, who will be responsible for the employees if such services are contracted by the GNWT to Nunavut, after April 1, 1999? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Acting Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 268-13(6): Contracting Services from the GNWT

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is correct, there is quite a number of services that are being looked at for possible contracting back with the GNWT from the Government of Nunavut. I believe the number is somewhere in the neighbourhood of 40 different types of services. The final arrangements or negotiations, are being concluded as we speak. My understanding of how it will work, is that the GNWT here in Yellowknife, once given the proper advanced notice for what services will be required, will make the necessary arrangements to make sure that the human resources are available to be here in the western Arctic to clear up the services, working for the GNWT. The final bill will be paid for by the Government of Nunavut for those services on a contractual basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 268-13(6): Contracting Services from the GNWT

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Acting Premier has noted that there will be approximately 40 services that Nunavut will require some GNWT services on. That will, Mr. Speaker, require sufficient, or a larger, number of employees excesses to what the GNWT needs. Has it been worked out, Mr. Speaker, who will be financially responsible for any particular layoff costs that may be incurred by the GNWT, subject to the services not being required by Nunavut after a year, or whatever time period? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 268-13(6): Contracting Services from the GNWT

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission, I would like to refer that question to Mr. Todd, the Minister responsible for the overall division. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All costs associated with any necessary layoffs or anything else that is associated with the downsizing of the western government, as the eastern government moves forward, will be negotiated with our federal counterparts. As I have said on a number of occasions, we will continue to document that cost. I think there is an acceptance that some of these costs will be negotiated, of course, because some of these costs are valid and that would be, then, the responsibility of the federal government to provide us with compensation for same. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 269-13(6): Prerogatives of the Executive Council

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have several questions today for the Acting Premier. I assume, with taking over the role of Acting Premier, he has also taken over responsibility for the Department of the Executive. If that is the case, then I think he would be the appropriate one to answer my questions today. My first question is, Mr. Speaker, does this Cabinet have the prerogative to extend ministerial benefits to a person after they have ceased to be a Member of Cabinet? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Acting Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 269-13(6): Prerogatives of the Executive Council

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a fairly complex question that would require some research, but I think the basic answer would be that Cabinet, as long as it follows the necessary rules under the Financial Administration Act, and the other laws that govern its conduct, has some areas of flexibility. On whether or not this is one area it has flexibility on, I would need to do some more research. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 269-13(6): Prerogatives of the Executive Council

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the Acting Premier could tell me if there is any precedent that has been set with respect to the extension of ministerial benefits to individuals after departing from Cabinet positions? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 269-13(6): Prerogatives of the Executive Council

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not certain if there is precedent or not. Perhaps if the Member would be more definitive in a specific area, I will be able to answer it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Ms. Groenewegen.

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Supplementary To Question 269-13(6): Prerogatives of the Executive Council

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the question was definitive and I want to know if he was aware of any prerogative or any precedent being set in that area, if

he does not know this, that is an adequate answer. Also, with respect to the Department of the Executive, could the Acting Premier please tell me if Cabinet has the prerogative to approve direct appointments which fall outside of the guidelines as outlined in the hiring process direct appointment human resource manual section 1.12. Does the cabinet have the authority to go outside of that particular framework in making direct appointments? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 269-13(6): Prerogatives of the Executive Council

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, unfortunately, do not have a copy of that particular directive or guideline on hand. Again, as a general rule is that the Cabinet is bound by directives and guidelines and goals that are there for us today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Ms. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 269-13(6): Prerogatives of the Executive Council

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One more question with respect to the Department of the Executive. Could the Acting Premier please tell me if Ordinary Members have any means of accessing information with regard to severance packages which have been negotiated with deputy ministers leaving the employment of the government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Perhaps the Acting Premier would know what goes to his executives, but to the Ordinary Members, I am not sure. Do you wish to answer, Mr. Arlooktoo?

Further Return To Question 269-13(6): Prerogatives of the Executive Council

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can only say that I will find out that information and pass it on to the Member as I do not have it in front of me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 270-13(6): Compensation for Injured Workers

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question will be directed to the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board. What is the requirement for a person to be compensated if injured? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 270-13(6): Compensation for Injured Workers

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If an employee is injured while on the job, they go to the nursing station, there is a form that each nursing station has that indicates the extent of their injury, how long they are going to be off, et cetera. It is a workers' compensation form, I believe, is then sent into the Workers' Compensation Board. They determine if this injury was done during a working environment and assess whatever compensation is then necessary by the staff of the WCB.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 270-13(6): Compensation for Injured Workers

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, does the person have to work several weeks in order to be compensated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 270-13(6):
Compensation for Injured Workers

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe there is a criteria and I apologize to my colleague, I cannot remember exactly what it is, but I am sure there is a criteria set and one of it will be extent of injury, how long they have worked, what level of salary they get. There will be a series of them. I will look into the matter, I think you asked me earlier. I have already asked the Workers' Compensation Board to provide me with a full briefing on it. Off the top of my head, I apologize, I do not know.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 270-13(6):
Compensation for Injured Workers

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the person who goes to work for a day and got seriously injured, would he be compensated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 270-13(6):
Compensation for Injured Workers

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I guess the answer would be probably. As I said to my colleague I will have to look into the matter and I know there is a criteria set, I just cannot remember what it is at the top of my head. I will provide him with a complete briefing on the conditions under which an injured worker would be compensated which will encompass so many days they have to work, et cetera. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

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Petition: 7-13(6): Moving Enterprise into the Deh Cho Constituency

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a petition from a number of residents of the community of Enterprise asking that the Legislative Assembly change the electoral boundaries to include Enterprise in the Deh Cho constituency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Petitions. Okay, I know there are going to be some bills coming up, but whether or not they are available to the Members, I am not certain so, we will take a 15 minute break.

--Break

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. We are on Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report to the Legislative Assembly that the Special Committee on Nunavut Legislation has reviewed Bill 21, Nunavut Statutes Amendment Act, No. 2, Bill 23, Nunavut Legal Registries Statutes Amendment Act, and Bill 26, Nunavut Workers' Compensation Statutes Amendment Act, and wishes to report that Bill 21 and Bill 26 are ready for consideration in committee of the whole, and that Bill 23 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole as amended and reprinted. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5) and have Bill 21, Bill 23 and Bill 26 moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Natilikmiot is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5). Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Ningark, you have unanimous consent, Bill 21, Bill 23 and Bill 26 are moved into committee of the whole for today. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two bills. I wish to report to the Legislative Assembly that the Standing Committee on Government Operations has reviewed Bill 20, Division Measures Act, No. 2, and wishes to report that Bill 20 is now ready for committee of the whole. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5) and have Bill 20 ordered into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Yellowknife South is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5), and order Bill 20 into committee of the whole for today. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Henry you have unanimous consent, Bill 20 is ordered into committee of the whole for today. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Legislative Assembly that the Standing Committee on Government Operations has reviewed Bill 25, Workers' Compensation Division Measures Act, and wishes to report that Bill 25 is now ready for committee of the whole. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5) and have Bill 25 ordered into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Yellowknife South is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5). Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Henry, you have unanimous consent, Bill 25 is ordered into committee of the whole for today. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Legislative Assembly that the Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development has reviewed Bill 27, An Act to Amend the Wildlife Act, and wishes to report that Bill 27 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5) and have Bill 27 moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Yellowknife Centre is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5). Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Ootes, you have unanimous consent, Bill 27 is moved into committee of the whole for today. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Legislative Assembly that the Standing Committee on Infrastructure has reviewed Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Program Transfer Act, and wishes to report that Bill 24 is now ready for the committee of the whole. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5) and have Bill 24 ordered into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Iqaluit is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5). Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Picco, you have unanimous consent, Bill 24 is ordered into committee of the whole for today. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Arlooktoo.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 48-13(6): Letter from NTI President Regarding the Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a letter from Mr. Jose Kusugak, President of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, for reviewing the legislative consultation on division bill on the Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Tabling of documents. Ms. Thompson.

Tabled Document 49-13(6): Empowerment Through Community Government Legislation: Report of the Review Committee on Phase 2 of the Municipal Legislation Review for the Western NWT

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following documents entitled, Empowerment Through Community Government Legislation, Report of the Review

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Committee on Phase 2 of the Municipal Legislation Review for the Western Northwest Territories.

Tabled Document 50-13(6): Empowerment Through Community Government Legislation: Report of the Review Committee on Phase 2 of the Municipal Legislation Review for Nunavut

And, Empowerment through Community Government Legislation, Report of the Review Committee on Phase 2 of the Municipal Legislation Review for Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Tabled Document 51-13(6): Ruling on the Request of the Member for Tu Nedhe for Commissioner to Disqualify Herself

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a document that is the request of the Member for Tu Nedhe for the Commissioner to disqualify herself and the ruling on that question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Tabling of documents. Mr. Morin.

Tabled Document 52-13(6): Letter From Morin Legal Counsel Regarding Judicial Review Application Hearing Date

MR. MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a document. A letter from my legal counsel to myself today confirming that an application will be heard in the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories in Yellowknife on December 11, 1998, at 10:30 a.m.

Tabled Document 53-13(6): Letter From DIAND Regarding Airstrip Built Over Existing Grave Site

As well, I would like to table another document from Indian and Northern Affairs, dated April 30, 1997,

from Indian Affairs to myself as an MLA expressing concern about an airstrip that was built over an existing grave site. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Mr. Erasmus.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Motion 13-13(6): Waiver of Parliamentary Privilege For Judicial Review Application to Proceed

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, December 9, 1998, I will move the following motion;

Now therefore, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that this Legislative Assembly notwithstanding its inherent power to control its own proceedings, privileges or prerogatives, waives its privilege over this matter to allow the application for a judicial review to proceed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 29: Northwest Territories Power Corporation Division Measures Act

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, December 9, 1998, I will move that Bill 29, Northwest Territories Power Corporation Division Measures Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Bill 30: Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, December 9, 1998, I will move that Bill 30, Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Todd.

Bill 31: An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, December 9, 1998, I will move that Bill 31, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to proceed with first reading of Bill 29, Northwest Territories Power Corporation Division Measures Act.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with Bill 29. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Dent, you have unanimous consent.

Bill 29: Northwest Territories Power Corporation Division Measures Act

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Members. Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin South that Bill 29, Northwest Territories Power Corporation Division Measures Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 29 has had first reading. First reading of bills. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to proceed with first reading

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of Bill 30, Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Baffin South is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with Bill 30. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Arlooktoo, you have unanimous consent.

Bill 30: Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. I move seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake that Bill 30, Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 30 has had first reading. First reading of bills.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. First reading of bills. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to proceed with first reading of Bill 31, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Keewatin Centre is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with Bill 31. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Todd, you have unanimous consent.

Bill 31: An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the Honourable Member for Baffin South that Bill 31, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 31 has had first reading. First reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills.

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to proceed with second reading of Bill 29, Northwest Territories Power Corporation Division Measures Act.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake is seeking consent to deal with second reading of Bill 29. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Dent, you have consent.

Bill 29: Northwest Territories Power Corporation Division Measures Act

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin South, that Bill 29, Northwest Territories Power Corporation Division Measures Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Northwest Territories Power Corporation Act to enable the Northwest Territories Power Corporation to carry on its business in Nunavut. The Public Service Act is consequentially amended to clarify that employees of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation who work outside the territories are members of the public service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 29 has had second reading and accordingly stands ordered to a committee. Second reading of bills. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek consent to proceed with the second reading of Bill 30, Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Baffin South is seeking consent to deal with Bill 30. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Arlooktoo, you have consent.

Bill 30: Nunavut Power Utilities Statutes Amendment Act

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, that Bill 30, Nunavut Power Utility Statutes Amendment Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the NWT Power Corporation Act as duplicated for Nunavut to establish the Nunavut Power Corporation and to enable the NWT Power Corporation to provide service in Nunavut. Consequential amendments are also made to a number of acts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Bill 30 has had second reading and accordingly stands ordered to a committee. Second reading of bills. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek consent to proceed with the second reading of Bill 31, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Keewatin Central is seeking consent to deal with Bill 31. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Todd, you have consent.

Bill 31: An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin South, that Bill 31, An Act to Amend the Public

Utilities Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Public Utilities Act to authorize the Public Utilities Board to establish joint divisions that the Public Utilities Board of another province or territory where the public utility conducts business in both jurisdictions. The bill provides that a joint division has the jurisdiction, powers and duties of the board and that a decision or act of a joint division is a decision or act of the board. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Bill 31 has had second reading and accordingly stands ordered to a committee. Second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of review of bills and other matters. Tabled Document 37-13(6), Bill 20, Bill 21, Bill 23, Bill 24, Bill 25, Bill 26, Bill 27, Bill 19, with Mr. Steen in the Chair. By the authority given the Speaker by resolution 11-13(6) the committee of the whole is today permitted to sit beyond their normal sitting hours until it is prepared to report progress.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I would like to call the committee to order. As agreed to last Friday, we will continue with Tabled Document 37-13(6) Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. Is that agreed by the committee?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. For your information, the Chair on Friday read out the motion governing these proceedings in the House. We have limited ourselves to 45 minutes each, except for Mr. Morin who had 90 minutes. For your information I will read out those that have spoken to this particular item. Mr. Dent, Mr. Picco, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Krutko and Mr. Henry. These people have spoken towards this item on Friday. Therefore, I recognize any other Members who wish to speak at this time starting with Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to take this opportunity in the Legislative Assembly of the Government of the Northwest Territories to address the people of the north about the state of their government. This past year has been a trying time for all concerned and it is now time to assess what we might have learned from this process. I stood in this House almost a year ago and stated that I was embarking on a mission of truth and transparency. I did so after careful reflection and being fully convinced that regardless of the personal or political risks and attacks, that this was something that had to be done. Although there have admittedly been many trying times, I have never wavered or doubted for a moment that this was the right thing to do. It started off as research into matters of concerns raised to me. It developed into questions on the floor of this House. Questions which I not only had the right, but the obligation to ask and questions to which northerners had the right to have answers. My questions were met with resistance, arrogance and ultimately a personal challenge from our former Premier to lay a conflict of interest complaint against him.

With the human and financial resources of one ordinary Member stacked against the unlimited and substantial resources of the entire government, it appeared at times that justice could not be served. I watched as Cabinet Ministers closed ranks against me, as the Management and Services Board ignored the recommendations of the Conflict Commissioner and then a Supreme Court Judge and some of my colleagues engaged in tactics to discredit me. However, I was inspired and spurred on by the people who despaired over the obvious lack of integrity in the dealings of this government. I was driven by the belief that it was far better to try and fail than it would be to fail to try.

This inquiry and this report by no means addresses all of the shortcomings of the operations of this government. This is merely a glimpse or snapshot of what has been described as the political culture of the Northwest Territories. This is not over so to speak, because the task of ensuring accountable and transparent government is an ongoing process.

Over the past several years, or maybe even longer, I suggested that many injustices have been dealt to individuals and businesses by the abuse of power in political office. I have now been told of so many irregularities and unresolved injustices that I am

coming to the conclusion that we need a full time advocate or ombudsman to act on behalf of constituents as a watchdog on government operations and politicians. Other Members have made reference to the need for an outside, independent person to sit on a committee to review policy and procedure because an assessment undertaken by internal personnel would not provide the necessary assurances to our constituents. This in itself is a sad commentary on our government. What we really need is honest people in positions of leadership setting high standards and providing exemplary leadership to the public service.

We have a unique situation here in the north: a small population, a disproportionate component of young, more vulnerable and fairly dependant people that we are expected to serve honourably. Because of the pressing needs, and everyone knows the statistics and challenges which face us in the north, it particularly behooves our government leaders to care more for the people collectively than the time they spend serving their own and their friends' goals and agendas.

Mr. Morin has said that the report of the commissioner does not reflect the reality of the north due to the fact that this is a small community and everyone knows everyone. I suggest that is all the more reason why leaders need to be particularly astute in the areas of fairness and impartiality. We should also be keenly aware that our actions do not go without notice.

Dealing specifically with the findings of the report, I believe that the assessment of the issues is fair, balanced and comprehensive. We will debate the findings of the report in more depth as we consider a motion on each violation of the act. I would, however, like to speak to a number of the questions raised by Mr. Morin in his 90 minute defence speech. First, let us look at what we did not hear from Mr. Morin. First, we did not hear anything new. He says he did not have the opportunity to defend himself over the past ten months, but, we know he had a team of lawyers at government expense, he had almost two days of testimony on the stand at the inquiry, he had full-time political advisors, a press secretary and the same opportunity as anyone else, if not more, to issue statements, positions and clarifications.

Another thing we did not hear was any evidence of any acknowledgement that Mr. Morin understands the concept of conflict of interest and the perception of conflict. He said he is not new to conflict of interest, so would he knowingly get into conflict again?

According to Mr. Morin, all the violations were unintentional and inadvertent; errors in judgment made in good faith. However, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner found that

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the violations were advertent and intentional. Maybe this could have been believable if this had been a first offence or an only offence, but this is a style, an attitude, an obvious and clear disregard for the test of closest public scrutiny. We did not hear any remorse, any apology and anything like, I acknowledge my actions and am willing to take responsibility for them.

No, indeed, everyone else is to blame. The Conflict Commissioner is biased. The law clerk gave him assurances that were inaccurate. Commission counsel did not follow proper procedure. They were allowed to interview witnesses under oath, but his counsel was not. The timing of transcripts reaching the internet was unfair. He did not want to sell his land, but he sold it anyway. Commission counsel refused to bring forward evidence that could have exonerated him.

Document 246 is one which I still have difficulty with. Mr. Morin has recounted for us what happened surrounding the Cabinet meeting of May 16, 1996. I quote, from unedited Hansard from Friday, so I walked in and stayed out of the meeting. This is where I get really confused, It is very clear in our conflict legislation that if you are not in a meeting you do not have to declare an interest. But, I did declare my interest in the Cabinet... how could I even be in a meeting to declare a conflict if I was not there, end quote. The letter signed by the four Cabinet Ministers said, Premier Don Morin declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting room, taking no part in the decision of the discussion.

As for the other Cabinet Ministers who are implicated by this report, this was a very important document at a very important juncture of the Commissioner's deliberations. I would like to challenge each of the other Ministers to tell us what you believed to be the purpose of the letter that you signed. If you knew that it would form part of the submission to the Commissioner being prepared by Mr. Morin's counsel, you must have surely recognized the significance of it being completely accurate. I was at the 81(2) hearing when the Commissioner reported her findings on which matters she would take to the public inquiry. I am quite certain that Mr. Morin's counsel had provided him with convincing assurances that these

matters would not make it to a public inquiry. It would follow that no public inquiry would mean no subpoena of the Cabinet minutes. The Cabinet minutes would normally reflect if a Minister had declared a conflict and left the meeting, but there is no such record in these minutes.

I appreciate Mr. Dent's recognition in his statement last Friday, if putting himself in my shoes he could understand how this appeared to be a conspiracy on the part of Cabinet. That is exactly what I thought when I saw this undated document in the submission by Mr. Morin's counsel.

I think the other three Ministers who signed this document also owe an explanation to the people of the Northwest Territories for showing such disregard for accuracy in a document which would be so crucial to the initial findings of the commissioner. If they cannot muster an explanation or an apology, I think they should be called upon to resign from their positions. We are at a place right now where we have a unique opportunity to demonstrate to our constituents we are serious about cleaning up the practices of this government. It is an important time because we are on the verge of elections and two new governments, east and west. Changing the Premier and leaving the other key players in place with the same old attitude and modus operandi is not enough. As Ministers of the Crown, they have a serious responsibility individually. They cannot hide behind the findings that it was the Premier who was in conflict because their denials of involvement or wrongdoing cannot be reconciled to the findings of this report.

When questioned in the press conference after Mr. Morin's resignation, a reporter with the National Post suggested to Mr. Arlooktoo that this was just the tip of the iceberg, based on an interview he had with me earlier in the day. Mr. Arlooktoo's response was, that's a crock. Well I would like to say no, it is not a crock. I personally am kind of tired of conflict proceedings but if Mr. Arlooktoo's response is indicative of what other Cabinet Ministers think as well, I have got a long list of dealings with this government that could be looked into. The matters investigated in this inquiry did not happen in a vacuum. There are dynasties and groups of long established relationships which appear to the public to influence the decisions of this government. If this report means anything, these agendas must be examined. I am all for business and all for northern business. I am a business person myself and I believe I capably represented the Northwest Territories and Hay River Chamber of Commerce for many years but

the benefits and support of business awarded by this government must be done so openly, transparently and fairly.

The Commissioner had words of advice for how Mr. Morin could have better used his efforts. The report says, the record of these proceedings shows that from start to finish Mr. Morin has tried to use this inquiry as a means to attack Mrs. Groenewegen, the complainant. He has not focused on his own office and conduct. I believe that each of the Cabinet Ministers could have shown more respect for this process by keeping their attention on their own actions as well. Mr. Arlooktoo's repeated mutterings and denigrating remarks towards me in this House and in the media is another example of someone who should focus on his own conduct.

Mr. Arlooktoo suggested last week that I was out for blood. No, Mr. Chairman, I am just out for accountability. The actions and comments of Mr. Arlooktoo since this report was released have made it very clear that he may not get the picture either. When he first came to this House I saw him as a sincere, hardworking representative of the people. Today I see a different person returning after the 13th Assembly, returning to his communities. Fortunately, it is never too late to learn from experience, so I hope he will reflect on why he might have changed.

Further, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Morin seeks to convince us that he has not contravened the provisions of part III of the legislation. He asks us to substitute our judgement for the judgement of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. He asks us to do this on the basis of his assertion that he has not engaged in conduct that contravenes the Act. He asks you to do this on the basis of the same information and arguments that he presented to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. He asks us to do this without having had the benefit of hearing the evidence of the other 41 witnesses whose testimony was heard by the Commissioner. Look at the report. Ask yourself with respect to each of Mr. Morin's points, was this a point considered and dealt with within the Report? Who is in a better position to determine the facts, the Conflict Commissioner or this Assembly? Why should this Assembly, as Mr. Morin is asking us to do, substitute our

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judgement for that of the Conflict of Interest's Commissioner's? Indeed, the legislation does not permit the Assembly to do so. Section 83(b) only allows the Assembly to accept or reject

recommendations as to penalty, not to the findings of contravention.

The conflict of interest legislation was brought into being to provide assurances that decisions would not be made by people in conflict. That decisions would be made with the public interest and not a Member's interest in mind and to avoid breaches of privilege, to avoid the appearance of lack of impartiality. If we as legislators were to investigate ourselves, what assurances would that instill as to integrity and public confidence?

On the subject of bias, we have to ask ourselves if the commissioner favoured one side at the expense of the other. There are not present here any circumstances from which it can be perceived by a reasonable person that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner unfairly favoured one side over the other.

On the contrary, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner was at pains to be fair to Mr. Morin. Indeed, she accepted the submissions of Mr. Morin's counsel that my role and the role of my counsel was largely subsumed by that of commission counsel after the 81(2) threshold had been met. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner denied my counsel's application to cross-examine Mr. Morin. The Commissioner granted her counsel and my counsel combined only half as much time to present closing arguments as she did that of the combined time allotted to Mr. Morin's, Mr. Bailey's and Mr. Mrdjénovich's counsel. Although I was determined to be a party with a direct interest in this inquiry, I was denied full participant standing and my counsel was denied the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses. It cannot be fairly said that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner was partisan by words or deeds. Mr. Morin's position is fanciful.

The Conflict of Interest Commissioner brought to the proceedings a fair and unprejudiced mind. Commission counsel was unable to pursue aggressive questioning of witnesses. Bias is a lack of neutrality on the issue to be decided influenced by improper considerations or prejudice. Unbiased does not mean uninformed. The process should not be allowed to be paralysed every time someone makes an allegation of bias. Allegations of bias should have been pursued at the outset of the process, not at its conclusion. If Mr. Morin believed there was merit in his contention of bias, he had an obligation to pursue it with due diligence, not complain after the fact when the decision went against him. We have to ask ourselves if we know of any facts to

support the claim of bias. Bias by conduct or bias by relationship. The expression of strong views and conclusions does not support a finding of bias. As for her choice of language, maybe it is the language that we could understand. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner is an officer of this Assembly, conducting an investigation for the Assembly.

I have listened as Members, such as Mr. Miltenberger, spoke of moving on with the business of government. I submit to you, Mr. Chairman, that this is a cop-out by people who do not have the fortitude to confront the issues. We have an opportunity here, as a result of this inquiry, to send a clear message to our constituents as to our position on matters of trust, integrity and public confidence. The more subtle, but actual, message from comments such as, let us move on quickly, is we should not be wasting our time on this and we have more important things to do. Well, Mr. Chairman, I would challenge the Members to tell me, just name one, because the issue of leadership in our government is germane to everything else that happens. It is germane to fairness in hiring, fairness in contracting, fair accessibility of our constituents to opportunity. It is germane to good public policy and meeting the needs of all our constituents, not just a handful who those Ministers stand to defend as having the right to earn a living in the Northwest Territories.

I could have softened my remarks today, but I believe in what I have pursued in this past year and I know most northerners believe in it as well. It is the most fundamental principle of functional democracy, accountable government. One of the saddest findings and comments in the report is, he brought down his own reputation and the reputation of his office. He brought down our reputation in the Northwest Territories. It will take years of work to regain what he has taken away from each one of us.

I believe Mr. Morin's resignation has gone some distance towards regaining what has been taken away from us. As we elect a new Premier this week, I believe that electing a Premier who will set a high standard and deal ethically and quickly with matters of the conduct of Cabinet Ministers will also go a great distance toward regaining what has been taken away from us. I think we should consider these words in the report, when you are the Premier everyone is watching you. It is a position of high honour and high profile and you are setting the standards for others.

As most of you are aware, I have already declared, if Mr. Kakwi put his name forward for Premier of this

government, I was convinced he is someone that could bring the integrity and leadership to that position that this government needs, to get back on a stable footing.

Everyone is watching us now. To the Members of this House, do not be distracted by your colleagues here in the House when you consider your vote on matters of the report. Think about your constituents, think about the needs of your communities, think about standing up and being counted for doing what is right. If you are not sure what to do, make a few phone calls to the leaders of your communities, to your constituents, and ask them what they think. Do not let Cabinet Ministers who have their actions and political reputations put on the line by this report, bully you into their agendas. Stand up for the good of your constituents. Their constituents will deal with them, but unfortunately so will yours if you compromise and cave in to political pressures that you are experiencing here. We must understand and adopt this report and then deal with the specific issues in it.

At the Meet the North conference in Edmonton last weekend, one of the session titles was, The Changing Political Landscape. My hope after all of this is that there will be a changed political landscape. I hope the findings of this report will prompt an early election in the west. I hope it will prompt people to seek office in the next election, east and west, who will live up to the title of honourable Members.

I hope this whole process will give people the courage, without fear of reprisal, to demand more accountability and openness

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from elected leaders in our communities, in our territories and provinces and even in our country. The findings of this report, as I said, are only the tip of the iceberg. The tip of a recently escalated neglect of the responsibility of elected officials to conduct themselves with the standards that will bear the closest public scrutiny and pass the test as meeting the highest standard of honesty and integrity. A good definition of justice is, determining what belongs to someone and ensuring they get it. The Government of the Northwest Territories. Let us give the government back to the people by doing everything necessary to restore the confidence in the integrity of our government. The people of the north are unique and precious. We have many challenges and needs, but we also have many strengths and virtues. Let us be humble enough to learn from our mistakes,

benevolent enough to forgive those who may have wronged us and courageous enough to stand up for what we believe in.

Mr. Morin has asked us for fairness. he has asked us to consider if he is a dishonest man, if he is a devious man, if we think he would have intentionally entered into conflict of interest. I suggest that these are not the questions before us. The question before us has more to do with accountability and the real life fact that we are each responsible for the consequences of our actions. I ask you to consider the tone and demeanour of Mr. Morin throughout these proceedings. I do not consider myself a vindictive person and I still hold no personal ill will towards Mr. Morin, but we must weigh his individual plea for fairness with the collective fairness to the people of the Northwest Territories. I believe that the people of the Northwest Territories deserve the best leadership that we can offer. Commissioner Crawford says in her report, and I quote, I am fully aware that resignation or removal from a post as Minister would be the inevitable result of the Assembly accepting the findings that I have made in every other jurisdiction in Canada.

Do the people of the north deserve any less from their leadership than any other jurisdiction in Canada? I say they deserve the best. There are no perfect leaders, but I believe there are honest and moral leaders who we could be proud to have represent us. Therefore, I encourage Members to carefully consider the motions that will be presented in this House. I will not speak on the recommendation regarding costs. I clearly have an interest and will declare a conflict on that matter but I ask, I indeed urge, all of you to adopt the other findings of this very important report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

--Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. I will now recognize the Member from Inuvik, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it has been a long journey to get to where we are today. I can remember first entering this forum and signing an oath, which basically said, I do solemnly and sincerely promise and swear that I will duly and faithfully, and to the best of my skill and knowledge, execute the

powers and trust imposed in me as a Member of the Northwest Territories council, so help me God.

Mr. Chairman, I have often spoken about bringing the people to government and making decisions on behalf of them, and trying to make sure we reflect their position in all that we do. The process of government is something that has been brought to light and questioned throughout this process. We are all a part of that process, no matter where we sit in this Assembly. As ordinary Members, as Ministers, we all execute and give directions and that forms a process of government.

Our first responsibility is to the people of this territory. The people who put us here, who voted for us, who saw the promise, I guess I could say, of good leadership when they all put their X beside our names and chose us to represent them in this Assembly. I go back to the oath of office that we all took, each and every one of us. If we look at that and at the people we represent, we all have to ask ourselves the question, have we done the utmost to represent the people of the territories? I do not think anybody, from either side of this situation, can stand above another. This is one of the more difficult situations I find myself in as a Member of this Assembly. It is never easy to police yourself, to call into question one's leadership, or one's point of, I would not say attack, but, one's point of pursuing an initiative, whether it be a housing construction in one's community, a hospital, or anything of that nature.

Mr. Chairman, that is one of the reasons why the Conflict of Interest Act was established. It was there as a tool to govern ourselves, so that the people that we represent, if they had a concern, they could raise it. They had an avenue to question government, as we call it. It seems that, in the past, the majority of times this Conflict of Interest Act has been used by Members. I do not know if that says anything, there is also a concern that the act itself does not allow for public participation, when it comes to costs and how they would deal with the issue.

Mr. Chairman, as a Member of the Management and Services Board, and as things were published early on, I was asked many times, in my community, why I chose to do one thing over another. It was difficult because a lot of times, I had to tell my constituents that there is a process that is set out to be used and we cannot go outside of that process, whether we want to or not. To some, in the community, they would question me as to say, where are you heading with this? You spoke of being in an open government, an

open process. When we talked to you on this specific issue, you tell us there is little I can say. That is one of the things of government. It is a process we have to use, that is established and, whether we like it or not, we have to operate under it. The only thing we can do, is to change those processes. Unfortunately, that seems to take a lot of time. I think we have all become aware of that.

Mr. Chairman, we are here today to deal with the report that is tabled, Conflict of Interest, filed by Mrs. Groenewegen against Mr. Morin. We have been asked by both sides for fairness. We have been asked to look at this report from two different points. I look at my role at this juncture and I have to say that this is another one of the processes that we, as an Assembly or previous assemblies, have put into place. Imperfect as it is, it is a tool that is used by the public and by Members of this Assembly, and previous assemblies.

Questions have come to light about what was the purpose? I cannot question those. I have told many of my constituents, I cannot question why, and I cannot pretend to read anyone's mind as to what possessed them or what made them choose the path they have gone in this whole situation. Indeed, I do not envy either of the parties who are involved in this and those outside

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of it. It is difficult when you are in this situation, alone as a Member, and knowing that the life you lived before becoming elected is changed to the greatest degree.

We all live in glass houses, as they say. Everything we do and say is looked upon as a potential or a possible comment we are making on behalf of government or as the people we represent. Mr. Chairman, I agree the people are looking for leadership. They are the ones who voted for us on voting day. I have heard many comments up until this day of what leadership or their feeling of leadership is, in the Northwest Territories. Many comments are said in a way, where not one of us, can come away from it thinking it does not impact them.

We heard earlier from a number of Members, and we heard Mrs. Groenewegen make remarks to it, as well, the fact that we must gather the pieces and move on. In a sense, at the end of the day, that is where we have to go. If we feel we are leaders, we have to get over this juncture and the history or the making of

history, in the 13th Assembly. We have to move forward. If we are not going to do that, then we have to seriously ask ourselves around here and everyone of us, have to ask the question, we being the ones chosen to represent the people, are we leading for the right reasons?

When do we gather the pieces? Some would say sooner than later. Others would say there is more yet to be done. The reason I said earlier that all of us are affected by this, I think of it as being simply because we are all Members of this government, involved in committees and committee structures that were designed to question our Cabinet, our Cabinet colleagues, as to the direction they were choosing. I guess I would beg to question, if all of these things were going terribly wrong, where were we all?

I do not think it was a neglect on anybody's position to say that some of these things have gone out, but I think some of the initiatives taken early on were the right initiatives. We were trying to steer the ship of the Northwest Territories to come to division and to come at it so that both territories would have an opportunity to make best of its achievements for the upcoming days. It is unfortunate we find ourselves at the tail end of the 13th Assembly's term to be dealing with such issues because many, as the 13th Assembly comes to a close, will only remember a few things. We will probably have to answer many more questions as how it was to be in the 13th Assembly.

Indeed, Mr. Chairman, we all had the opportunity to raise questions in committee to the Ministers and in this forum. I understand, as well, that the Ministers, at times, used their opportunity to expand on their questions that made it difficult to understand whether or not you actually received your answer. That is a process of government. Can we make government perfect? How far are we willing to go back because, unfortunately, the way I see it, this is a structure that has been organized for years, that has been developed and as it developed and changed over the days from when officials from Ottawa used to travel north and make decisions on behalf of everyone, those changes came our way and we have had an opportunity to influence them. In some, understandably, it would say in the Northwest Territories that our opportunities to influence them have been very little, but we have come a long way and with that, mistakes are made. Sometimes bad judgement is used.

As this report was tabled, I had to look at it from the point of view that it was done by an officer of this

Assembly, so to speak, doing the job that she was appointed to do through the Conflict of Interest Act. As I said earlier, I cannot go back and question the frame of mind or what was the intent of the questions on behalf of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. I cannot go back and review the documents and the details to say whether or not Mr. Morin was just doing his job or that all the circumstances around it were just circumstances, or answer his question, when he opened up speaking to the report, and questioning us, as Members, before we would vote on this, if we voted in favour of it then, we would consider him as being dishonest, intentionally going beyond the lines and controls that are put in place for us.

That is a difficult point to have to look at, but I have had to look at it from an aspect of dealing strictly with the report. I cannot look at one's motives against another, but as I said earlier, this report is damning on all of us. You have heard of accountability and you will hear of it many times more before we are done. We are all accountable, whether we want to admit it or not. We have all taken part in votes in this Assembly, we have all passed or denied legislation, we have had the opportunity in committees to question the direction of Cabinet. If those that would say, well at times the Cabinet came up with a policy and put it into the Assembly, well we had that opportunity if we disagreed to change the course of direction this government would choose. I think if we look back on the history of the 13th Assembly, that was not done very often.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, maybe it is time for all of us to question accountability. Who are we accountable to? We are accountable to the people, the people who put us here, the people who put their trust and faith in us to guide this territory into division and beyond. Have we done that? I look at what we are doing today and I say that is far from where we thought we would be. Accountability, Mr. Chairman, is something that we all have a different measurement of. Some would say more needs to be done. Some would say, enough is enough, let us get on with our work.

Mr. Chairman, as I look at the report and its recommendations, a number of them were stated to be no violation, others there was conflict. I have to look at this report from the aspect the report is done, stated clearly, we have to deal with the report. The report, and I say this trying to be without malice, when one reads it, it draws many questions, but that is what the act and the whole process is for is to answer the questions. I would say that as the report sits, I find myself in a position that I would have to accept it.

I also accept the act of the Premier of the day when he resigned as being an act of goodwill, an act of accepting that this government was in a difficult position. I would say that he chose the honourable thing. As the recommendations state, they all state reprimand. How much more can I reprimand anyone in the Assembly than what has already been done? Can any of us take joy in doing more? That is not for me to answer. I have my own answer for myself. We go back to accountability. Maybe it is time, Mr. Chairman, that we go back to the people and ask them if they find us accountable. Maybe it is time to go out for a new mandate. As we heard Mrs. Groenewegen's comments earlier,

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more needs to be done, she says. Well if there is that much conflict in our system and those we chose to be Cabinet Ministers and the lack of fortitude, as she mentioned, on behalf of other Members to question it, then I think we should seriously consider the fact of having to go back to the people and let them choose the ones they would put back here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. I have one other Member on the list. Mr. Ootes, Yellowknife Centre.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe by stepping down as Premier, Mr. Morin did the right thing. It was in everyone's interest. The Premier is there to advance the public's interest and ensure that he maintains the public's confidence. All elected officials holding public office have a duty to continually reinforce the public interest and trust. When they lose that trust they should step down. The moment there is a public inquiry involving a Minister or Premier, he or she should step down.

When the Conflict Commissioner decided to proceed with the conflict inquiry, I gave the Premier the perfect opportunity to do the right thing. I moved a motion in this Assembly earlier this year that he step down from this position. That motion was seconded by Mr. Krutko and supported by Mr. O'Brien, but the motion was defeated. Many Members voted against the motion or sheltered their vote by abstaining. How irresponsible it is to shelter your vote. In my opinion, had Mr. Morin voluntarily stepped aside at that time, it would have gone a long way, in my mind, to respect

the credibility of the office and to reinforce public trust. That did not happen.

The task of dealing with the conflict report is not a savoury one, believe me. My constituents have let me know that they want me to take a stand on this matter. I was elected to deal with these matters no matter how tough they may be. We either find in favour of the recommendations or not in favour and proceed accordingly. If we find in favour of the recommendations, then we have to deal with the matter of reprimands. My constituents demand that I do that.

First, let me state that I have read the report cover to cover. I have studied its contents and conclusions, so let there be no doubt in anyone's mind that I do not know what is in the report, because I do. On Friday, I listened to Mr. Morin and on the weekend I had the opportunity to review Mr. Morin's statements again in the unedited Hansard. The following are my conclusions and comments.

On Friday afternoon Mr. Morin pleaded for understanding. It was eloquent, it was well presented, it was a very skilled presentation. A superb display to tug at the hearts of Members. Members saw a skilled politician in action. The objective, of course, was to reach for our hearts. Mr. Morin forgot one thing and that was to reach for our minds. I heard him plead for us to understand his side of the story. I compared the facts presented in the report and Mr. Morin's facts provided on Friday. Mr. Morin's presentation was very emotional, but for me what presented on Friday does not stand up.

Mr. Morin has all along blamed others for his predicament. Mr. Morin should look at himself, not others to put the blame on. He blames the Conflict Commissioner for a flawed process. Mr. Morin chose a path of confrontation and counterattack. He challenged Mrs. Groenewegen in the Assembly with the following words; or anyone else who may believe there is wrongdoing to file a complaint against me with the Conflict Commissioner, that is if they have the guts and political backbone. That was the tone in which he presented it, too, Mr. Chairman.

His disdain for Mrs. Groenewegen was amply demonstrated during the inquiry by referring to her as Groenewegen. Ms. Crawford writes, the record in these proceedings shows that from start to finish, Mr. Morin has tried to use this inquiry as a means to attack Mrs. Groenewegen, the complainant. He has not focused on his own office and conduct.

He blames the press for its coverage of the hearing. Let me quote from the conclusions of the Conflict Commissioner's report; he could have asked for advice on the fishing trip or Lahm Ridge Tower, his relationship with Roland Bailey, or how to make a declaration at a Cabinet meeting and how it should be reported. If Mr. Morin had taken these steps, there would have been little need for the time and expense and the drain on northern resources which this hearing represents.

In addition to the recommendations in the report, there are several other areas of concern. One is the letter signed by the four Ministers, the unresolved issue of the Lahm Ridge Tower and the issue of the establishment of a committee of public servants to review the report.

During our time here in the Assembly, we have repeatedly heard from the government the words transparency, open government and accountability. I am sorry to say that they have been just words. The supporting actions have not been there and so the words have become totally meaningless. Let me give you an example of what happened just a month ago in the Legislative Assembly. During question period on November 9th I asked Minister Ng to confirm what the employees of Vital Statistics had told me, that the office would close in Yellowknife and move to Inuvik. Mr. Ng's reply in the unedited Hansard says, I am not aware of that at this time, I am not sure of what the Member is speaking of. November 26th letter to me from Minister Ng, 17 days later, says, the Vital Statistics office, currently located in Yellowknife, will close March 19th and move to Inuvik and Rankin. I knew, the public knew, the staff knew that the Minister stated he did not know. My comments and questions were correct. Now, it may have been inadvertent that the Minister did not know, but if the Minister knew the answers at that time I was mislead, as were other Members of the public and Members of this House. In my opinion, former Premier Morin tolerated that kind of action from his Ministers without ensuring accuracy and respect for us.

You want me to trust you as Cabinet Ministers, demonstrate that I can. Smoke and mirrors, spin doctors. The hallmark of democracy is government accountability. Government must promote and maintain public trust and confidence in the integrity and partiality and objectivity of the Assembly and the process of government. Public trust, confidence and integrity in the executive branch of this government must be there. Those in the public that I have talked to do not believe it is there anymore.

On the matter of questions. Is asking too many questions in this

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House considered out of line? Is challenging Ministers of the government on their decisions on the awarding of contracts a waste of time? Last year, I moved a motion to clarify the RFP process. Has anything happened on that? No. Should Ordinary Members' efforts to ask respectful questions be responded to by abrasive, incomplete or evasive answers? Frequently this has been the case.

Who was responsible to set that tone? Mr. Morin. Mr. Morin was the leader. He had the responsibility to lead and direct his Ministers. If a Minister wants to be confrontational, then he or she sets the tone, not me. When answers to legitimate questions are not forthcoming and it takes a conflict of interest complaint and a public inquiry to get those answers, is that a waste of money? I do not think so. Is it the fault of Mrs. Groenewegen that a conflict of inquiry was conducted? I do not think so. Is it the fault of Mrs. Groenewegen that dollars were spent on a conflict of interest? No, absolutely not. Did she fulfil her responsibilities as an MLA? Beyond question.

The inquiry came about because of Mr. Morin and because of his actions. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner saw eight terms of reference that disclosed adequate grounds for proceeding with an inquiry. Her report concludes with seven recommendations.

The report clearly states that we must accept or reject the recommendations. Under section 1(2) of the act, nothing in this Act affects the inherent power of the Legislative Assembly to control its own proceedings, privileges or prerogatives, unless expressly provided otherwise. In other words, there is no express provision limiting the course of action of the Assembly. It is this Assembly's inherent right to punish its own Members in cases where there is guilt. In my mind, that means punishment as we see appropriate. In my mind, Mr. Morin did not provide enough checks and balances to ensure accountability and fairness when dealing with matters of his own Cabinet's functioning.

The inquiry showed one flaw in the credibility process. That was in the seemingly unlimited resources provided to the Member being investigated, Mr. Morin, while the complainant, Mrs. Groenewegen, received no public resources or support even after a

determination and a test of substance had been passed by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. That alone, is a tremendous deterrent for open, good government. There is no protection or form of assistance provided to the person laying the complaint. The risk alone would be enough to discourage anyone from laying a complaint, not to mention the amount of sheer determination and courage it would take to ward off the barrage of obstructions and attempts to derail the process, all paid for with unlimited access to the public purse. While Jane Groenewegen sat without participant standing and without funded counsel, she knew full well that she could suffer, but she persevered even though the odds were clearly stacked against her. I have the greatest admiration for her.

The only intention Jane Groenewegen ever had was to fulfil her duty as an elected official and respond to the concerns raised publicly. She, like all of us here, has a right to ask questions and the constituents have a right to the answers. After the goings-on that occurred with this inquiry, it will be a miracle if anyone lays a conflict of interest charge again against anyone in this government.

Before the report could be tabled in this House, Mr. Morin sought an injunction to prevent the report from being tabled before us. Mr. Morin left his fellow Members and Cabinet Ministers sitting in this assembly without notification as to what his next attempt to stop the process was. Justice John Vertes dismissed the application.

Justice Vertes stated:

"It is not in the public interest to have a process that was put in place by the Legislature itself, that has now been carried on for several months, to be all of a sudden side railed by a last minute application. The legislators, as the representatives of the public, have put this process in place, and therefore the process should be allowed to play out."

He continues:

"The law says very simply that the courts have no role to play in reviewing the exercise of the traditional privilege of a Legislature....one of the standard areas of privilege of Parliament is the discipline of its own Members."

Justice Vertes clearly points out that:

"It is now fully within the sphere of the Legislature. The Legislature says that what must be done from now on and any complaints must be taken to the floor of the Legislature and argued out there in the public eye."

He concludes:

"I have no doubt that the matter is solely within the purview of the Legislature, there is no role for this court to play and therefore the application is dismissed.

On the internal committee report. I do not support Acting Premier Goo Arlooktoo's suggestion of an internal committee of deputy ministers to investigate the report. If you agree with the report's findings, you certainly do not want the deputies to report on themselves. Some of the deputies were witnesses in this

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inquiry, but it goes without saying that their approach may be biased. Such a review should be very independent of government and by individuals who do not have a vested interest in the outcome of the results.

There is a need for whistle-blower legislation, which I have a great deal of research done on already, which I will be glad to provide to this government to pursue.

The Conflict of Interest Commissioner has found Mr. Morin guilty of "wilful and deliberate violations of the act", of providing documents he knew to be "untrue and contain untruths" and of causing the people of the NWT embarrassment and expense.

She then recommends that Mr. Morin be reprimanded for seven violations of the Conflict of Interest Act and that he pay all of the complainant's costs "from start to finish, plus one dollar which is to be paid personally in cash".

Most people would be begging for mercy after such a condemnation. Mr. Morin resigned as Premier so he could focus on quashing the report in the Legislature because he said, the fight is never over till it is over. He insisted on that.

The Conflict of Interest Commissioner stated:

"The Premier is the head of the government and ultimately responsible for everything done by government... Premier Morin contributed to this

perception and by doing so he contributes to the erosion of public confidence in the impartiality and integrity of government."

The report sends a very stern message that government must be conducted openly and transparently. If we agree with any or all reprimands then in effect we also agree with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's findings and conclusions. Therefore, we must also deal with those items arising out of those findings and conclusions. For example, the letter signed by the four Ministers, the issue surrounding employment contracts to former employees, and the Lahm Ridge Tower matter.

Let me deal with the Lahm Ridge Tower matter as an example. The report cites many inconsistencies. We have to question the timing of the Cabinet shuffle for example. The removal of Mr. Arlooktoo from DPW at a time when many questions were being raised about the Lahm Ridge Tower in relation to the Yellowknife Office Space Rationalization Plan. A suspicious mind and a discerning public would say there must be a problem. There was never any substantive reasons given for the shuffle. Of course, the result of the shuffle was that we could no longer ask questions about the Lahm Ridge Tower from Mr. Arlooktoo. We were left with a new Minister.

Mr. Antoine has stated he was dependent on briefing notes from department officials, notes that have proven to be inaccurate in many cases. Because of the controversy of the Lahm Ridge Tower, Mr. Antoine should have ensured that he could answer questions in this House very accurately. He should have done due diligence. He should have assured himself of all facts, that officials were providing accurate information. That did not happen. Instead there were a series of misleading briefing notes.

Let me refer to one example of an inaccurate briefing note. It was in reply to oral questions asked by Mr. Ootes, on February 6, 11 and 12, 1998. Questions asked of Mr. Antoine. The note states, which is clearly not true:

"The 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."

Of course that is incorrect.

What about Mr. Morin in all this. Did the conduct of Premier Morin meet the standard required? Did he act in a manner to maintain public confidence in his and his Minister's integrity and impartiality? In this instances, Ms. Crawford writes:

"Premier Morin's position was compromised by his relationship with Roland Bailey and by his housing arrangement with Mike Mrdjenovich... the use of his office to persistently defend a transaction involving individuals with whom he was already in a conflict situation resulted in a failure to maintain public confidence in his impartiality."

Mr. Morin said last Friday, and I will read from the unedited Hansard:

"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 briefing notes. I read 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 was a good deal for the government."

The Lahm Ridge Tower has never been proven to be a good deal for this government.

To conclude my remarks, Mr. Chairman, I would like to make reference to comments made by a Professor Ian Green of York University. He is a noted authority on conflict of interest legislation. He was interviewed last week on CBC and his comments were of interest. In referring to the report, he said some of the language could have been more diplomatic. He said, "she could have used more neutral language." Ian Green also stated that "I would hope that Mr. Morin would apologize for getting into this inadvertently". I would hope that former Premier Morin would apologize for getting into this inadvertently or advertently, whichever way it was, but on my part, I certainly have not seen that apology or any remorse. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

--Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Does anyone else wish to speak? Mr. Arlooktoo.

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HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this very important issue. The issue of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's report on the matter of a complaint from the MLA from Hay River in relation to the Member for Tu Nedhe.

Mr. Chairman, I informed Caucus last Wednesday that, as Acting Premier, I felt this was an issue of conscience. No Cabinet position would be there for the debate. During the debate on any motions, Ministers including myself, would speak and vote as independent MLAs and on their own conscience. I still believe that to be the case. Mr. Chairman, I will start off by saying that, in my view, the intent of having conflict of interest legislation is good. In today's complex world our constituents require knowledge that not only will our law makers live up to the highest standards and ethics possible, but also that there is a law that backs us up.

I will also make some comments, either in this debate or future debates, on the process and the present legislation, on how we can improve what is there today. Mr. Chairman, I just finished listening to a couple of the previous speakers and I cannot tell you that it was easy to have your honesty or your integrity challenged. I must even say that it is quite difficult, but I do not think I will dwell on that. First, let me say that I hope that the Clerk of the Assembly will ensure that the comments that I make today are translated and distributed to my constituency in order that, at least, my words will be heard over there.

Mr. Chairman, on the Document 246 there have been insinuations, or maybe a bit more than that, by some MLAs in this House, that I may have, along with some other Ministers, been involved in something. Let us look at this issue. The issue of Document 246. This is a letter signed by myself and three other Ministers. There is an issue that Mr. Dent spoke of quite well the other day. The basic substance of that letter was that Mr. Morin was not involved in Cabinet discussions on the Fort Resolution office and land issue.

When all is said and done, Mr. Chairman, the commissioner agreed and accepted that Mr. Morin was not present when the matter was discussed. Let me repeat that, Mr. Chairman. The Commissioner agreed and accepted that Mr. Morin was not present when the matter was discussed. Further, I quote from the Commissioner's Report, that is both important and a sign of good faith. There was a question, however, and it is laid out in the report, on complete accuracy. Mr. Todd and myself gave our explanation, they are available for you to view in the transcripts. If MLAs are

here to question whether I was being honest or not, that is up to you, but as I stated in the House the other day, I believe very much in the oath of honesty that we gave before testifying at the inquiry.

The other portion in the letter was whether or not Mr. Morin actually declared a conflict. As I stated in the inquiry, to this day, I cannot recall, but Mr. Morin is adamant that he did. Mr. Chairman, much has been said by MLAs, the media and the Commissioner about witnesses and who you should believe and who you should not believe. There is a section in the very beginning of the report about the standard of proof and an explanation that the standard of proof for this process was lower than beyond a reasonable doubt. However, it is a standard of proof that is used in a civil court. However, there has been much said about whether or not witnesses were believable or not and that some testimony appeared to contradict one another, even amongst Ministers. The suggestion being, I assume, is that this appears to be less than believable. I would look at it a bit differently, Mr. Chairman, that inaccuracies and inconsistencies about events that occurred two to three years ago from memory shows witnesses actually being honest. There were two rules that legal counsel told me to follow during the testimony. One, is to tell the truth and two, only tell the truth. We were told, by no means, do not speculate.

Not to belabour this point, Mr. Chairman, I would further suggest that the inconsistencies between Ministers' testimonies could provide some reassurance and not suspicion that, in fact, Ministers came there on their own and they gave their own testimony without collaboration. There was no story concocted of what was to be said. As I said, Mr. Chairman, it is not a point that I will spend too much time on. Some Members appear to have made their judgement already and there is not much I can do about that.

Mr. Chairman, just before I go further, I wanted to make another point on the testimony and on memory. There was an occasion while I was testifying, and it is quite interesting, that an occasion, while I was sitting there, an MLA came in, walked around for a few minutes and left. I basically did not think anything of it, but when I came back here, it turned out that particular MLA came here and said that I, in the inquiry, was hanging myself so badly that I could not remember my name. The same MLA delivered a verdict hours after the report was actually released.

I would challenge Members, to those that have a question in this area of memory and on testifying in an inquiry, to perhaps think of it this way. Try to remember all the details, everything that happened, everything that was said, of a meeting that occurred here last week. What was discussed? Who came in? What was worn, et cetera? Now if you extrapolate that to what happened two years ago, and you top it off with an oath that words you should tell the truth, only the complete truth, then I think you might have a different view.

Mr. Chairman, on the process. I have been quoted in the media as having said the process is cumbersome and expensive. I still believe that, but I also wanted to emphasize my strong belief that the conflict of interest legislation is there for a good reason, that we require the highest of standards, the highest standards in accountability and honesty and the leadership. The standards for law-makers and Ministers, especially, are probably higher standards than for others. I wanted to emphasize that. Things like transparency are important. I think the time is not now to talk too much about the flaws in the process and the flaws in the legislation, but the time will come after this particular case is dealt with.

Mr. Chairman, in preparing for this session, or for this item on the agenda, I have read the report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. I have read the whole thing. I originally started by reading the summary that was produced, then, I must admit, I went quickly through the report to look at highlights and finally, a couple of days ago, I finally finished reading the whole thing. It is a comprehensive report that is very detailed. I commend those that worked on it, it is by no means, as Mr. Roland said, easy or pleasurable for anybody on either side. I hope it is not,

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anyway. It is an event that has taken up much of our time and an important part of the NWT's history. It is an event that has destroyed some people's careers and reputations forever and I think it is an event that has also traumatized a number of families, including the former Premier's family. I think it would be remiss for any of us to not mention, to not acknowledge that. While we are trying to achieve the highest levels of accountability, we also need to, at least, remember that what has occurred in the past year has had its consequences. Although those that have been affected negatively will probably not admit to it, I have

seen, at least on their faces, that this has been a very difficult time.

Mr. Chairman, before I get into some of the substance, Mr. Morin has clearly stated that he feels the process has been biased from the beginning. This began with him asking it to be investigated by someone other than Ms. Crawford and that he felt that Ms. Crawford could not be impartial. I cannot pass judgement on that, I had no working knowledge of Ms. Crawford before and I cannot recall any time that I have met her, other than at the inquiry. The thing is that Mr. Morin clearly felt that the process was biased and I would also quote, at least paraphrase an individual that Mr. Ootes has just paraphrased, that was Mr. Ian Green, who I also heard on CBC the other day and he is an eminent professional of political science at York University. I should thank CBC first for introducing me to that gentleman. As I came in the office here, I found a copy of his book here in the library entitled Honest Politics and I think it should be required reading for absolutely everyone in this House. The areas of principles of democracy, of being impartial, of treating everyone equally, et cetera. I think as a side notice, it is very important. What it did say during the interview that Mr. Ootes did not say, did not talk about was that if, for no other reason that if a party feels there is possible bias in a process, then that should be enough of a reason for perhaps the Conflict Commissioner to remove herself or himself. Like I said, Mr. Chairman, I am paraphrasing but I thought that should be pointed out.

Mr. Chairman, again on the process and our particular process here in the House I do not take lightly at all. The fact that we are now the judges, we are now the jury in this case. I had felt strongly before this started that it was incumbent upon every Member to at least listen to Mr. Morin as he asked, before making a final judgement. Alas that did not happen, but I would still hopefully be in a position of not passing final judgement until there are actual motions on the individual recommendations.

Mr. Chairman, I spoke briefly for the need to know some of the principles of democracy which are the principles for the quality and respect for individuals, referred to in Mr. Green's book as mutual respect and I am sure in any political science class you will find around the country. An interesting point that again in this area is the defence to the majority which is the principle of mutual respect that suggests everyone in a particular community or group should have equal opportunity to participate in decision making. In this

case, Mr. Chairman, that is to achieve fairness and justice.

Mr. Chairman, a couple of points on public perception and public opinion. I would have to agree with many Members here that there has been a great deal of discussion in the media and public here, as I go around town in Yellowknife. Their concern about leaders and leadership and the perception or the fact they see less and less or feel less and less confident in the government as this whole process rolls along. I can see that is there. I have seen the news reports, the editorials and I see what they say. What I would also consider personally, as an individual here with the full right to vote and express an opinion here today, what I would have to consider also is the public perception and opinion in my own constituency which is overridden to a certain degree by what happens here in the capital and in the larger centres. I have to keep that in mind.

On Thursday, whatever date it was when Mr. Morin stepped down, this pretty much came as a shock to my constituency. In particular my home community of Kimmirut which used to be Lake Harbour. It is a small community of 450 people. They have been watching the news, listening to CBC radio and the Inuktitut's version of CBC Northbeat. A better version. There was news on that TV show that Mr. Morin had stepped down and I had taken over, at least for a day, as Acting Premier. This came as a shock to the community. What happened in that community was the news flew all around town and everybody or at least many people went to the church and gathered in the church. This was just such a big shocking event, they went there to pray for me. I did not know about this until somebody called me later that evening to say that event had occurred. MLAs here talk about all the faxes and phone calls they have received. I have to tell you that is the only phone call I have received, specifically on this issue. I have since talked to more constituents in all of the communities I represent, but I have solicited them myself. I wanted to make that point.

Mr. Chairman, on the specific issue of the report and of the recommendations. I have looked at the transcripts, some of it. Some of the ones that have been highlighted by others and I have looked at the entire report. I did watch some of the proceedings as they occurred on the local cable channel. I would have to say the report and evidence showed Mr. Morin made some errors and mistakes and how his office conducted its business, also how Mr. Morin behaved in the way he conducted his business. When

we get to the particulars for the individual areas on the house deal, the trip to Plummer's Lodge and the Fort Resolution office complex, I will make my comments. I think, Mr. Chairman, it is only fair or proper that I limit what I have to say in those areas because I was, in fact, a witness in these proceedings. At least two of the MLAs, Mrs. Groenewegen and Mr. Ootes, have strongly questioned or criticised my integrity and questioned my honesty, and I do not think it is proper for me to be here to defend myself. I do not think this is the place. The MLAs in the past three years have come to know me, pretty much inside and out and have come to understand that as Mrs. Groenewegen said that I am a hard-working individual. Most of you will concede that in most cases, I am brutally honest and will be a judgement for you to make later after the report is concluded because it is not in the report.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I have tried to balance out as much as possible, my feelings on the matter in talking about the importance of this legislation. The importance of making sure the government and its Ministers and MLAs are held accountable to the highest standards that are possible.

I have seen in the last year, a fair amount of backstabbing, hypocrisy and things like that. That is not an issue for now. We can leave that for later, but I believe as I said earlier, that is not

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the issue we are discussing right now.

The question right now is passing judgement on our former Premier, Mr. Morin. I would say that whatever the Legislature and you as MLAs decide to do with the conclusions, I will live by them and will live by them to the fullest extent possible. So with that, Mr. Chairman, I would conclude my remarks but also say that I would reserve time during the ten minutes per Member later on when we discuss the particular details. So with that, I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. I have two more Members on the list. I suspect we are going to be here for at least another hour so I would think it would be appropriate to take a 10 to 15 minute break at this point.

--Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I will call the committee to order. I recognize the Member from Kivallivik, Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, some of the comments that we have heard in this House since the debate on this issue has started, would beg one to ask the question as to what Assembly some of the Members of this House have been sitting in for the past few years, in reference to their comments regarding the report.

Mr. Chairman, it appears to me that some Members in this Assembly are in denial regarding this report and are busy with their little brooms, trying to sweep the conclusions of it under the rug. Mr. Chairman, this is not acceptable and it is not in the public interest. Mr. Chairman, it should be noted that many long and hard hours have gone into this document, as a result of the 17,000 pages of testimony and evidence and the appearance of some 50 subpoenaed witnesses. Mr. Chairman, before I comment further, I want to qualify my preceding comments by saying that, although I have had disagreements and differences of opinion in this House with Mr. Morin, I have blocked these discussions and disagreements out of my mind and I assure you that my comments are made in an objective, fair, honest and impartial manner.

Mr. Chairman, when the decision was made by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner to move forward with the public hearings on these complaints made by the Member from Hay River, Jane Groenewegen, I made a decision to stand up in this House with Mr. Krutko and Mr. Ootes to support a motion that would have the Premier take a leave of his duties as Premier while this investigation was being conducted. My reasons for this, to me, Mr. Chairman, were obvious. I thought it would be unfair for Members of the Premier's staff, whether they be directly or indirectly related or working with the Premier's office, I thought it would be unfair that they would be put under this pressure in the event that they may have to testify regarding this issue and in reference to the Premier. After all, Mr. Chairman, the Premier is their boss.

I feel very strongly that the former Premier, Mr. Morin, did not act alone and for this reason I feel that he should not be laden with the consequences of this report solely. If, as it appears, Ministers, senior bureaucrats and deputy ministers played a role in

misleading or misrepresenting the truth in this inquiry, then it stands to reason that Mr. Morin should not bear the consequences of his actions alone.

Mr. Chairman, another issue that stands out in my mind is that of the public. Is the fact that some Members of this Legislature have in a direct or indirect manner refused to accept this report in its entirety. Some have inferred that the report was unfair and biased. Mr. Chairman, when I look at this report, and I spent a fair bit of time reviewing it, I made a decision to remove Mr. Morin's name from the report and Ms. Crawford's. I replaced them with Mr. X and Mrs. Y. Mr. Chairman, when you do this, you can see very quickly that the report and its conclusive testimony and recommendations would be reasonable for any average person to accept. It would be very difficult, Mr. Chairman, for the average person to not agree with this report. This report was further complicated by the conflicting statements that were made, in many cases, and Mr. Chairman, the very poor selective memory of certain witnesses and certain government officials, in reference to their testimony.

Mr. Chairman, on the weekend I had the opportunity to speak with a former Minister of this Assembly. This individual commented to me and stated that as far as he was concerned some Members of this House, some Members of Cabinet, are not in touch with reality, they are not in touch with the public and their concerns and that they will be demanding that corrective measures be taken in reference to the conclusions of this report.

Mr. Chairman, the corrective measures that they speak of will be decided later on in this Chamber. The comment was also made by this former Minister that we must ensure that this sort of behaviour does not resurface again in the new Nunavut government or the western government.

Mr. Chairman, the Premier has gone on record in this Assembly to state that he did not have the opportunity to defend himself regarding the allegations. I find that statement difficult to comprehend, given the fact that he testified at a public hearing regarding the various complaints made against him. He had plenty of opportunity to defend himself, with the help of a number of lawyers that were paid for by this government.

Mr. Chairman, I will now move forward on some specific details in conflicting statements that are found in this report. Mr. Chairman, it was stated in this

Assembly by the Minister responsible for the FMBS that Mr. Bailey did not violate the post-employment policy, that Mr. Bailey had no knowledge that would relate to any contracts that he was bidding on. This, Mr. Chairman, is extremely difficult to believe as Mr. Bailey was the highest ranking deputy minister in this government and sat in on numerous meetings that would involve contract discussions, sole contracts and numerous other issues.

Mr. Chairman, this comment was made in this House as late as last week, that Mr. Bailey did not violate this government's post-employment policy. Mr. Chairman, in the records, in the testimony given by Mr. Bailey, he, himself, indicated that he was privy to inside information that related to various contracts. One in particular, Mr. Chairman, is the information for the contract that relates to Mr. Bailey obtaining a petroleum consulting contract that he, himself, states that he was privy to inside information and discussions prior to receiving this contract. Still, there are Members in this House, honourable Members that

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state that Mr. Bailey did not violate the post-employment policy.

I ask you, how can this be? Does Mr. Bailey have a twin? Mr. Bailey would also have been aware of the office space plan that was being studied prior to being awarded an \$8 million long-term lease by this government that nobody else could even get close to. Is this a coincidence? I think not. This lease arrangement blatantly ignored the policy of this government, a policy that was put on hold, that would see no long-term leases for any individual or company, until division.

There are many issues, Mr. Chairman, that have not been totally resolved in this report. The most critical one, I believe, is the land issue regarding the Deninu Ku'e Band. This issue, Mr. Chairman, the band was given a long-term lease by this government. The land in question was supposedly sold to the band by Mr. Morin. The issue was further confused by the fact that Mr. Morin indicated that he removed himself from the meeting after declaring a conflict of interest. The records of that Cabinet meeting, the minutes of the meeting, show no support of this declaration. As a result, the issue on the agenda of that day was passed and that being that a lease would be given to the band on the completion or the construction of this office complex that they were contemplating. Once again, Mr. Chairman, the issue was further confused

and complicated, if I read this right in the Commissioner's report, that states that the reference to the land that was being sold was not referenced to Mr. Morin, but was being referenced to the land that was owned by the Northern Store Company. One has to look at this and say, what action did the Cabinet vote on? Was the land owned by Mr. Morin or was the land owned by the Northern Store? The inference is there that land that was identified in the documents during that Cabinet meeting was land that was owned by the Northern Store Company.

Mr. Chairman, that in itself, to me, would be very misleading to the Members of Cabinet that voted on this motion. I guess more damage would be the fact that how did this information get to Cabinet? Who prepared this document? Why is it so duplicitous? Mr. Chairman, there are many questions unanswered here and I believe what really has to be done is the review of this inquiry should be widened to incorporate any individual, whether from this House or from this government, that in some way inferred or passed on information that was inaccurate, false, and misleading. This, Mr. Chairman, is unacceptable.

Mr. Chairman, even as I speak here today there are honourable Members across the floor who find my comments or statements unimportant or funny. I assure you, Mr. Chairman, that is not my intent. My statements and my comments are very serious and they were brought forward by the general public and the people of my riding.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to forgo the rest of my prepared text and just briefly speak about what has happened here over the last number of years. Mr. Chairman, there have been many occasions when questions were asked by Members from this side of the House, by myself, Mr. Picco, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Krutko, and these questions were treated with disdain almost to the point of poisonous. Mr. Chairman, my feeling is that, just maybe, if some of these questions and comments were treated in a fair, open and honest manner that we would not be in this mess we are in today with this very embarrassing situation. Still, Mr. Chairman, Members across the floor still act in the same manner. Have we not learned anything about the recommendations, the testimony and conclusions of the Commissioner's report? That concerns me, Mr. Chairman. I am aware that some people from this side of the House may even have been threatened, Mr. Chairman, with reference to how they speak and what they speak of regarding the outcome of this conflict report.

Mr. Chairman, it would make one think that we are living in third world conditions here. I believe, Mr. Chairman, that we have to take the Commissioner's report very seriously and deal with it accordingly. I strongly believe that Mr. Morin should not wear this alone. If anybody, any individual that is connected with this House or this government, if they provided false information they should be dealt with. We are moving toward division, the creation of a new territory, Nunavut, and the Western Territory, and I think we want to ensure the people that this sort of behaviour and these sorts of decisions will not be tolerated in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

--Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. I have three more Members on my list here, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Ng and Mr. Todd. Mr. Ningark, Member from Natilikmiot.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have a very short presentation to make, but let me go back to a little over nine years ago when I got elected. When I was campaigning through the Natilikmiot area, which consists of Gjoa Haven, Taloyoak, Holman, Spence Bay and Pelly Bay. When I was campaigning, Mr. Chairman, I had the opportunity to visit people in three communities. I talked to parents, I have attended some public functions, I talked to kids in schools, I went to shopping areas to meet people, as we all do when we are campaigning, Mr. Chairman. What struck my attention, Mr. Chairman, was some homes that I visited, the condition that they were in. In some cases where people were chronically depending upon social services there was no furniture in their homes. Some homes were overcrowded. There were elders in homes without proper care. There were kids not able to do homework because of the overcrowding at home. That really struck my attention, but as a new person who was campaigning that I have seen some hope in some of the people that I met. In some cases there was pain, fear, and in some cases there were chronic situations.

Mr. Chairman, as I got elected I began to see how the government worked. It took me a little while, perhaps about five years, I am much slower than most people that I know. I started dealing with other MLAs and Cabinet Members and there were many times that Members were very helpful. I learned from those Members and I appreciate their assistance.

Mr. Chairman, when I learned about the conflict of interest allegations, I did not really believe them at first. I will tell you why. In the eastern Arctic in the Nunavut area, when there is something going on in the government system we are the last to learn. Perhaps because of the communication. Perhaps because I am not up-to-date with my office. Perhaps because people like me are on the land out hunting and so on, sometimes I forget to check my fax or telephone or there are times I do not

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listen to news in the morning or what have you. Mr. Chairman, I have dealt with every Minister of this government from day one. I have travelled with most of the Ministers in the past. I have socialized with Ministers, in the past, under many circumstances and I have every respect for every one of them.

Mr. Chairman, in some cases I have made requests on behalf of my constituents in the Natilikmiot area, some times on behalf of the Kitikmeot Leaders Forum, the whole Kitikmeot region. I have tried to limit my contact with bureaucracy wherever possible, but deal with the Ministers. Mr. Chairman, I have been directed by Kitikmeot Leaders Forum to make a request or statement, and I have also been directed by the people in Pelly Bay, Gjoa Haven, Taloyoak, when I visit those homes, to say something or talk to a Minister or say something publicly on their behalf. In many cases I have been successful in pursuing what the people of the Kitikmeot region want, especially of the Natilikmiot area. In many cases the requests that I made seem to have been ignored or the processes are long, cumbersome, sometimes tedious, it takes a long time.

You know, Mr. Chairman, I have people in three of my communities talking about daycare centres. People in my communities wanting to have a women's centre. I have one constituent that passed away not too long ago wanting to get a wheelchair. I have people in my communities that wanted to buy equipment so they could do some carvings. I have people in my area that wanted to get some hunting equipment. I have spoken on their behalf. We have, Mr. Chairman, an access road program in the government. In Pelly Bay we have been talking about an access road for many years and it has been under construction for about five years perhaps. When I hear through other MLAs and through the news, either newspapers or media, et cetera, that when someone approached the government and made a request to their business with and they are successful and in a short matter of

time, I wondered, has my concern on behalf of the people that are disadvantaged, people who are down below the level scale. Why are we not able to make the government understand? Why are we not able to make progress as we have anticipated, while others that I find may be of less needy are given the speedy process. I question that aspect.

Mr. Chairman, when Premier Morin was asked to step down there was a motion. I did not support that motion because I believe in the notion that a person, any person for that matter, who has alleged to have broken a section of the Criminal Code or other laws, is innocent until proven guilty. Under that assumption, I did not support the initial motion requesting the Premier to step down.

After the report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner was released, Mr. Morin did the honourable thing to do and he stepped down from the seat of the leader of the Executive Council. I believe, Mr. Chairman, that one should not punish another twice. I believe that when Mr. Morin stepped down that was reprimand enough for him to indicate that he had to step down. When we go through the recommendations like other Members talk about, I will either support or reject what is recommended.

I think this being my second language, Mr. Chairman, I have the opportunity, although to read the context of the report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, but I was not able to read it all. I went through it twice, perhaps three times, Mr. Chairman. Like most of my colleagues, people of the NWT, those who are close to Mr. Morin, that believe Mr. Morin, people who are distant somewhat from Mr. Morin, people who have some reservations about the credibility of Mr. Morin and Members of the Cabinet, I wish, Mr. Chairman, that I knew the truth. I wish that I knew what was in the truth, either coming from Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Morin, Cabinet Ministers, the lawyers, people that went through the process, bureaucracy that were in attendance during the business deals. I wish to God, Mr. Chairman, that I knew the truth, but I do not. Mr. Chairman, I also wish that we were living in a perfect world scenario. I wish I belonged to that association. Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, I do not belong to that club. I know so, Mr. Chairman. I know each and every Member of the Legislature plays to a degree on common sense. Everyone should know. Each and every one of the Members of the Legislature and bureaucracy, especially the elected. My colleague here should know that one has to respect the integrity of this government. We have to honour the public expectation.

Mr. Chairman, for the record, I am not a perfect person either, nor do I pretend to be. I have made mistakes in the past and tried to learn by them. I continue to make mistakes up to this day. Like I indicated before, common sense should play a big role even though we know the rules and everything else. Even, Mr. Chairman, if there was no policy, no roles in the Legislature, I am sure the first thing we would follow would be common sense that we were given. The same opportunity to recognize and understand the need to use our common sense. Mr. Gargan, the Speaker, has told me a couple of times when I sit in the Speaker's chair, although this is beside the point, to uphold the integrity of the House. I have learned a lot from the Speaker and I thank him for that.

Mr. Speaker, I consider Mr. Morin a friend. I am sure he considers me as a friend. Mr. Chairman, I consider each and every one of the Cabinet Members a friend, Mr. Ng, Madame Thompson, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Dent and Mr. Todd, perhaps I am missing somebody, Mr. Arlooktoo. They are very close friends of mine, as I indicated earlier, because I work with them here in this forum. I work with them in each and every committee room that we have had in the past four years. I socialize with them in the Members' lounge, sometimes I talk to them on the street and so on. I wish, Mr. Chairman, that they would have treated me with favouritism, really. I prayed even to God some nights when people from my area came to me and made a request on their behalf for a project for services, programs, what have you. I wish they had a little more respect. In another term that is, ya, John, you are friend of mine. You are a friend of mine, I will give you the special treatment. I even prayed that, but they never did. On account of friendship did they give me anything special? No, Mr. Chairman, and I thank God for that, really. Perhaps it has happened to somebody else. It never happens to me. I wish it did, Mr. Chairman. I do not know the truth of all of this. I do not pretend to understand the entirety of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's report. It would probably take me another couple of months to read it all and understand it, even though if I understand it, I am no lawyer. I guess I will never be, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, will the respect of the public diminish from here on any further? I do not think so. Perhaps it did the last few years, I do not know. You see, Mr. Chairman, people in my area,

those are the people that I know, ordinary people living in Pelly Bay, Gjoa Haven and Taloyoak, although they watch television, the proceedings of this House, do not really understand how we operate. They do not have the luxury, Mr. Chairman, to come here to this House, sit up there and watch the proceeding in person. Why? They do not have the luxury of buying a return ticket of over \$1,500. Mr. Chairman, they do not have the luxury of spending money for the hotel in this capital city of NWT. What they want is what they request, basic things, Mr. Chairman. When we hear, I am sure that perhaps that some people of the public may or may not have been given special treatment. I am sure it is going to hurt a bit because the people that I represent, again I repeat myself, want something like community daycare centre, women's groups that we all represent want an office space so they could have their little get-togethers, perhaps a volunteer person working in that office space. Mr. Chairman, you noticed that I used volunteer, why?

In many cases we do not have the funds, money to carry on with a business by paying a person a salary. I find that people living in a city are so lucky. Many people tell me that at home. To be able to just walk across the street and talk to people that he wanted to talk to in the bureaucracy, sometimes to the Cabinet Ministers, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I hope I am not swaying away from the debate of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's report. I do not think so. I am merely trying to explain that what some individuals seem to have been given, those individuals are not able to afford many things, seem to be given special attention or financial treatment, so on, it hurt me too as people at home that need the basic things in life seem to be forgotten. It hurts. Either the Cabinet Members, Premier Morin acted knowingly, intentionally, being used by some Members, or inadvertently, I do not know that, Mr. Chairman. Again, I repeat myself. I wish to God that I knew what is going on really. I do not know, Mr. Chairman.

The world in the NWT is much bigger than Lahm Ridge Tower. Mr. Chairman, we have people in the eastern Arctic that talk about the the high cost of living. I talk about high cost of living. Manik Thompson as an Ordinary Member talks about the high cost of living. Sometimes she comes to me, even though as a Minister, talking about the high cost of living. I have heard people like Mr. Evaloarjuk talking about high costs of living in Igloodik. I am sure each and every one of you remember when he was talking

about milk and other commodities that we sometimes take for granted living in a city like this.

You know, Mr. Chairman, there are times when I wake up in the morning and my time after a good night's sleep, Sunday morning especially, and I feel really lucky that I am able to buy groceries at a reasonable price here in Yellowknife. My wife and son and grandchildren in Pelly Bay sometimes have to buy something that costs much more than what we buy here in Yellowknife. Sometimes I feel guilty, Mr. Chairman, of having to have a fish store across from my apartment and sea food. Sometimes a glass of wine, Mr. Chairman. I know that my wife and children are not able to have that luxury at home.

The point I am getting at, Mr. Chairman, is sometimes we forget, we get overconfident. Sometimes, Mr. Chairman, we get careless, sometimes we forget the reality. Sometimes, Mr. Chairman, we forget who put us in here, the public. Sometimes when we are dealing with the people that are close to us, we become very nearsighted, Mr. Chairman. We do things sometimes without even thinking about it. I am forgetful too. Sometimes I forget. Sometimes I have to remind myself where I am, who I am. There are times when I stand up in this forum, Mr. Chairman, without a written statement and I say things I do not mean to say. Sometimes when I ask questions of the Ministers, many of you know me, that I will direct my question to a wrong Minister. I have done that a few times here in this House because nobody is perfect. The public should know that. It does not matter who the public is. It will be a judge, a lawyer, a Minister, a priest, a Premier, Mr. Ningark, whoever. We are not perfect, but we should know that we are now the representatives of the public in a big way, big time. What we do here, in our offices, is be scrutinized by the public.

I used to think once I left Pelly Bay, a small community of about 500 people, whatever I do, nobody is going to notice. Nobody is going to care. I can do as much as I want, privately that is and to a degree, Mr. Chairman, publicly. I learned pretty fast when I found out the first year I was an MLA that what I did here in Yellowknife, somebody knew back home what it was. I never even talked to my wife or sons or anyone, for that matter, or to my campaign manager. I was not being unfaithful, Mr. Chairman. Let me correct that. I did something in public in a way, but not here. I said something. It is a small world, is not it? Every one of us should treat it as such. It is a small world. The higher you get, the smaller it gets. We should know that by now.

Mr. Chairman, my respect of the government, the indicator of the government, Cabinet, Members, Executive Council, whatever term you want to use, has not diminished since the day the report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner was tabled. No, Mr. Chairman. Why not, Mr. Chairman? Well, I had made a few mistakes in my lifetime. I have prayed to God and I am not overly religious. I am not a saint. When I make mistakes and I prayed, every time I prayed I seem to have been forgiven. When I ran again for the seat of the Legislative Assembly, some people complained about me back home that I was not representing their interests. That I was not voicing their concern, Mr. Chairman. That I did not visit their community as often as I should; that I failed to attend public meetings and public functions. I tried to explain myself. Although without the proof that my excuse was good enough, I was forgiven many times.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Morin has paid the price by stepping down from the office of the Premier. Either he did what he did, as indicated in the report, were intentional inadvertence, all with the knowledge that what he was doing was against the rules and procedures of the Cabinet, or without knowing that. He has indicated in many instances when he spoke initially that he had no, at any time, he had no intention of going against the rules, policies of the Executive Council. Is it up to me to try and impress upon the other Members to reject the report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner or accept it in its entirety, when it is not up to me? I am not here to impress upon anyone to vote either. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. For your information you had the shortest speech, but it turned out to be the longest.

--Laughter

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. Ng, representative for Kitikmeot.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, first of all I think I have to speak about Document 246, the letter signed by the four Ministers. I am one of the four that has not been able to speak to that point yet. Nor have I been asked to speak to that point. For the record I

also want to reiterate what my colleagues have said, that I did not knowingly sign an untrue document when I signed that letter. I signed it based on my knowledge that Mr. Morin was not in attendance at the Cabinet meeting, in which that decision on the proposed office complex in Fort Resolution was discussed and a decision was made. I signed it on the basis of knowing that Mr. Morin had also at some point expressed he was in a conflict of interest on that matter. In signing that letter, there was no attempt to mislead or misconstrue any of the facts as I saw them. I just wanted to get that on the record. If there was any misunderstanding, caused as a result of my signing of that letter, then I apologize to the Members of this House and to anybody that would have been impacted.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to speak about the conflict report we are here debating. As MLAs, we all know we have many roles. We have a role to represent our constituents, a role to represent all NWT residents when we pass or formulate policies and pass legislation.

In this situation in dealing with the Conflict of Interest report, we are basically the judge and jury with respect to allegations and the report the Commissioner has made on the conduct of one of our Members, Mr. Morin. It has been said already and recognized that we do have the inherent power to govern ourselves, regardless of what else is out there. We alone are the ones that must accept or reject this report. We alone are the ones that must impose punishment if it is warranted. In acting as a judge and jury, we obviously have an obligation to remain as impartial as possible. I do not think that is possible though, Mr. Chairman.

I know in my own circumstances, we all know the Members that are involved. We are all aware of the media broadcasts, editorials, public opinion, what your constituents are saying to yourselves, what other Members are saying. Right from day one as we started this whole process. I think it is really hard for any Member to be totally objective in this. Mr. Morin has raised the issue of potential bias right from the start. He quite frankly has said that he raised it on the aspects of the current Commissioner even prior to her appointment and that was before anything ever came before her.

I think it is fair to say that since this inquiry started, many of us have heard instances of situations that have been raised that probably raised the potential of bias or certainly the appearance of bias. I think it is

fair to say also in reading the report and I, like other Members, have had a chance to read it. I have read it a couple of times that the manner in which the report has been written, the manner in which some of the recommendations have been put forward, I think also raises the issue of the appearance of bias.

Now, we all have fundamental rights of every citizen in this country to be judged fairly, to be impartially judged, and that includes MLAs. We know Mr. Morin has been granted a hearing to see whether or not there are grounds for a judicial review of this whole conflict of interest process that is impacting him. We do not know there was bias in the inquiry process. We do not know that. Was there total impartiality? Again, I say we would not be able to know that. Were the principles of natural justice followed? Again, I do not think we are the ones that can determine that. Mr. Morin has an affidavit that he has filed to the court in support of his application. It lists roughly 24 items he feels have grounds to support his basis of bias in this whole conflict process.

None of us in this Assembly have the experience, I believe, or the legal background, maybe with the exception of Mr. Erasmus, to assess this whole matter. Maybe if you did determine whether it is bias or not, we would have to go through all the transcripts and I understand it is 3800 pages of transcripts and thousands of documents. We would have to redo the whole thing and nobody wants to do that. It is not possible. Now if there was a different commissioner, would the allegations have changed? Probably not. I say they would not have. They would still be there. Would the facts or the testimony have changed? Maybe, we do not know. It depends on the questioning, the questions and the participants. Would the interpretation of the legislation, the outcomes of the recommendations have changed? Well, maybe they would have but again, we do not know.

What I do know is I have sat with Mr. Morin for five and a half years as a Member. I have sat with him in Cabinet as a Cabinet Member for almost four years. I can tell you he is opinionated, aggressive, stubborn and he is even arrogant when it comes right down to it, as some Members have said. I would say to you he is not dishonest, deceitful and I know nobody would intentionally get into a conflict situation just for the sake of it, to spite anybody, for that matter. I think he recognizes he has made some errors of judgement in the handling of his affairs. I do not think there is any doubt about that. I think he has inadvertently crossed that line in carrying out his duties to arrange his affairs

so the perception of conflict is not there. When the report came down, we all knew it was less than 24 hours later that he took the honourable high road and resigned as the Premier. He stepped down from that, recognizing there was this really critical report out there against his actions. He has been publicly humiliated, not just in the NWT because of this, but on a national scale. As everybody knows it has been in the southern papers. Southern coverage of these proceedings, I am sure, is taking place. His family and friends have been negatively impacted by the same token in their association with him. My concern, Mr. Chairman, is really surrounding this issue of his application for a judicial review. Like I said, we do not, I do not have the knowledge, I do not think Members have the knowledge of whether there is substantiation or not. There is no mechanism for us in this assembly to deal with that issue. We cannot accept the report or accept the recommendation subject to a judicial review application being turned down or having it upheld and then having to go through that process again.

We all, as Members, have a responsibility to try to be as fair as possible. An impartiality of the process, as I have indicated, is a big question mark right now. Having said that, we all know that the conflict report is before us and we have to deal with it. Members have said, this is our conflict legislation, it is our Commissioner, so rightly or wrongly it is our process and we have no choice really but to accept the report based on that

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being our process. I reluctantly, Mr. Chairman, would have to support that view.

By the same token, I think that if a judicial review is granted, and we do not know that yet because he has tabled a letter today saying that it is December 11th that the matter may be heard on whether or not they will proceed with a judicial review. If a review is granted, if the report is shown to be biased, I think this legislature will have no choice but to have to revisit this whole issue all over again. It is unfortunate really, that Mr. Morin's inquiry is the one that has to point out some of the flaws in our legislation and the flaws in our system.

I think outside of this current issue that we are dealing with specifics, Members have mentioned this, the need to support an independent review of our current legislation and of the process under which Mr. Morin's conflict inquiry was carried out. I think there has to be

a review of matters brought up in the report dealing with government policies and procedures. We have to identify the problem areas that have taken place and right off the bat. The whole premise of the debate now of whether there is impartiality and fairness has to be addressed in future legislation on this matter.

Mr. Chairman, I guess in closing, I support what a lot of other Members have said in respect of needing conflict of interest legislation. All of us want to uphold our offices as honourably as possible and have the highest standards that we can maintain. I do not think anybody can argue with that, but we need to move forward and make the amendments necessary in our legislation and in our policies and procedures. I do not think any of us, whether it is in the current NWT legislature, the new Nunavut legislature, I do not think anybody wants to go through this situation again in having to deal with a conflict report against one of our colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

--Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. I have one more Member on my list. The Member for Keewatin Central, Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this has indeed, at least for me personally and I am sure for many Members, been a difficult year for Members of this Assembly. The 13th Assembly has been faced with challenges unprecedented in an over 30 year history of the Government of the NWT. For the first time since the seat of government came north from Ottawa, we have had to cope with the difficult challenge of deficit reduction. We have had to deal with the enormous complexities and challenges of preparing for division and suffer the stress of a separation which all parties are labouring to keep as amicable and productive as possible. Now we are faced with perhaps our most personal difficult task to date. The responsibility and obligation to pass judgement on one of our own colleagues in respect of the matter that is before this House today, the report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

All of this has placed an enormous strain on this Assembly and has stretched our ability to govern effectively to its absolute limits. I am personally saddened to find ourselves in the situation we are in today and our former Premier, Mr. Morin, a man who has worked hard for his constituency in the north over

the last 11 years, has found it necessary to step down. We find ourselves grappling with matters of censor and leadership a scant four months before division occurs.

I want to thank Mr. Morin for moving quickly to relinquish the office of the Premier, particularly after the release of the report. I know Mr. Morin and I know the reasons he made this decision. He made this decision to save his family, his friends and his colleagues any further pain and to attempt to restore confidence in the government that he has worked many years of his life in serving.

We are forced to deal with a question that is before this House, how to deal with the report at hand. I would echo the comments of some of my colleagues that it is incumbent upon all of us to find a fair resolution to this issue. There is no question that this is one of the most highly charged and emotional issues that we as an Assembly are being called to deal with. It has taken a tremendous personal toll on a number of good northerners, myself included. It has polarized public opinion, has caused friction and division in this House and has undermined our ability to get on with the many very important issues of the day.

As I sat here, either here or in my office, listening to my colleagues speak to this issue, I hear the recognition that there is a crisis of faith in the ability of this government to govern effectively. Many of you believe that the inquiry into the allegations of conflict of interest have precipitated this crisis. I see the matter in a much larger context. We now live in a time of growing demand for services of government and diminishing capability of government to provide these services. There are a great many of our constituents whose needs we simply no longer have the capacity to meet, and who are understandably angry with their government for our failure to continue to provide the level of service they once enjoyed.

In addition, as I mentioned before, this government has had to face the unique challenge of division without any experience or body of precedent upon which to model its actions. Our civil service is stretched to the limit in trying to provide the basic services of government while trying to complete the many demanding tasks that are required of our staff to prepare for division. We have had to cut back in our service to the public because of reduced fiscal capacity and then it has had to be cut back even further. As well, we are looking at a time in which the public, both at a national level as well as in our local

context, has come to expect the worst of the government and to be suspicious of our motives and our methods.

I have thought long and hard about this process of the inquiry into the conflict of interest allegations against our former Premier and about all of the events that led to that process. I am not certain whether this whole turn of events has led to a lack of confidence in this government or whether the inquiry enhanced the matter that is before us today, are in fact an outcome and product of an environment in which there is heightened suspicion of the motives of government and those who serve in public life. I am, however, certain of one thing. There is now, more than ever, a need to restore public confidence in the institution of government and to bring stability during the remainder of our term. For this reason, a number of my colleagues have said that they would like to move quickly to accept the support and the recommendations it contains so we can get it behind us. Take the steps we feel are necessary to

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regain a measure of public faith and get on with the very important issues of governance at hand.

Many of these same people feel that in stepping down, Mr. Morin has imposed upon himself a punishment which goes beyond that recommended by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. I concur with the desire expressed by some of my colleagues to bring this matter to a swift conclusion so the attention of this Assembly can be more proactively focused on the matters at hand. However, I must also acknowledge the content of the report of the Commissioner and the lessons it contains. While I have some concerns with some of the findings of the Commissioner, I have expressed these, that does not mean I do not see value in the report. It is a cautionary tale. There are lessons in this report for each of us who are privileged to sit in this Assembly and for those who follow in our footsteps. If there is one single key lesson I have learned as a result of this document, it has to do with the issue of public perception.

It has become clear to me in reading the report and talking to my constituents and other Members of the public that even if the conduct of this government had been by the books, it did not look right. If the conduct of the government is broadly perceived to be wrong and continues to be perceived that way after the facts are on the table, then we have a real problem.

Regardless of whether or not we followed the rules, the issue is that the public, our constituents, the people we represent are not happy with the way in which matters were handled. This to me points to a very real need for the government to make every effort possible to put things right.

We are less than one year away from an election in the west and only weeks away from election in the east. Allowing the electorate to vote new Members to represent them in their respective Assemblies is the surest, the most decisive way to renew confidence in government. Until the time comes that our constituents are given this opportunity, we must take what steps we can to show that we take the lessons of this report seriously.

Mr. Morin took the first step on his own in resigning from his position as Premier. As well, another very important step was taken when the decision announced by the Acting Premier to establish a committee of senior staff of the Government of the Northwest Territories. This committee will review and recommend changes to government procedures to ensure government staff are aware of and adhere to the conflict of interest.

I concur with my colleagues, we must agree to act quickly on the recommendations in order to restore public confidence in this government. We have been involved in a lengthy debate about legal costs, rights on representation and examination, protection of witnesses and how to deal with the findings of this conflict hearing.

I would suggest that another lesson to be drawn from this process is how to improve the process itself. Proceedings related to the conflict hearing need to be reviewed and recommendations prepared for all our consideration. Such a review should be designed to ensure we have a comprehensive framework in place that we all agree is thorough, appropriate and addresses the conflict issues of Ministers, MLAs and the public service. These recommendations should be tabled in this House so they are available to all members of the public. I would further suggest that the value of such a review would rest in its ability to provide an objective, third party assessment of the process we have just been through. Such a review would best be performed by someone not caught up in the politics and issues of the day, someone of confidence and standing from outside the Northwest Territories.

We need to demonstrate to our constituents that this Assembly is committed to good governance, that we are prepared to get back to the job so we can see the Northwest Territories through the final months leading to division. We need to demonstrate that, as we have said so many times in this House, we are capable of managing our own affairs.

While the Government of the Northwest Territories and the people we represent face many challenges, we also have many opportunities. We are on the brink of creating two new territories. We have the opportunity for a new fiscal relationship with the federal government that will reduce our dependence and transfer payments and may bring with it jurisdiction over our non-renewable resources. We have the opportunity to work towards the settlement of land claims and the conclusion of self-government negotiations, and we have the opportunity to build strong partnerships with our southern neighbours and become a contributor to the Canadian federation. All of this depends on our ability to view the matter at hand in a fair and even-handed manner and to bring stability and order to the remaining days of this Assembly.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to add one final comment in closing. As one of the four Cabinet Ministers who signed the letter testifying to the conduct of the Premier regarding a specific Cabinet meeting, I have been asked by Mrs. Groenewegen to offer an explanation for my signature. It was not my intention to speak to that issue, but I will comply to Mrs. Groenewegen's request. In signing the letter, it was my intention to testify to the intent of Mr. Morin's actions with respect to declaring a conflict. I believe then, as I do now, that Mr. Morin absented himself from the meeting with the specific intention of avoiding being in conflict. It is unfortunate that the wording of the letter was not more specific, and I do regret if this letter had the effect of either misleading the proceedings of the commission or in any way affected Mrs. Groenewegen in her complaint. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

--Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. I would now recognize the Member from Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The debate and decisions of this Assembly arising from the Conflict of Interest report I believe will have profound implications for the legitimacy of our institution and for the credibility of elected representatives serving both Cabinet and in the Legislature. It will also have profound implications for the professionalism of our administration, and as well for the personal life and career of one or more of our Members. While we are conducting ourselves in this debate, the decisions we will be making and whatever actions we take today, will reveal a lot about each of us as individuals, as human beings, whether or not we are Members of Cabinet or the Legislature.

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Mr. Chairman, I believe that, first and foremost, we need to honestly and openly admit our mistakes and that we have an obligation to make sure the mistakes that were made, whether real or perceived, will not happen again. In our business, there is nothing wrong with admitting that we have failed. The point is that our constituents who know us best expect that we will always try to work to the highest standards, but they, more than anyone else, know we are human and that we do make mistakes like everyone else.

I think it is also important to remind our own constituents, the media and the federal government, as well, all of whom are watching as this debate unfolds, that the level of criticism being directed toward our institution, their elected representatives and the administration do not take into account the contributions they have collectively made to the people of the Northwest Territories.

Despite the very serious issues raised in the report, and we will deal with all of them, there have been many good things accomplished by this Legislature and by its government over the last three years. In a few months, two new territories will be officially established and the key to a successful transition to these two new territories and ensuring the efficient delivery of programs and services to both new territories, will be Assemblies and Cabinets which have the support and confidence of their respective constituents.

MLAs, Ministers, and the people working for them must operate according to the highest standards, morally, politically and legally. Long-term legitimacy must be the foundation for our institutions because long after we are gone these institutions must still be in place to represent and service future constituents.

In our debate and decision, we must remember and remind everyone, it is not the institutions that are to blame for what happened. It is the action of those that are part of the institution who must stand accountable. I agree that the report and this debate must focus around accountability. It is about saying, I am sorry and I will do what I can to ensure that it will not happen again.

I appreciate the comments by Mr. Dent, who offered his apology to his constituents and to the Members of the Legislature and other Members of the House, who have offered similar remarks. I believe it is one of the first steps that we need to be taking and we are well on our way to addressing the issues that face us.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak to the issue of professionalism of our civil service. We must take into account the implications which the conflict of interest issue has had for our administration, including the public service in general, and those who were directly involved in the inquiry. My first thought is that we need to reassure our public service that despite the turmoil of the past weeks, we know that they have continued to serve the people of the Northwest Territories with commitment and dedication. We also know that there has been a level of frustration within the civil service during our term of office. I have worked hard within my own portfolio to provide the leadership and guidance that our officials need. I have always insisted, during my terms of Minister, that my officials offer their advice freely and openly and without fear that I might disagree. In fact, there have been instances where persistent officials, deputy ministers, have been able to influence my view, change my mind, and I have always acknowledged my appreciation for the open way in which they have been able to do that.

Trying to make the right decision within the rules, guidelines, policies and legislation has been something that I have worked hard to achieve. If the rules do not work, you do not break them, you work to change them. I have learned that you always ignore rules at your own peril. Rules are there for our own good and no one is above the law.

Mr. Chairman, the report speaks to the fact that something went desperately wrong in the Department of Public Works. Civil servants appear to have been placed in impossible situations with no one to turn to for help. My view is, that responsibility lies clearly at the political level. We will not encourage and build on the loyalty and commitment of our public service if some public servants are singled out, nor will we start

the process of recovering the respect of our constituents using this approach. Indeed, what we need to do is to ensure that the public service understands and is committed to enforcing the highest standards which are required for the conduct of our business as elected representatives. There is no doubt that if officials are asked to do something that they are uncomfortable doing, they must have a place to go to seek guidance. That is why certain positions in the civil service are considered to be so key. Positions like the principal secretary to Cabinet and the Deputy Minister of the Executive department must be filled with individuals who are respected, who have integrity, who can build trust and who are not afraid to advise even when the advice is not well received. Perhaps we can do more to ensure our civil service has the freedom to do their work without fear of reprisals.

While our constituents are expressing their outrage and dismay at the findings of the report, and some may have lost even confidence, their current feelings resulting from the inquiry must be balanced with the challenges we all faced during the last four years.

When our constituents go to the polls in Nunavut in February, and later when the west votes in October, 1999, it will be important for them to take into account the hard work, compromise and leadership in Cabinet and the Assembly which was needed to meet those challenges.

Our record includes balancing the budget, downsizing government, implementing division, diamond mine development, improving social safety net programs, reorganizing the administration, negotiating a new formula for Nunavut and the west, implementing land claims, dealing with self-government agreements and generally just working hard at improving the quality of life for all residents of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Chairman, the Member of this Assembly from Hay River had the right to launch the conflict of interest complaint. She was challenged to do so in the House and she followed through. Since then, she has been the subject of much praise and criticism. I have said from the beginning of this process that the process is our process. It is there for the use of every Member of this Legislature to use if they felt that the concerns and issues they were raising were not being dealt with to their satisfaction. It is a due process set up by this Legislature. Throughout this

process, I have tried to treat the Member from Hay River with dignity and respect and I advised my staff and my department to do the same.

Some people in Hay River did express to me that they thought Hay River might be punished and I quickly reassured them. I regret, today, that they felt that they could be punished because their Member in this Legislature had lodged a complaint against the Premier. For individuals to fear their government and its politicians is a condemning statement of our leadership. No one has punished Hay River and certainly no one in Cabinet even raised the notion of punishment in any meeting that I have attended.

Mr. Chairman, in 1987, when I was first elected, this place was a strange place for me. My previous experience was entirely within the confines of Dene politics and the Dene Nation. We had our own way of doing business, conducting ourselves. When I was elected as a Minister, I was informed that I would be called the Honourable Mr. Kakfwi. I said at the time that I did not want that label. Whether it was a label or title, I said I did not want to be called honourable. I remember, it was Mr. Gordon Wray, who was a Minister at the time, who said something to the effect that it is something that we all have to wear, it is like a responsibility and something that never leaves us. It is to remind us always that we are compelled to be honourable with whomever we deal with, that we treat our best friend and our worst enemy with the same respect, fairness and I would not differentiate between the two. As uncomfortable as I was with the label and the title, I was moved by the suggestion by Mr. Wray and I have always tried to conduct myself that way. As I said in the beginning, I believe this debate and our decisions today will reveal a lot about us as individuals and as human beings.

Three years ago, I supported Don Morin as our Premier. Since that time, he has provided leadership to help us meet many of the challenges which faced us as people and as a government. On November 26, 1998, Mr. Morin resigned as Premier and he also lost his seat on Cabinet. Personally, I am of the view that the Member for Tu Nedhe has paid the personal, professional and political price in his constituency in the Northwest Territories, across Canada, in his family and within himself. There is no doubt in my mind that life will never be the same for Don Morin and his family.

Mr. Chairman, the Legislature has established the conflict of interest section in the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. We established an office

for the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and we appointed Ms. Anne Crawford to that office for four years. She took an oath to faithfully and impartially perform the duties of office. One of the duties is to conduct an inquiry within certain rules following any written complaint filed with the Clerk. As such, she is a servant of this House. We appointed her and we have the power to remove her with cause. We tasked her with enforcing the conflict of interest section of the act and she has done her job. Her report is before us and we have a decision to make. Do we accept or reject her recommendations? If we accept them, do we wish to impose punishment beyond the reprimands that are recommended? I believe that we had put our trust in her when we appointed her to do this. Since we cannot and should never presume to sit in judgment of our own actions, I believe that the Commissioner did what was asked by this House. She conducted an inquiry, she sought the facts, she asked additional questions when she was not satisfied, she gave us a report and a set of recommendations.

I am satisfied with the integrity of the Commissioner and with the process she used. I agree we should review that process. For instance, perhaps their preliminary review of the facts to see if there is enough to go to a public inquiry, that should be done by someone other than the commissioner who conducts the inquiry. Of course, we could look at options. This in no way negates the findings, nor does the fact that she reviewed the preliminary evidence make her biased. Some have criticized the Commissioner for asking questions of the witnesses. I commend her for asking questions, for if she was not clear about something, it was her primary duty to inquire to seek the facts, to review the evidence and finally, to determine that she was satisfied and that she could forward her report and her recommendations to the speaker. I am satisfied that Anne Crawford did her job as best as she could and I trust that the review was thorough. I accept her report and her seven recommendations and I commend her for her tenacity and for the promptness with which she reported to the Speaker and to this House.

In dealing with the report's recommendations, my preference is that we also focus on steps which should be taken by us by this Assembly and by the Cabinet, steps that would ensure that we reassure everyone, including ourselves that we will maintain the highest standards of conduct in all of our affairs. This is what our constituents in this institution deserve. It means that the Cabinet should take the

following matters: review and make the necessary revisions to how Cabinet makes and records decisions; ensure that policies, regulations and legislation are reflected properly in those decisions; and enforce Cabinet conflict of interest guidelines to avoid real, perceived or conflict of interest situations. These matters are within the jurisdiction of Cabinet.

In addition, it means that we should review the conflict of interest legislation and procedures, as at least two Members have expressed some concerns. I believe we have an opportunity with this debate in the decisions we make to restore the confidence of our constituents and the public in their Assembly, their Cabinet and this administration. We have a duty to reaffirm our commitment to them that we will always work to find ways to ensure that we will always maintain the highest conduct in the way we perform our duties, in the way that the government operates in the service of its people. This is what we need to do as we go about representing the people of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Chairman, I say it is time for us to accept the report and the recommendations and that we go on to find a way to agree as Members, as Cabinet, to take action together, to address those concerns and issues that need our attention to satisfy ourselves, our public and our constituents. It will ensure accountability and the high standards of conduct in our affairs as we go about our duties in serving our people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I have two more Members again on my list, Mr. Antoine and Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Antoine, Member for Nahendeh.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman,

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I just have a few comments on the Conflict of Interest report. Mr. Chairman, this is a long and very difficult process for all of us here and everybody in the Northwest Territories, especially the Member from Tu Nedhe and the Member from Hay River. First of all, I just want to make a comment about Anne Crawford. We have hired her by the Legislative Assembly to be the Commissioner for Conflict of Interest and she had a very difficult task before her. Her report is before us and I would like to thank her for the work that she has put into this work.

I just want to also say that in looking at the report, at first I was quite upset because of the recommendations and the findings. As I continued to read it and tried to put myself in the place of the people I represent in my constituency in Nahendeh and as the situation evolved and talking to more of my constituents, there are a lot of different views out there. There are views that this government here, people have lost confidence in this government and as a result, we should do something about it. I just want to mention that specifically in the report there are some common opinions that the Commissioner expressed which is usually, I am told, normally not done in this type of report with her making some leads without any basis for it in her opinion. Having said that when the honourable Member from Tu Nedhe, Don Morin, said that he did not knowingly set out to breach the conflict of interest guidelines and regulations of this government during his tenure as Premier, and at the same time on the 26th he resigned his post as Premier, having participated in this and having participated in this comprehensive public review, his affairs, I believe that Mr. Morin has been punished. I just wanted to say that on the 27th of November, this Conflict of Interest Commissioner clarified her position in the Nunatsiaq News by saying that, while the report in the Nunatsiaq News states that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner did not intend to recommend that Morin vacate his seat. This is from November 27, 1998 and told the Nunatsiaq News that this was not her intention as a result of her finding. This interpretation of her report, however, was incorrect. Commissioner Crawford goes on to explain that she intended that these words from the report meant that her findings showed that Premier Don Morin's violations did not extend to deriving monetary gain through the use of his office and that his seat should not, therefore, be declared vacant. Further on, she says that the removal from office or resignation is now a normal political practice in Canada for Cabinet Ministers found to have committed violations similar to those found Morin to have committed.

However, Commissioner Crawford, according to this news article, informs us that she was not inviting the Legislative Assembly to either remove Morin from the premiership, nor to declare his seat vacant. I am quoting this from the Nunatsiaq News, November 27th. This is the day after Don Morin resigned. In that regard, I feel that by Don Morin resigning as Premier that the recommendations that were outlined in the report for reprimand, being the Premier for eight different counts, and according to my research, reprimanding meaning to rebuke or censure or of that

nature reprove the person to criticize for a fault or an offence. By Don Morin removing himself from the Premiership, I think this has adhered to the recommendations in the report.

That is what I have said before and I continue to take that position. However, Mr. Chairman, the public perception influences public confidences in elected officials. The question we have faced in the House here, in the media as well, and throughout the report, are evidence of the public concern over how we have carried out business in this government. The report sends a clear signal to the elected officials and staff on how to follow government business guidelines and regulations with consistency and integrity. I want to assure our residents of the Northwest Territories that the message has been firmly registered with myself and, I believe as well, with my Cabinet colleagues.

What is expected of us here, Mr. Chairman, and how should we proceed? The government has already begun to instruct a review that the conflict report identifies issues that must be dealt with. This may include changes in the legislation, maybe regulations, implementation of a code of conduct, changes to policies, procedures and practices. It certainly has an effect on the government already and the Acting Premier is providing direction in this regard. As well, this report has a big effect on all of us here, ordinary MLAs and the Ministers, alike. I believe there is a rush by all Members of this House to seek legal advice of the Law Clerk and I heard there was a big rush there to see what has to be declared. There is definitely an effect by this report on all of us here.

I just want to comment on the Department of Public Works and Services. Mr. Chairman, I became the Minister on December 5th, and after the decision of the Lahm Ridge Tower was decided upon, so I was tasked with in the session immediately afterwards answering a lot of questions. There is also, in the report, a very scathing kind of criticism based on the people in the Department of Public Works and misleading the Legislative Assembly and misleading the Ministers and so forth.

That is a big concern to me, Mr. Chairman, currently as the Minister of Public Works and Services. I think it is a big concern with the people within the whole Department of Public Works and Services. Having been the Minister since that time, I have had the opportunity to work with all the individuals in the department. I find them very competent and professional people. They do their work and they carry out the projects and I have a lot of confidence in

them. However, also looking at the report, we will be reviewing the report, I guess, because it is a concern and I cannot really seeing letting it go by, we have to do something about it. We want to determine what actions are required and I just want to assure the civil servants not to be too concerned about it, I would like to have their support in trying to look at this whole report, because it has a very black mark on the department in this whole report.

A review of the contracting and leasing policies must be looked at, practices to identify areas of improvement must be done by the department as well as a review of delegating contracts and signing authorities to determine, perhaps, changes that are required. This report does have an effect, specifically on this department, already. I am committed to ensuring that the recommendations from the review are implemented throughout the portfolios that I am responsible for.

We have much work to do to improve the way of life for the people in the communities that we represent, Mr. Chairman, and this whole process has been like a dark cloud on all of us. I am quite pleased today that we are finally debating the end of this report. Hopefully we conclude today and put that behind us and

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carry on and finish the work that we have committed ourselves to do until the end of our term. There is improvement to be made in the social economic health of all residents of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut communities, and we should try to send a strong message to the people that we are going to be doing what is recommended in the report. A strong message has been registered to the government respecting the institution of government all around the takings, this message has been registered and action is being taken and will continue to be taken. Let us carry on with the business of the day, while at the same time, dealing with the very difficult past now of restoring the public confidence in this government institution.

With that, I would like to say Mahsi for allowing me to have these brief comments on this report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

--Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. I have the honourable Member for Yellowknife North, Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think this is probably the most difficult thing that I have had to deal with since becoming an MLA. One of my problems, which I have had to wrestle with since this report came out is the fact that this report is still going up for judicial review. My legal training tells me that this House should not be sitting here reviewing the report and its recommendations until that judicial review has been completed. That judicial review, that report, should be able to stand on its own two feet.

The credibility of the work that was done and in the manner it was done. Mr. Chairman, the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act says that Section 82.(4), that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner shall conduct an inquiry in accordance with the principles of natural justice. Mr. Chairman, I do not think that anybody in this room is in a position to judge whether this report was done in accordance with the principles of natural justice. We have heard many times here that we do not have the time to review all the transcripts and all the documents that were submitted. We do not. Most of the people here do not have the legal background either to decide, even if they were able to read all those documents and listen to all the testimony, the rest of that. Most of us here do not have the legal background to judge if this inquiry was done in accordance with the principles of natural justice, because most of us do not know the rules of natural justice.

Mr. Chairman, several years ago, I passed my bar exams and I was accepted as a lawyer. Today, I do not remember the rules of natural justice. I do not know how anybody else here, who are not lawyers, could do that. Mr. Chairman, the reason I am saying this report should be able to stand on its own, that the inquiry should be able to stand on its own, is because I know that two of the reasons that will be used to try to keep this report and the inquiry out of the judicial review, is first of all, parliamentary privilege. There will be an argument that because we have parliamentary privilege in this House and that because we established the commission of inquiry, that our parliamentary privilege should extend to the commissioned inquiry and its report, which is total hogwash. Does anyone in this House want to be judged by someone and that someone not be able to be judged on doing the inquiry properly? As I have heard earlier today, I do not think so. Our very Act

says, it should be done in accordance with the rules of natural justice. To me, that infers that we want someone to be able to judge whether this inquiry was done properly.

Mr. Chairman, the second thing that will be used is that they will say it is a moot point now because the Legislative Assembly has already dealt with it. The Members, with all their legal training, have gone over the report, and poured over all those millions of pages and documents of testimony. They have dealt with it. Because of that, Mr. Chairman, I have had a very difficult time dealing with this. I have heard both sides say, let us be fair. Okay, if we are going to be fair, then the judicial review should have a fair chance to be reviewed by an impartial person, an impartial judge and we should be willing to waive parliamentary privilege, if it is found, we should be willing to waive that and also to waive the fact that just because we deal with it here, that it is not a moot point.

I know we passed the motion that we are going to deal with it, so we have to deal with it. All we can deal with is what we have in the report. Having said that, Mr. Chairman, whether or not there is bias found in this report, when I look at the Commissioner's recommendations it seems to me all she had asked for is that the Premier step down from his position on Cabinet. He did that. She could have recommended that he be removed from his seat. She could have recommended that he be suspended. She did not do either of those. We have heard several Members say that having stepped down so quickly was the honourable thing and it helped this government. I believe that is true. I also believe, and it is the Dene way, that when a person is punished once, you do not step on him when he is down. What I am saying here, is that I believe Mr. Morin's resignation is enough punishment and humiliation for the contents of this report.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Rabesca spoke the other day, also Mr. Kakfwi. They had indicated Mr. Morin provided us with some leadership, good leadership, during some very trying times. I believe that is true as well. I thank them for bringing it up because it indicates to me this House is trying to be fair.

Mr. Chairman, whether or not this report and the commission of inquiry is found to be biased or not, I think we need to learn from this process on some of the things that have been identified. One of the first things, and some of the other Members referred to it, was the other day there was an interview on CBC with a professor of ethics. He is an expert on conflict of

interest, public law and ethical politics at York University in Toronto. What he indicated is that you do not only have to be impartial, but there has to be the appearance of impartiality and that many politicians do not understand the concept of conflict of interest. I think that is very true. I think a lot of us probably do not understand as much as we should and we had better find out.

The other thing we have to do, and it has already been put in the works, is we need to review the conflict of interest legislation. We have to review, we need someone to review, this report and the issues that have been raised in here, including policies and procedures. For these two things, I think we need an independent party to head the process. That is the only way it is going to receive the proper respect it deserves. It has also been raised by Members here that we also need to find ways for the public to be part of and to feel they are part of our processes. I

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agree with that.

Mr. Chairman, another thing Professor Green had indicated in his interview is that conflict of interest commissioners should be retired judges because they have had years of experience looking at evidence, assessing that evidence and writing reports. Mr. Chairman, I also agree with this. I think we should heed the professor's advice.

I have also heard other people say, and I believe it is true, that it is time to move on. We have a lot of issues facing us. We still have to conclude division and the creation of two new territories. We know we are behind our schedule already. We need to work on that. We need to work on self-government. The aboriginal summit has said they are not going to work on the Western Territory's future government constitution unless there is significant progress made on self-government. They expect and want those self-government negotiations to be concluded by, not this coming election, but the next one in 2004, or whichever year it is.

Mr. Chairman, we also have to work on devolution of our resources. We need to ensure that our people benefit from our diamonds, our oil and gas and our other natural resources. At this time, we are not able to ensure that we properly benefit from things like oil and gas and from those diamond mines that are just now opening. We need to ensure that our people get full employment, training and jobs through those

projects, as well as others. We also need to improve our social programs in the area of health and social services. We need to raise our education levels, we need to decrease our pupil/teacher ratio and improve housing conditions. Of course, Mr. Chairman, we all know that we have a scarcity of dollars and every time we bring this up, people say, where is the money going to come from and where are you going to remove it from? We have to work on those.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I believe that the former Premier has suffered enough, that we should not try to extract any further punishments from him and I also believe that if there is a judicial review and the judicial review process proceeds that we should try to ensure that the Conflict of Interest Inquiry and its report should be able to stand on its own two feet and it should not expect to try to hide behind parliamentary privilege or the question of mootness by our dealing with this report. Thank you.

--Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. I have a final name on the list here of a Member who wants to speak at this time. Mr. Steen, you have the floor.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner appears to represent different things for different Members. It seems to have a different impression on different Members. My impression of this particular document and the proceedings leading up to the document, I perceive, and I believe the public do too, is that it started as a conflict of interest inquiry. It did not end up as a conflict of interest inquiry. I think the public saw that it ended up into a public inquiry into the integrity of this government, whether or not this government was corrupt in its business dealings. I believe that is what it ended up because if we were, just to take the facts first and stuff, why was the integrity or the personal opinions and personal dealings of the businessmen, like Mr. Bailey, Mr. Mike Mrdjenovich, why were they being questioned? The inquiry was supposed to have been into Mr. Morin. Unless you take into consideration the fact that this expanded into a public inquiry, you would then be suggesting that the statements by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner were out of order and her judgements of what the personal reputations of these particular business people. Why was she referring to

them at all, if she was only dealing with Mr. Morin's conflict of interest?

I believe that what it turned into was a public inquiry into the public perception that this government is not above-board in its dealings. It is not fair and it is not transparent. One of the things that I believe that this conflict of interest inquiry has pointed out, is that the public's opinion is the perception you receive, is that Cabinet is forever avoiding answering questions from MLAs. Why? The public always asks me, why is it so hard to get the Cabinet to answer a question? My response is, it is a game. To them, they go home upstairs and they brag about how they could avoid answering my questions. It is a game, but it is a dangerous game because the public perceived this thing as being, not a game, but a very serious thing because the questions we asked as MLAs are questions related to services and programs in our communities. If we are not successful in getting responses and honest responses from our Cabinet Members, we pay the price at home. At election time, we are going to pay the price.

In turn, we ask Cabinet to be honest with their responses, but I noticed in particular in some cases some Cabinet Members are more inclined to be evasive with other MLAs than with certain MLAs. I cannot say I personally had a problem receiving information from the Members' Cabinet, but then again, I cannot say the same thing when I was dealing with the staff and deputy ministers when we were dealing with budget session and they were answering the questions, I did not have the same feeling of honesty. I felt I was being led around the bush, if possible, but I was not getting the answers that I needed. If I get that perception, then the public must get it too because they are seeing the same thing. We must not forget that when we came here, before we were sworn in even, there was a public inquiry from the previous Premier as to whether or not one of our deputy ministers was involved in a conflict of interest in transportation. The result came to us after we got sworn in that there was no conflict, but we were never given the report. Cabinet said it is for Cabinet's information only. They gave us a very short report.

What is the public perception? What is my perception? Why not give me the whole thing if there is nothing to hide? That is the question. What was it, six months later, a year later? We are faced with the news, RCMP are doing an investigation into this government's wrongdoings. We asked questions again to the Cabinet Members. I asked the Premier,

who was being investigated? Do not know, never heard of it. I cannot help questioning in my mind. I believe, last February and March in the budget session, I asked Mr. Todd and Mr. Voytilla whether it is possible for this government to be investigated without them knowing. Their responses were very evasive. No, yes, no, no. I do not believe it is possible. I think they knew who was being investigated and I think that they knew exactly what was being looked for, but the information we, as Members, were getting was very vague. I cannot help but believe this thing carried on

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even further in that the suggestions from the Conflict of Interest Commissioner that there were people taking advantage of their positions. Again, is it the perception or is it the truth? From the public's point of view, it is probably a good perception that it is the truth.

They were in the position to do it and they were doing it. Unless we have opportunity as Members to have a look at all of those directives of governance of Cabinet and approve those directives one by one like we should have done when we first got elected, we are never going to agree to those directives because we must not forget one thing. I think Mr. Todd is correct in that Mr. Bailey was not contravening the directives because the directive says right in the end of it, nothing in this directive will prevent the government from doing what they think is best. Every one of the directives say the same thing. We were told this in the House. We asked the questions of the Ministers. I remember distinctly Mr. Morin responded and showed to us in writing, nothing in this directive will stop Cabinet from doing what they think is best.

What is the point of the directive, you want to ask. At what point in time should they defer away from the intent of the directive? Let us take, for instance, the Business Incentive Policy, the Manufacturers' Incentive policy. They are all directives, but they sure leave a lot of leeway for Ministers and deputy ministers and the administrative staff to bend the rules, to serve if they want, to favour some businesses over the others. We established a system where we expect our staff to be angels and to abide by these directives. How can you expect them to do that when the top directive says, nothing in there prevents Cabinet from changing. They do not have to follow the directive. In other words, there is an opportunity there for Cabinet at any point in time to favour some businesses over the others, depending

on what they think is the best for the NWT resident. We put them all there, we voted these guys in. We should place some faith in them and of course you can follow this down the line that our constituents will say, we voted you in too and we should put some faith in you but the faith cannot stop at me unless it is above me as well. I am not in a position to deliver. All I am is a voice piece, that is all.

The faith the people see is one of the questions you come home and you ask, what is a conflict of interest? At home it is an unheard of thing in the small communities, it is not even heard of, it cannot even be imagined by people. Here, in the big city, where people stand to make millions, that is a very important thing from the perspective of the MLAs that represent the areas in the South Mackenzie where major dollars are being spent compared to the north. It is easier to see, easier to realize an opportunity to benefit if you know the right people, if you know the right Cabinet Members. I think Mr. Ningark mentioned that he would have liked Cabinet to favour, in his dreams even, he was dreaming, he got that impression that he was being favoured, but when he woke up, he was not.

I think that we are all in that situation at some point in time when we hope that we will all be the proper Ministers, we in turn get lobbied by businessmen. It is an endless thing. We are lobbied by our constituents, so we are subject to the same rules and the same potential wrongdoings as anybody else. What I would like to see out of this thing here is what is suggested. Somebody suggested that there is going to be a review of the policies and directives of this government that were questioned. I think Mr. Miltenberger said, it does not look good if the same people that were doing the contradictions to the directives, who were taking part in the contradictions to the directives, who were in fact being the ones to amend the directives, to see how we could better ourselves and avoid the perception of a corrupt government. I do not know who is going to do this. I hate to suggest a third party because we should be able to handle our own responsibilities and I think that we should do it.

We ended up in the end still putting trust in certain people but I think that we would go a long way if somehow Cabinet did not see us as the opposition that they had to avoid answering our questions. I think this, to some degree, has come from party politics, which is not here. We are not in party politics, but we look like the opposition and we are treated like the opposition. Again, I do not say, I do not apply this to

all the Ministers. Some Ministers are very responsive and very honest with their responses, some are not. That has been my experience for the last three years.

Coming back to the actual document itself, I believe I think like Mr. Erasmus in that I would let the courts decide first if this thing was properly done. If it in fact was a conflict of interest inquiry or was it in fact a public inquiry into the corruption of government. I think it drifted a long ways off of a conflict of interest inquiry. That is only my opinion. I would like to hear what the court says on it. Whether or not I will accept the recommendations at this point in time, I am not prepared to deal with the recommendations, but I will deal with the perceived corruption in this government. I would like to deal with that and the quicker the better because I think that 90 percent of that whole report was based on that.

Mr. Morin is what you might call a symbol and he had to pay the price because he was the leader. He stepped down, now we are up to picking another leader. We should be careful about who we put there because we seem to have, for some reason or other, enjoyed putting people up on top and then slashing them back down. It seems to be a human error if you call it, but it is a bad thing on the part of humans to put somebody to the top and then bring them back down, crack. We have to think about who we are going to put there again. I think a lot of us are starting to wonder whether we want to go up there, whether we will even be Members of this Legislature in the future, whether the price is worth it. I have questioned whether the price is worth it. I know that I have constituents at home that put a lot of faith in me and what they expect out of me. So far, I do not think I have disappointed them as far as integrity or honesty, but then again, being where we come from, we do not even have opportunity to be crooked, we are so poor.

I am not in a position to judge, but I sure would agree with the Members that say we should start working on a more open government and a more honest one. I would like to see this done very shortly, not after 1999. I would like to see it done very shortly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Are there any more Members that wish to speak? If not, we will take a short break at this point in time and just take it from there. Thank you.

--Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I would like to call the committee back to order. Members of the committee of the whole are dealing with Tabled Document 37-13(6). The committee has concluded their general comments and I recognize Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. There is a motion to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? Thank you, 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 the committee of the whole. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. NINGARK:

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

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Moved by Mr. Ningark, seconded by Mr. Erasmus, the motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of Bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request unanimous consent to return to item 14, notices of motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Thebacha is seeking unanimous consent to go back to item 14, notices of motion. Do

we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Miltenberger, you have unanimous consent.

REVERT TO ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 14-13(6): To Rescind Resolution 12-13(6), to Adopt the Recommendations of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner in TD 37-13(6) and, to Establish a Review Panel on Conflict of Interest Legislation, Policies and Guidelines

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, December 9, 1998, I will move the following motion.

Whereas the Legislative Assembly has been considering Tabled Document 37-13(6), Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, in committee of the whole since Friday, December 4, 1998;

And whereas all Members have had an opportunity to express their initial views on the report and its recommendations;

And whereas it is desirable to also address some of the broader issues raised by the report and by the debate on the report;

And whereas it is in the public interest to conclude this issue pending a more in-depth review of issues raised;

Now therefore, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Iqaluit, that Motion 12-13(6) be rescinded;

And further that this Legislative Assembly adopt all eight of the recommended sanctions of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner as outlined on pages 102 through to 104 of the Commissioner's report;

And furthermore that the Management and Services Board be directed to fund the legal costs of the Member for Hay River, Mrs. Groenewegen, in relation to the conflict of interest inquiry process, where the Commissioner has made a recommendation that those legal costs be paid;

And furthermore that a three-member review panel be established by the Management and Services Board to review and assess the adequacy and the effectiveness of the conflict of interest provisions contained in Part III of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, and any policies and

guidelines developed which relate to the area of conflict of interest;

And furthermore that the review panel be chaired by an eminent person independent of government;

And furthermore that the review panel assess the appropriateness, adequacy and effectiveness of the conflict of interest guidelines for senior government officials;

And furthermore that the review panel consider specifically what are appropriate standards regarding financial dealings for Members of the Legislative Assembly, senior government officials, and their respective spouses, and to recommend higher standards where the review board deems them to be appropriate;

And furthermore that the review panel may make recommendations with respect to proposed amendments to the conflict provisions of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act for Members and to policies and practices for senior government officials.

And furthermore that the review panel seek input from Members of this Legislative Assembly, Conflict of Interest Commissioner, senior officials of this government and from the public on the issue of the proposed amendments to the conflict of interest provisions of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act;

And furthermore that the review panel report to the Management and Services Board by no later than April 15, 1999.

And furthermore that the review panel report be released publicly.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Notices of Motion. We are on third reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

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MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 16, motions.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Thebacha is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 16, motions. Do I have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Miltenberger, you have unanimous consent.

REVERT TO ITEM 16: MOTIONS

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to deal with my motion today, at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Thebacha is seeking unanimous consent to deal with Motions 14-13(6). Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Miltenberger, you have unanimous consent.

Motion 14-13(6): To Rescind Resolution 12-13(6), to Adopt the Recommendations of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner in TD 37-13(6) and, to Establish a Review Panel on Conflict of Interest Legislation, Policies and Guidelines

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly has been considering Tabled Document 37-13(6), Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, in committee of the whole since Friday, December 4, 1998;

AND WHEREAS all Members have had an opportunity to express their initial views on the report and its recommendations;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to also address some of the broader issues raised by the report and by the debate on the report;

AND WHEREAS it is in the public interest to conclude this issue pending a more in-depth review of issues raised;

NOW THEREFORE, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Iqaluit, that Motion 12-13(6) be rescinded;

AND FURTHER that this Legislative Assembly adopt all eight of the recommended sanctions of the Conflict

of Interest Commissioner as outlined on pages 102 through to 104 of the Commissioner's report;

AND FURTHERMORE that the Management and Services Board be directed to fund the legal costs of the Member for Hay River, Mrs. Groenewegen, in relation to the conflict of interest inquiry process, where the Commissioner has made a recommendation that those legal costs be paid;

AND FURTHERMORE that a three-member review panel be established by the Management and Services Board to review and assess the adequacy and the effectiveness of the conflict of interest provisions contained in Part III of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, and any policies and guidelines developed which relate to the area of conflict of interest;

AND FURTHERMORE that the review panel be chaired by an eminent person independent of government;

AND FURTHERMORE that the review panel assess the appropriateness, adequacy, and effectiveness of the conflicts of interest guidelines for senior government officials;

AND FURTHERMORE that the review panel consider specifically what are appropriate standards regarding financial dealings for Members of the Legislative Assembly, senior government officials, and their respective spouses, and to recommend higher standards where the review panel deems them to be appropriate;

AND FURTHERMORE that the review panel may make recommendations with respect to proposed amendments to the conflict provisions of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act for Members and to policies and practices for senior government officials.

AND FURTHERMORE that the review panel seek input from Members of this Legislative Assembly, Conflict of Interest Commissioner, senior officials of this government and from the public on the issue of the proposed amendments to the conflict of interest provisions of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act;

AND FURTHERMORE that the review panel report to the Management and Services Board no later than April 15, 1999.

AND FURTHERMORE that the review panel report be released publicly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. Mr. Morin.

MR. MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that this motion involves the financial matter in which I have an interest, I am declaring a conflict and withdraw from the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as this motion involves in part the issue of payment of my legal fees, I would like to declare a conflict and will withdraw from the Legislature and not vote on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the motion. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, after extensive and intense debate, this motion is an attempt to bring closure to this particular part of the process of reviewing the Conflict of Interest report and moving it along to the next process where, in fact, more work can be done in a detailed way that will help deal with the issues raised in this report. I would ask that my colleagues consider supporting this and at the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I request that this be a recorded vote. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Seconded from Iqaluit, Mr. Picco.

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MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a seconder of the motion, Mr. Speaker, I think that the motion addresses the entire Conflict of Interest report and goes considerably further. First of all, all

recommendations by the commissioner, Anne Crawford, are adopted and that Mrs. Groenewegen receive full payment for her legal costs and that an independent review panel will review all aspects of the conflict of interest provisions and also the human resource guidelines, including the opted out clause. Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be supporting the motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the motion. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting this motion as I feel that one clause there, where it refers to adopting all of these recommended sanctions of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner as outlined. I feel this move on the part of the Legislative Assembly would serve to render obsolete Mr. Morin's appeal to the Supreme Court. I would think that if we adopt this, there would be no point to the appeal. The decision would be made that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner was not biased. At this point in time, not arguing whether it is biased or not, I am arguing the point that I feel it would render obsolete Mr. Morin's move to have the appeal heard before the Supreme Court. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the motion. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Similar to Mr. Steen, I would hope that the courts do not take this motion to mean that we do not wish them to additionally review the report and the process that was undertaken during the course of the Conflict of Interest inquiry. I believe that every person should have their day in court and that every process should be reviewable by peers or a higher court. As I had indicated earlier, our own act indicates that this inquiry should be done under the rules of natural justice. I just wanted to indicate that this should not circumvent the judicial review. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the motion. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in reference to this motion, I do not think that any Member of this House takes any joy in supporting this motion. On the same token, what are we to do. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the general public expects us to deal with this motion as it was put forward and our constituents believe that we must review what has been presented to us and act accordingly. As a result, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting this motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like my colleague, Mr. O'Brien, and I am sure every other Member of this Legislature, I have no joy, not at all, in dealing and debating the past week what is in the motion, Mr. Speaker. I believe that every person in this country should be given the opportunity to an appeal. I believe that is recognized by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom. I believe that Mr. Morin, in his own right, has the right to an appeal. I believe that the panel of judges are independent and they seem to be independent. The judge is part of the impartial tribunal. I believe that any judge will recognize that in that scenario. We talk about, Mr. Speaker, that we have put Mr. Morin and his family through a lot of pain and also Mrs. Groenewegen and her family and friends. In order that we come out as a majority of the public expects us to come out, I will be supporting this motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Again, I would like to remind the Members to speak to the motion. To the motion. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to indicate my support for the motion and I wanted to thank the drafters of the report for attempting to put together a series of conclusions and compromises and taking all of the words that have been expressed by Members of this House and that I wanted to add my voice to what Mr. Steen and Mr. Erasmus had said on a judicial review. Once again, Mr. Chair, I will be voting in favour of the motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Again, I would like to remind the Members to speak to the motion. To the motion. Questions, Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My brief final comment to the motion would be that as an Assembly, we are going to great lengths to try to deal with this report in a proactive way and we are looking at all the implications of this report. One of the implications of course, to me, has to be the issue of natural justice served so that this should not been seen in any way to preclude, circumvent or short-circuit the right of the judge to look at the issue of natural justice in this particular case.

MR. SPEAKER:

Speak to the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? A recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Henry, Mr. Ng, Mrs. Thompson, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Todd, Mr. Arlooktoo, Mr. Dent, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Evaloarjuk, Mr. Barnabas, Mr. Picco, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Roland.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Steen.

MR. SPEAKER:

The results of motion 14-13(6) is 19 for, 0 against, 1 abstention. The motion is carried. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, meetings for tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of the full Caucus, at 10:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Government Operations at 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon of the Ordinary Members of the Western Caucus.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, December 8, 1998:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements

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3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of 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, 1998/1999
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Public Highways Act and the Motor Vehicles Act
 - Bill 20, Division Measures Act, No. 2
 - Bill 21, Nunavut Statutes Amendment Act, No. 2
 - Bill 23, Nunavut Legal Registries Statutes Amendment Act

- Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits
Program Transfer Act

- Bill 25, Workers' Compensation Division
Measures Act

- Bill 26, Nunavut Workers' Compensation
Statutes Amendment Act

- Bill 27, An Act to Amend the Wildlife 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 Tuesday,
December 8, at 1:30 p.m.

--ADJOURNMENT