



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

7th Session

Day 10

13th Assembly

HANSARD

MONDAY, APRIL 19, 1999

Pages 187 - 209

Page numbers reflect printed Hansard

The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

Honourable Jim Antoine, Honourable Charles Dent, Mr. Erasmus, Honourable Sam Gargan, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Henry, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Morin, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Rabesca, Honourable Floyd Roland, Honourable Vince Steen.

ITEM 1: PRAYER

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

SPEAKER (Hon. Sam Gargan):

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Good afternoon. I welcome all of you back to the House and I hope that you have had the opportunity to spend some time with your families and visit your constituencies during the break. I also hope that your travels were safe and that you found everyone in good health.

I would also like to welcome the Pages, staff and members of the public to the House today to hear the first budget address for the new Northwest Territories, as we know it now.

As we have all noticed Spring is just around the corner and it promises a summer of sunshine, open water and new possibilities. So Spring is the best season to present a new budget because it is the beginning of a new direction for all of us. As we begin this new direction, I would like to remind Members that we are working for all of the people out there who are on the land, in the communities, in the towns and in the city. In this House we are representing more than just our personal interests. We are elected to represent the views of our constituents regardless of colour, culture or creed and without prejudice or judgment.

As the Speaker, I remind Members that I will continue to be strict with the rules of the operation of the House. I also remind Members that we are to treat each other with respect and dignity.

But, before we begin, I ask all Members and the public to join me in offering our prayers to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. David Hamilton, whose father passed away this weekend. Mr. Hamilton, we

offer our thoughts to you, your mother and your family. Our prayers are with you as you travel tomorrow.

On that note, I would like to begin. I have received correspondence from the Deputy Commissioner. I wish to advise the House that I have received the following messages:

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories the passage of Appropriation Act, 1999-2000, during the seventh session of the 13th Legislative Assembly.

Yours truly,

Dan Marion

Deputy Commissioner

Orders of the day. Item 2, budget address. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 2: BUDGET ADDRESS

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, as I stand today to present the first budget of the new Northwest Territories, we find ourselves at an important crossroads. Down one path lies continued, no, increased dependence on federal transfer payments. Down the other path lies more financial independence and the responsibility that goes with that. I am an optimist. I believe that we will, together, choose the road that gives northerners the best chance to succeed and to live up to our potential.

In February of this year the Premier, the Honourable Jim Antoine, presented the public with this government's vision for the future in a document called The Western Agenda. Recently renamed Agenda for the New North, this document outlines five related strategies to achieve this vision. The Agenda explains the need for northerners to take greater control of our future and become more responsible for our own well-being.

The agenda sees the Northwest Territories as a place where people come first; where people are better educated; where people are healthier; where all people benefit from increased economic development; and where all of our residents work together to build a strong north.

We have our work cut out for us but I have no doubt that northerners are able and willing to build on our strengths and address our problems. My priority as Finance Minister is to secure the financial tools the north must have to meet our future head-on, and to succeed at making our vision for tomorrow a reality. This is an important point and I will come back to it later in this Address.

The success of our new territory will not be measured by the government's balance sheet nor by a statistical measure of growth in the economy. Rather, the success of our new territory will be measured by the ability of our citizens - men and women, young and old, aboriginal and non-aboriginal - to lead healthy and productive lives.

For our government to achieve this success:

-We must look ahead - to the coming fiscal year and beyond - to our future in the next millennium, and recognise the challenges it will bring.

-We must work together - Members of this Assembly and

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Cabinet, together with Aboriginal First Nations, communities, businesses, our elders and our youth; and most importantly,

-We must take control over our economy and its resource potential.

If northerners can work together and find an equitable way to share control of our resources, we will have the tools necessary to build a future for our youth. With these tools, northerners will be in charge of the pace of development and can ensure that northern residents benefit from development.

This will lead to a stronger fiscal position for the government and will mean that we can keep up with the investment we need to make in education, in health care, in economic development, and in job creation. There is only one way to improve social and economic conditions for northerners. We must work together and we must have more control over revenue sources.

Mr. Speaker, when looking ahead to the future we must not forget the past. I would like to recognise the work that went into ensuring that our new territory began on the best possible foundation for the future. I want to commend everyone - Members of the

Legislative Assembly, the Western Coalition, the Aboriginal Summit, the public service, and all the people of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut - who worked to ensure that we are ready for our future.

In October, 1998, we signed the Formula Financing Agreement with Canada to ensure secure funding for our new territory for the next five years. In March, 1999, we signed an Agreement with the Government of Nunavut to divide the assets and liabilities of the GNWT as of April 1, 1999. We successfully concluded agreements on the NWT Power Corporation and the Workers' Compensation Board, both of which will be operated jointly by the two territories for the near future.

We recently concluded a new Collective Agreement with the Union of Northern Workers and have reached settlements with 80 percent of the employees affected by the pay equity issue; that represents 85 percent of the amount we set aside to resolve this issue. We continue to urge the UNW to reach a negotiated settlement on the remaining claims.

These achievements show our ability to meet difficult challenges now and in the future, through cooperation and mutual effort. They are the basis on which to build our vision of the future. We have met the challenges of the past and we can meet the challenges of the future, but we need the right tools.

Mr. Speaker, our biggest challenge over the past few years has been to ensure the Northwest Territories and Nunavut start on a stable fiscal foundation. It was a difficult task and I would like to thank my predecessor, Mr. John Todd, and all Members of the 13th Assembly for their commitment to this task.

At budget time last year we anticipated ending the 1998-99 fiscal year with \$28 million in accumulated debt. It looked like both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut would start out in the red. But, because of a favourable one-time adjustment to the Formula Financing Grant from Canada, based on revised Northwest Territories population estimates, we enjoyed a forecast \$62 million accumulated surplus as of March 31, 1999.

This surplus was split 56 percent to the Northwest Territories and 44 percent to Nunavut, according to the Division of Assets and Liabilities Agreement between this government and Nunavut. For the Northwest Territories, this means we start this new chapter in our history in the black, with \$34 million.

Addressing the growing demand for government spending will continue to be a challenge. Currently, our Formula Financing Grant comprises over seventy percent of our yearly total revenues, and largely determines how well we are able to meet our expenditure needs. The comparative growth rates of the populations of the Northwest Territories and Canada figure in the calculation of the Formula Financing Grant. This is where our new territory faces its most critical fiscal challenge. The population in the Northwest Territories declined slightly last year and our growth rates for this year and future years are forecast to be below Canada's. This means that for 1999-2000 we are expecting virtually no revenue growth over last year. In dollar terms, that means revenues are forecast to be \$708 million.

Although the revenues available to us are not enough to meet all of the critical needs we face, we must strive to maintain current programs and services, and address at least some of the areas of urgent need. This requires us to bring forward a budget for 1999-2000 with planned expenditures of \$742 million, an amount that exceeds revenues by \$34 million. This will consume our accumulated surplus and leave us with neither an accumulated surplus nor deficit by the end of 1999-2000.

As a new Finance Minister I would have preferred to bring forward a balanced budget. My years in the private sector have instilled in me a fiscal discipline that is based on spending within your means. However, at this time, I do not believe that we can cut services to our citizens any more than they have been to date. Using the accumulated surplus to cover the \$34 million deficit forecast in this budget will give us a year to make progress on restructuring our fiscal relationship with Canada.

At the same time we must continue to exercise fiscal restraint and carry on working aggressively to deal with the root causes of expenditure growth. But make no mistake, if we do not find more revenues, we may have no choice but to cut services, or more likely, both services and capital spending in next year's budget.

Recently, Premier Antoine, and my predecessor, Mr. John Todd, met with federal Ministers, the Honourable Paul Martin and the Honourable Jane Stewart, to lay out the need for a revised fiscal relationship with Canada. We believe that both Canada and the citizens of the Northwest Territories can benefit from a different regime.

The solution to our fiscal problem is to increase the size of the fiscal pie in the north. To achieve this we need the support of all people in the Northwest Territories. We need their understanding, we need their patience, we need their creativity and, most of all, we need everyone's cooperation.

Increasing our revenues to meet growing expenditure needs can only be done by restructuring our fiscal relationship with Ottawa. This means that we must work together to ensure the federal

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government turns over control of northern resources to northerners. Just as importantly, we must work together to ensure the Northwest Territories gets a greater beneficial share of tax revenues and royalties generated in the north. In order to accomplish this, we recognise the need to find innovative ways to share the responsibilities as well as the revenues. Mr. Speaker, I will have more to say on this later, but I will now focus on the social challenges that we face in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, children and youth of today are the hope of tomorrow. The Northwest Territories is a young territory. Forty-three percent of our population is less than twenty-five years old. This compares with 33 percent for Canada. The challenge for this government is to help prepare our young people to be our future leaders. To be good leaders they must be educated, healthy, and able to participate in the economy.

Education and training are critical to the development of our youth. That is why we have invested significantly in improving our education system. We have extended grades to all communities in the Northwest Territories and helped adults return to school to continue their education. Enrolment in high school increased 23 percent from 1990 to 1997 and our high school graduation rate is rising.

These successes are encouraging, but much more needs to be done. Thirty-six percent of our adult population has not completed secondary school. This limits access to jobs in government, resource industries, and in other sectors of the economy.

Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to our youth. By continuing to make strategic investments in education and training we can help ensure that our young people are ready for the jobs that are available. As part of this commitment we have allocated \$1.2

million in this year's budget to ensure that the pupil/teacher ratio is maintained. This means that even with a growing number of school-aged children the pupil/teacher ratio will not increase.

In 1997-98, the government announced the Northern Employment Strategy. This was designed as a one-time investment to provide northerners with employment opportunities as well as the skills required to take advantage of those opportunities. One tremendously successful element of the strategy was the Working Together Program which provided employers with a wage subsidy to hire northern students and youth. This program helped provide many of our young people with the experience they need to obtain meaningful and lasting employment in today's labour market. For the two year duration of the program, more than 900 job opportunities were created in the 33 communities across the Northwest Territories.

I am pleased to announce that this budget includes \$1 million to extend the Working Together Program for one more year. We anticipate that this funding will create over 450 jobs for young northerners this fiscal year.

The Working Together Program will allow the Honourable Michael Miltenberger, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and the Minister responsible for Youth, to take steps to alleviate the problem of youth unemployment in the Northwest Territories. Our young people suffer from the highest rate of unemployment in the Northwest Territories and therefore are a clear priority of this government. However, equally important is our commitment to ensure that all our residents of working age are equipped to fill available jobs.

We have provided an additional \$1 million to continue the Investing in People Program. This successful program helps fund adult basic education and job-related skills training for income support clients, so they can move into productive employment. Many community-based work projects employing local residents are funded by Investing in People. This kind of investment is a clear sign of our commitment to help residents become more self-reliant.

Mr. Speaker, children are also a priority of this government. In keeping with the goal to improve the future of our children we are continuing to support the Healthy Children Initiative. Reinvestment of approximately \$160,000 from the second phase of the National Child Benefit Program will allow us to

maintain funding for this successful program. During the 1998-99 fiscal year, almost one hundred community-based projects were delivered in the Northwest Territories as a result of the Healthy Children Initiative.

Providing education and economic opportunities for northerners is only part of what needs to be accomplished. All residents of the territory need to be confident they will have access to adequate health services. An issue of increasing concern over the past year has been the crisis facing us in recruiting and retaining health professionals. The turnover rate for nurses is much higher than the government staff average. The vacancy rate for nurses is currently 25 percent. Furthermore, there are national shortages of nurses and other jurisdictions have launched aggressive recruitment campaigns.

Our ability to recruit and retain nurses is impacted by many factors. While we are making good progress in training northern nurses, we do not yet have an adequate pool from which to draw. For nurses in our small communities, the stress of being constantly on call can lead to burn-out in a relatively short period of time. As national and international competition increases for nurses, our salary and benefits packages have not remained competitive enough. Recent announcements by British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta that they will be hiring significant numbers of additional nurses will only heighten the competition. Similarly, physicians are also in short supply in other rural and remote areas of Canada. The Northwest Territories will have to offer competitive packages to continue to attract and retain physicians.

The Minister of Health and Social Services, the Honourable Floyd Roland, is aware of the need to address the issue of access to quality health care, especially in smaller communities. He is committed to follow up on the agreement reached by Premiers and the Prime Minister, to reinvest the additional Canada Health and Social Transfer funding contained in the 1999 federal budget, for health care. This budget reinvests not only the approximately \$3 million per year in additional CHST funding, but adds an additional \$3 million of our own.

I am pleased to announce three related initiatives to assist in recruiting and retaining health and social services professionals.

-We have identified \$1.9 million for specific recruitment and retention initiatives.

This funding follows through on a commitment made by the Minister of Health and Social Services last fall. The Department of Health and Social Services, in partnership with Health and Social Services Boards of Management, is putting into action a variety of strategies designed to encourage northerners to pursue professional opportunities in this field, to attract health and social services professionals to the North, and to encourage our current staff to remain in the north.

These strategies range from scholarships, to summer employment and mentoring opportunities, relief pools for community nurses, and better promotion of the Northwest Territories as a career location. In addition to these actions, this government will dedicate \$3 million over the next two years to provide salary incentives to attract new nurses, encourage current nurses to stay, and promote nursing as a career to our young people. This initiative recognises that our wage and benefits packages are not competitive enough under current market conditions. We will work with the Health and Social Services Boards, the Union, and the nurses to structure this funding to have maximum impact. This budget includes \$750,000 for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to enhance training opportunities in the nursing and social service professions.

Finally, we have set aside an additional \$556,000 in Student Financial Assistance to support students who choose to pursue these careers. These spending measures will help keep and attract the professionals that are needed to ensure northern residents receive quality care.

This government believes the education and health initiatives announced in this budget will improve the social and economic conditions in the Northwest Territories. Obviously, they will not erase all of our problems. Our crime rates are high and our incarceration rates continue to increase. The GNWT's Correctional Service is facing severe challenges in delivering appropriate services to communities and to offenders. Our correctional facilities are severely overcrowded.

We are the only jurisdiction in Canada without a fully dedicated community-based probation service, which results in an even higher incarceration rate. Furthermore, we do not have adequately funded

programming for inmates to provide them with the counselling and skills development that will help them succeed upon release.

I am pleased to announce that this budget includes approximately \$1.5 million in new funding to allow the Minister of Justice, the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, to implement a comprehensive plan to improve community justice and corrections services. This integrated approach includes several components.

-As part of the new funding, Community Justice Committees will receive additional support to allow them to work more effectively with the RCMP and the probation system.

Also, until this year community social services workers have provided probation and parole support in addition to their many other responsibilities. Over the next two years, the Department of Justice will phase in a dedicated probation and parole service that will improve community services. This means that convicted persons who qualify can be placed earlier in a community-based setting, thereby easing the transition of inmates back into their communities and reducing the strain on overcrowded correctional facilities.

Funding will also be used to enhance rehabilitation programs in correctional facilities, including aboriginal healing, family violence prevention, and sex offender rehabilitation. In addition to these programming initiatives, the government is committed to improving the quality of our corrections facilities. Planning for much needed renovations to the Yellowknife Correctional Centre will begin this year. This facility currently operates at an average of forty percent above maximum capacity.

Two new Young Offender facilities are also in the planning stage - a 24 bed building for males in Yellowknife, and a 12 bed facility for females in Inuvik. These two projects are among the seven pilot projects currently being planned through the government's Public/Private Partnerships initiative.

Mr. Speaker, just as we are seeking greater control over northern issues, this government is also committed to providing resources to local governments to address local concerns. In order to address growing concerns about fire prevention and safety in northern communities, this budget contains \$729,000 in additional funding. This will enable the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, the Honourable Vince Steen, to improve direct

training and fire safety support services to communities. This investment will help cut down on loss and expense due to fire.

Mr. Speaker, before I move on to the economic challenges that face this government, I will take time to talk about a current economic initiative that is being delivered by a government agency usually associated with social initiatives.

The Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program is being delivered through the NWT Housing Corporation, and gives many northerners the opportunity to own their own homes. To date, the program has generated over \$45 million in housing sales and assisted 350 families in the north to own their own homes. This initiative was introduced in the last fiscal year as a pilot project until March 31, 1999, and was designed to meet several objectives. With several hundred housing units for sale in 1998, there was very little demand for new residential construction. The construction of new homes, which creates jobs and causes businesses to grow, cannot occur until units for sale are purchased. The program was also designed to encourage families to move between communities to work and to encourage those who work in the north, but live in the south, to move here permanently.

Although this program has been a success, and as previously announced will continue until June 30 of this year, it does not detract from the commitment of this government to social housing. The funding contained in this budget for the NWT Housing Corporation will allow for the continued delivery of social housing programs at current levels.

Mr. Speaker, the continued commitment by this government to

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improve education, health care, and social services for residents will better prepare us for tomorrow. At the same time, this government must also encourage economic development that creates employment for northerners. Our investments in developing the economy have put many more people to work. Over 1,200 additional people were employed in the Northwest Territories between 1991 and 1996. But the large number of young people in the Northwest Territories today means that we will need many more jobs in the future. At our current rate of population growth, our youth will need an additional 3,500 jobs by the year 2008.

The initiatives contained in this budget build on our ongoing commitment to ensure our youth are better educated and better trained, but we must be sure that the jobs are there for them when they graduate.

The increased need for new jobs comes at a time when we are facing an economic downturn in the Northwest Territories. Our economic growth is tied to resource industries, and current global economic conditions have hurt us. Historically low gold and oil prices, caused in part by economic problems in Asia and Latin America and by the sale of gold bullion by the world's central bankers, are examples of factors outside the control of this government that have impacted our economy.

The tools needed to allow northerners to live healthy and productive lives are strongly linked to resource development. Resource development provides the greatest potential source of the additional revenues that this government needs to provide programs and services to northerners at adequate levels.

Although this government cannot change the realities of the global economy, we can take steps to counter the impact by better insulating our economy from these shocks. In these difficult economic times, our government has taken steps to encourage investment in the north. Our tax rates remain competitive with the provinces and we have recently implemented the Risk Capital Investment Tax Credits program to improve the investment climate for business.

On the positive side, opportunities for growth do exist, and this government does welcome investment in our economy. The opening of BHP's Ekati Mine, and the work toward the development of the Diavik and other diamond properties in the Northwest Territories, are welcome bright spots. The Ekati Mine alone directly employs about 450 northerners and has created further opportunities in other sectors of the economy.

The potential development of the Diavik-Aber property would benefit the north during the construction and production phases beginning in the year 2000. Although the regulatory review process is not complete, we are encouraged by the approach taken to date by everyone involved. This government will continue to work toward our goal of developing sustainable resources and generating maximum benefits for the people of the Northwest Territories. Companies must recognise that development in the north will only be supported when it generates direct northern benefits to the greatest extent possible.

Mr. Speaker, let me say it again, this government wants and needs to see more development, but companies must understand that only environmentally responsible development will be supported - and then only when northerners benefit significantly.

Although the sparkle of diamonds has caught the eye of most people, we cannot ignore the significant resource potential in oil and gas developments in the Deh Cho, the Mackenzie Valley, and the Beaufort-Delta regions. These regions are still relatively unexplored and contain significant oil and gas potential. Although oil prices are low at this time, a gradual improvement is expected. In addition, pipeline construction in southern Canada, and a forecast improvement in gas prices, are increasing the economic viability of natural gas developments in the Northwest Territories.

Opportunities exist, but we must work to ensure that we are able to take advantage of these opportunities and maximize benefits for northerners. The results of the 1998-99 Fraser Institute Survey of Mining Companies in North America highlights the fact that uncertainty surrounding land claims and the administration and regulation of both resources and resource development is limiting the attractiveness of the Northwest Territories to new investors. The settlement of land claims and self-government issues will bring greater certainty to our investment climate and contribute to the development of our untapped potential. This government supports the aspirations of aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories to settle land claims and implement their inherent right to self-government. This government is committed to working with our aboriginal partners and the federal government to settle land claims and self-government issues. It is only by working in partnership with aboriginal governments that we can create opportunities for everyone to jointly share in the economic development of the north.

Greater certainty would also be realized if control of resources were transferred to the north. At present, companies wishing to undertake resource exploration and development in the north must contend with a regulatory burden complicated by the fact that the federal government controls resources and the territorial government controls other aspects related to development.

In addition, companies who wish to invest in the north face uncertainty because there is no formal role for this government to play in assessing and permitting development to proceed. Therefore, it becomes

necessary for this government to proceed on an ad hoc, and therefore uncertain basis, as it rightly attempts to ensure that benefits from development remain in the north.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to turn our attention to increasing the range of opportunities for the people of the north. If we are to create the jobs required for our children and ensure that those jobs are both long-term and less vulnerable to changes in the global economy, we need to diversify our economic base.

We must examine opportunities to improve self-sufficiency by

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undertaking more value-added activities. The government's procurement policies and existing economic programs encourage value-added activities but do not focus on generating an export base. The diamond sector provides an example of the employment potential associated with products developed for the global market. Exploration and development of the resource sector will continue to be the strength of our economy, but we need to create additional opportunities in the service and manufacturing sectors. This government has supported diversification by providing guarantees to businesses interested in the cutting and polishing of diamonds.

I have already touched on the importance of creating a future for our youth. If the diamond industry is a bright spot on the economic horizon of the Northwest Territories, we must equip our residents to take advantage of these opportunities. Therefore, this budget includes:

-\$265,000 for Aurora College to sponsor diamond industry pre-employment training.

-\$133,000 in direct support to Sirius Diamonds to assist them in providing on-the-job training to northerners to work in their newly-established diamond cutting and processing facility in Yellowknife.

This government is also open to providing further training support to other diamond value-added manufacturers who are prepared to set up in the NWT and provide priority hiring and training to northern residents.

Mr. Speaker, constructing the roads that we travel on also creates economic opportunities and employment. This year the Department of Transportation will

upgrade 17 kilometres of Highway 3 between Rae and Yellowknife at a cost of \$10 million. This work will provide training opportunities for 16 employees. These employees will be learning skills on the job, which will be transferable to other jobs in other sectors of the economy once the upgrading is complete.

It is necessary to generate growth in all sectors of the economy. Therefore, this government is committed to working with aboriginal groups, industry and business interests to develop a new economic strategy for the Northwest Territories. This strategy will provide recommendations to guide the orderly development of various sectors of our economy, including the resource sectors, as well as tourism, trade and services, and manufacturing, and will serve to promote further diversification.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we cannot afford to cut programs and services any further. Our social programs are under extreme pressure. We already have close to, if not the highest, pupil/teacher ratio in Canada. We already have a severe shortage of nurses. We have a serious shortage of housing in most communities. Our jails are overcrowded. It will take millions of dollars to address any one of these needs - way more than what we have now. The only solution is to increase our revenues - and increase them significantly. The reality is, at present we face revenues that are not expected to grow much over the next few fiscal years. There are several reasons for the slow growth.

Recent developments in the Northwest Territories have created new jobs in the mining sector and the businesses that serve it. However, rather than contributing to employment growth, these new jobs have only reduced the impact of other job losses, particularly in the government and resource sectors. Job losses have meant that people have left the Northwest Territories. Between 1996 and 1998 there was a net outflow of more than 2,000 people from the Northwest Territories. This has had consequences for our fiscal situation. The outflow has caused our population to decline and has negatively affected the growth in the Formula Financing Grant, since the grant is based, in part, on our population growth relative to that of Canada.

The net outflow of people has also affected our tax base. As working people leave the Northwest Territories we are losing income tax revenues. Although the Formula Financing Agreement protects us against 80 percent of the decline in our tax

revenues, the drop we are experiencing is significant and will affect our ability to finance programs and services.

These factors mean that our revenues will be growing slowly, if at all, as long as our economy is flagging. Increasing tax rates to make up lost revenues is not an option. We have a small tax base compared to our spending needs. Tax increases would not generate the additional revenues needed and would adversely affect our business investment climate and severely impact families.

Currently, our tax rates are competitive with the provinces. We have the lowest corporate income tax rates in Canada, with the exception of Quebec, and have no corporate capital tax. Our personal income tax rate is still among the lowest in the country, although it is facing competition as provinces look to decrease the personal income tax burden. We have no territorial retail sales tax.

To achieve our economic goals, it is important that we maintain an attractive environment for business investment in the NWT and encourage families to live here. Therefore, I am pleased to say that there are no tax increases in this budget.

Although our revenues are growing slowly over the next few years as a result of economic conditions, expenditure pressures are growing more quickly. The importance of re-examining our fiscal arrangements cannot be emphasized enough. Unless we increase our revenue capacity, we simply cannot keep up with our spending demands. Without revenue increases we face the prospect of either large annual deficits and a large accumulated debt in the next two to three fiscal years, or significant cuts to services, or in the worst case scenario, both. We need to address this problem now.

We must increase our capacity to invest in economic development to provide jobs for young people and, at the same

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time, we must take positive action to address our social conditions. However, to meet both of these objectives, we must generate more revenues. Even though the Northwest Territories has significant resource deposits, we only have access to a small portion of the revenue potential of these deposits. The federal government controls most resource revenues.

Mr. Speaker, we estimate that, over the 25-year life of two diamond mines, the federal government will receive a fiscal benefit of \$7 billion, compared to the \$500 million the Government of the Northwest Territories can expect to receive. On an annual basis, this translates into almost \$300 million for the federal government and \$20 million for the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The federal government receives more than 90 percent of the fiscal benefit from resource development in the Northwest Territories. This means that for every additional dollar raised by the federal government from the resource sector in the Northwest Territories, this government keeps less than ten cents. Therefore, we are seeking a commitment from the federal Minister of Finance, the Honourable Paul Martin, to examine the structure of our Formula Financing Agreement with respect to how the Northwest Territories can benefit more fully from tax and royalty revenues raised from development in the north, and how they are treated in our current fiscal arrangements. As I said earlier, we believe that both Canada and the Northwest Territories can benefit from a restructuring of our fiscal relationship.

To meet our long-term goal of a strong and healthy Northwest Territories, we must work together. The Northwest Territories, together with our aboriginal partners, must gain control of its own resources and we must restructure our fiscal arrangements with the federal government. Gaining control of our resources will enable northerners to affect the pace of development and to create an attractive investment climate. I have already mentioned how gaining control of our resources will improve investment certainty and foster a more positive investment environment.

Gaining control of our resources will also give this government the opportunity to design policies and budget initiatives that are coordinated with resource development scenarios, thereby increasing the fiscal rewards to both northern governments and to the federal government.

Leaving control of resource development in the hands of the federal government may limit opportunities for the type of win-win situation this government envisions. For example, the federal government may be reluctant, because of national interests, commitments, or objectives, to establish a royalty regime that allows companies to deduct the cost of

local employment creation when determining royalty payments.

These are the types of initiatives that could be considered if the Government of the Northwest Territories, in partnership with aboriginal governments, had control of the resources in the north. This government believes these types of initiatives, a more certain investment environment, and a reduction in regulatory overlap will generate additional development, employment and revenues in the north. Local control over our resources and new fiscal arrangements will give us the tools to generate additional revenues for the north and for the federal government. An increase in the size of the fiscal pie. This can be a source of money to help fund self-government structures, helping aboriginal organizations meet their political aspirations, supporting our partners in achieving our mutual goal of control over our own future.

New fiscal arrangements can include both expanding the "tax window" - the revenues we keep as a result of economic growth and development - and sharing the resource revenues currently retained by the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, we are at a crossroads. We can either rely on increased federal transfers or we can increase our financial independence and the responsibilities that go with it. I believe that increasing our independence is the right road to take. How can this government and our partners achieve this? In the short-term, we need to gain support from aboriginal governments. We also need the support of industry and other partners in our economic and social development. We must work together to redefine the federal government's role in northern development and show how northerners can do better with control over their own resources.

We need to ensure that our business environment remains competitive and attractive. And, most importantly, we need to prepare our young people to assume responsibilities in a more diversified economy through education and training initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories has changed dramatically since 1967. This year, 1999, marks a major milestone in our development as a new and revitalized territory. We must build on the strength of the people who helped create the new territory and the wisdom of all those who have contributed in the past.

Over the last thirty years, we have acquired many of the tools we needed to build our territory. However, we have gone as far as we can with these tools. We need a new set of tools. We need a new set of tools with which to ensure:

-The capacity to address social conditions.

-The capacity to develop a stable political environment.

We need control over our resources and a greater share of the benefits they generate. This will allow us to expand economic development in the north, to share in a larger portion of revenues generated from this development, and to increase the size of the fiscal pie for all Canadians.

New fiscal arrangements and economic development will generate additional revenues that we can invest in the future of our children:

-through education, training, and health care; and

-through job creation, business stimulation, and diversification of the economy.

Mr. Speaker, all people and governments in the Northwest Territories must work together. The control of resources in the Northwest Territories must be in the hands of northerners. The

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initiatives and directions contained in this budget can lead to a sound fiscal and economic position. The initiatives contained in this budget can result in healthy, educated and productive people and a future for our youth. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. We will take a short break and invite the public to a reception in the Great Hall.

--Break

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. Item 3, Ministers' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 3: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 35-13(7): Protected Areas Strategy

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that Cabinet has approved the Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy. This strategy provides a framework for the overall development and management of a system of protected areas in the Northwest Territories. Community consultation was an important element in developing the Protected Areas Strategy. Aboriginal organizations, industry, environmental groups and the federal government were equal partners in the process.

Mr. Speaker, this strategy will benefit future generations in the Northwest Territories by protecting unique environmental, geological, cultural and historic areas. It promotes a balanced approach to land use decisions by incorporating the best available traditional, ecological, cultural and economic knowledge. The members of the Protected Areas Strategy Advisory Committee can be proud of this document. They have developed a strategy which will allow us to protect areas of land and water with special natural and cultural values while providing greater clarity about the status, access and development options for these areas. Communities, regional and land claims organizations will take the lead in identifying areas to be protected. The Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, with support from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, will establish a Protected Areas Strategy Secretariat to provide assistance and support for identifying and establishing protected areas.

Mr. Speaker, the Protected Areas Strategy is the culmination of several years work by the Advisory Committee. It is dedicated to the memory of two members of that group: Mr. Nelson Green, a champion of Inuvialuit culture, traditions, language and harvesting rights; and Mr. Ron Seale, a man who devoted both his professional and personal life to preserving our wild spaces and parks. The Protected Areas Strategy will now be sent to the federal Minister of DIAND, the Honourable Jane Stewart, for her approval. Once that approval is given, we look forward to implementing the strategy in partnership with communities, regional organizations and land claims bodies. Mashi Cho.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Item 4, Members' statements. Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 4: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 93-13(7): Resources for Quality Education Programs

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to direct my comments to the subject of education in light of our overall budget deliberations. I submit that rising to the legal and moral obligation to provide a quality education to northern students is something which impacts every other goal and challenge that this government faces. A quality education is essential to the hope which we hold for every northerner that they have the opportunity to achieve an independent, healthy, productive life. If we cannot adequately educate our children, we cannot reasonably expect them to reach their potential, access jobs, or fully contribute to society.

This government pays lip service to education as a high priority of our agenda. To what lengths as a government are we prepared to go to back up this claim?

Recently the Department of Education, Culture and Employment undertook a Minister's Forum on Education. This process articulated the positive and the deficient aspects of our current education system. Although I agree that it is important to clearly identify the needs, I do not think that the results of this forum came as a surprise to anyone. The system needs more money. If this document is not now used as a basis for implementing a response to these needs, we might as well have spent the money on something else.

It is not realistic to put the identifying of solutions onto the public. Neither is it realistic to put the identification of additional resources solely on the shoulders of the new Minister. If indeed education is a priority of this government, it is going to require the commitment, effort and determination of each Member of this House, on the government side and on this side of the House.

Mr. Miltenberger has stated on a number of occasions that 31 of the report's recommendations are non-monetary. I simply do not buy that. We commission surveys, reports, strategies, forums, reviews by

departments all the time. Perhaps we do this too often and at too great an expense. If these initiatives cost money, what makes us think that we can implement the recommendations of the education report at no cost. There is no way of sugar-coating or dancing around the fact that education requires more financial resources. When we balanced the budget, we accepted the argument that we had no choice. To allow the deficit to accumulate would erode our children's future. The same is true of our education system. If we allow the lack of resources to persist, the accumulated effect will never be addressed. When the opportunity to provide learning as a foundation in the formative years is lost, the effects can be life long. Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Hay River is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Do I have any nays? Mrs. Groenewegen, you have unanimous consent to conclude your statement.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you colleagues and thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I ask each Member of this House as

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we review the budget of this government over the next several days, to carefully consider from where we might find resources to invest in education. Just as surely as investment in education will pay real dividends, failure to respond to the needs in our current system will result in real losses of immeasurable proportion. Mr. Speaker, I will be speaking further on the subject of education this week and will look forward to questioning the Minister responsible. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 94-13(7): Ministerial Forum on Health Care

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members will recall that I previously called for a public inquiry into the quality of health care in the Northwest Territories. It is now

apparent that there will be a Ministerial Forum on Health and Social Services in the near future. Mr. Speaker, my constituents may be wondering what is the difference between a public inquiry and a ministerial forum. A public inquiry can compel witnesses to appear and can cause documents to be presented to the Inquiry Board. A ministerial forum cannot force anyone to testify or cause any documents to be produced. The recent Minister's Forum on Education gives a clear indication of what is wrong with the education system in the Northwest Territories. It is, Mr. Speaker, the same thing that is wrong with health and social services in the Northwest Territories. There is not enough money to meet the demands being placed on the education system and there is not enough money to meet the demands being placed on the health and social service system.

So, what will we get out of a Ministerial Forum on Health and Social Services? Probably the same thing that we got out of the Minister's Forum on Education, 40 or 50 recommendations on what can be done to improve the system, in which 30 or so do not involve the expenditure of any money. The Minister will then stand up in the House and say, we can implement the recommendations that will not cost any more money, but the recommendations that call for increased spending to deal with the crisis cannot be implemented at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that a ministerial forum will be able to address the true crisis that affects health and social services in the Western Territory. The crisis is a lack of money to deal with program shortfalls. However, I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that a ministerial forum does have the role to play in defining the future of health and social services in the new Western Territory. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Mackenzie Delta is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Do I have any nays? Mr. Krutko, you have unanimous consent to conclude your statement.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. It is important that the ministerial forum travel to small communities in each of our regions as well as the regional centres. Members must have a true understanding of health and social service delivery in

the smaller communities if they are to make relative recommendations. It is important, Mr. Speaker, that the broadest possible cross-section of northerners is given an opportunity to participate in the deliberations of a ministerial forum. It is important that the membership of the forum also represent the diversity of northern realities. Mr. Speaker, I will be following up with questions at the appropriate time with the appropriate Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement 95-13(7): Government Support for Giant Mine

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak about the Giant Mine situation today. Mr. Speaker, the Minister in his budget address mentioned that our economic growth is tied to the resource sector and how true that is. Certainly that is very true for us here in Yellowknife but throughout the Western Territory because Giant Mine affects a lot of areas. Our concern as a government today should be with the 270 workers that are at Giant Mine and the welfare of their families and our community. In the short term, the receiver may keep the mine in operation, but we need a long-term outlook for this situation, Mr. Speaker. We need to keep this mine operating.

Last week I did some contact work in a number of areas. I spoke with a number of business people who are keenly interested in this situation and then I spoke with Mark Danis, who is the president of the Canadian Auto Workers representing the mine workers at Giant Mine. They are both interested in the possibility of discussing a consortium to look at the long-term future of the mine and possibly becoming involved in that consortium in a way to perhaps keep the mine going. Mr. Danis said to me that he knows of an example in Kapuskasing where a sawmill was due to be closed down and it was owned by the pulp and paper industry and the workers were able to negotiate a takeover of that particular operation. That was ten years ago and it is still operating today on a very successful basis.

A consortium of Yellowknife business and labour members could be a solution to our problems here, Mr. Speaker, but they need government support.

They need the support of the federal and the territorial governments and the municipal governments in all aspects. I am told that Giant Mine is marginally profitable and, no doubt, with the price of gold being at the lowest it has ever been, the future could look bright for this particular mine if only we could keep it going on the short term. There is a sense of urgency in all this matter, Mr. Speaker. Our government must be pro-active. They must be willing to try and bring in the federal government on this. Mr. Speaker, I see my time is up. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was speaking about the need for our government to be pro-active on an urgent basis in this matter. I think our government can provide and seek the support of the federal government in such a consortium approach by workers and local business people and, in the end,

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that will benefit all of the Northwest Territories. It can provide the research to the consortium to identify success models elsewhere and, at the same time, work on the cleanup problem to negotiate with the federal government how this is going to be brought about.

This particular issue affects a lot of our areas of the territorial government. It affects the NWT Power Corporation. Giant Mine is a huge consumer of power and so it affects that particular corporation. It affects our federal transfer payments, as the Minister of Finance referred to in his budget statement that if we lose population we lose dollars on the whole territorial, across the board, basis. In the city, we lose employee property taxes and income taxes. DIAND and the federal government lose royalties on any company profits and production and, in addition, they lose the income tax of those employees working there. Mr. Speaker, later day I will be asking the Minister of Renewable Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, some questions to encourage support by this government for this particular proposal. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Henry.

Member's Statement 96-13(7): Trade Mission to Nunavut

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the last few years the Prime Minister of Canada has led several trade missions to other countries in an attempt to build up Canada's export capacity. These trade missions have resulted in significant contracts for Canadian businesses in other countries. Mr. Speaker, the reason I bring this issue of trade missions up is that I believe it is imperative that our Premier organize and lead a trade mission to Nunavut. It is a fact, Mr. Speaker, that while this government has been concerned with the legislative mechanics of ensuring that Nunavut became a reality on April 1, 1999, other Canadian jurisdictions such as Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec have been busy organizing and leading groups of business people north to take advantage of the new economic opportunity that is Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I have recently heard of cases where northern architectural firms based in the Northwest Territories were not invited to bid on jobs in Nunavut and that this work was awarded to southern-based architectural firms. Our northern-based firms have the expertise and design experience that is necessary for the successful completion of Canada's arctic projects. It is vitally important that this knowledge and expertise be promoted to the decision-makers in Nunavut. There are many Northwest Territories-based businesses and professional service firms that will depend on Nunavut for a significant portion of their revenues.

As a government, Mr. Speaker, we are always looking for opportunities to increase the economic base of the Northwest Territories. I have always maintained that a strong private sector is just as important to the economic well-being of the Northwest Territories as any major resource development project. I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, that if we do not aggressively pursue business opportunities in Nunavut and remind the powers that be that we are only a short plane or barge ride away from Nunavut, that NWT business will be the losers. Mr. Speaker, a trade mission to Nunavut, in my opinion, is an

important step that this government could take to ensure the viability of a strong private business sector in the Northwest Territories with a minimal output of cash on the part of this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be following up with questions of the appropriate Minister later today. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Roland.

Member's Statement 97-13(7): Inuvik's Muskrat Jamboree Spring Carnival

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like today to talk about one of the important events in Inuvik, our spring carnival known as the Muskrat Jamboree. The Muskrat Jamboree was held the weekend of March 26-29 and was very successful despite the poor weather. It takes many organizers and volunteers to make the Muskrat Jamboree a success and I would like to take some time today to thank these important people.

Many thanks to the executive members of the committee. They are: Gerry Kisoun, chairperson; Chris Laroque, vice-chair; Veronica McLeod, treasurer; and Delores Harley, the committee's secretary. I would also to say that the work of the committee members: Theresa Ross, Jeffrey Amos, Kelly Kokesch, Donna Allen, Debbie Enoch, Bonnie Ross, Dorothy Amos, Bernice Furlong, Shawna Kaglik, Hank Rogers, Rosa Kisoun and Abel Tingmiak, was much appreciated.

Also, many thanks to some of our local chefs for taking the time to set up tents and spend their weekend cooking delicious food for the hungry carnival-goers. This year Maureen Elias, Lena Rogers, Joyce Rogers, Rita Allen, Herbert Allen, Arlene Jensen, Linda and Kelsey McDonald and the Bernhards had tents at the river. There were also a few organizations who prepared food for us. They were the Anglican Church, Aurora College Campus of Inuvik and the Francophone Sugar Shack. I know that it was a lot of work and it was much appreciated.

I would like to thank the participants of the games and the visitors from throughout the region that travelled to Inuvik for our carnival. My family enjoyed watching the games with their spirit of healthy competition and we also took the opportunity to visit with friends and

relatives at the river. Once again, thank you to the many people that organized, volunteered, prepared food and participated in the games and events at the carnival. The 1999 Muskrat Jamboree was very successful because of your hard work and community spirit. Quyanini, mahsi cho, and thank you. Mr. Speaker, in closing I would like to send greetings to my wife and children back home.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Rabesca.

Member's Statement 98-13(7): Benefits of Rae-Edzo Internet Service

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to give some good news and to show my colleagues

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what can happen with a little cooperation. Over the past two years, Migwi Business Services has been working hard to set up Internet services in Rae-Edzo. Today, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to announce that since April 5, 1999, Migwi Business Services has been offering Internet services within Rae-Edzo. During this same time frame, Migwi Business Services and the Rae-Edzo Friendship Centre have been working together to set up an Internet resource lab and computer training centre where residents of Rae-Edzo have access to computers either for training purposes, entertainment or keeping in touch with loved ones at BHP or elsewhere.

It is these two organizations that will provide training in many areas, including general operation of the computers, software and Internet training, web page design, as well as distant learning courses. Since January, these two companies have been training three local Rae-Edzo residents as trainee technicians. They basically took three residents with no computer background at all or very little, and over the past three months have brought them to a level of knowledge that they can easily repair and rebuild a computer and provide limited networking solutions. These three residents are very interested in continuing a career in computers and are looking at furthering their education to achieve this. As you can see, Mr. Speaker, Rae-Edzo is finally into the 20th century and with a little cooperation between these two

organizations residents have more opportunity than ever before to expand their horizons. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Morin.

Member's Statement 99-13(7): Triplets Born to Fort Resolution Family

MR. MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today on a Member's statement on a happy occasion for a couple from Fort Resolution, Tendah King and Rocky Lafferty. On April 12, 1999, at 1 p.m., they had triplets born to them from Fort Resolution. That is the first set of triplets in the 210-year existence of Fort Resolution, the oldest community in the Northwest Territories. They were three girls, Tanis, Tori and Tamara and they have all made it back to Fort Resolution safe and sound.

The community was happy for them to return home. Once again Fort Resolution showed to the rest of the Northwest Territories that they could pull together and help each other. They formed a big baby shower in the community hall, I understand this weekend, to help the couple out. As well, they are accepting donations of clothing and other things to help this young couple out. I just wish them the best of luck and a good sawing season for Rocky at the sawmill this summer. He needs the money to support these kids. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement 100-13(7): Nahendeh Constituency Visit

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, (Translation) I would like to say something in my own language. Last week we had a little bit of time, so we spent three days in Fort Simpson. There are a lot of communities that I am MLA for. There are six communities that I represent in the Deh Cho region. I do not get an opportunity to travel back to the Deh Cho region a lot,

so the three days that I spent there I appreciated. I spent two nights in Fort Liard and whoever wanted to meet with me, I had a chance to meet with them. If I have an opportunity in the future I will go back there and meet with more people.

In Fort Simpson we had a constituency meeting. There were a lot of people that attended that meeting. I explained what this new government is all about. There were a lot of questions and a lot of people went to these meetings. I had a chance to explain a little bit of our new government, so it was a worthwhile meeting.

There was also a leadership meeting a while ago I had a chance to attend, I was invited by the chiefs to that meeting, so I attended it for a while. There were a few things of concern that they raised and I was thankful I attended that meeting. Over the last three days I spent in the Deh Cho region I went to see three communities, so I still have three more communities to visit. The next time I go back there I will visit the remaining three communities. Thank you.
(Translation ends)

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement 101-13(7): Ratification of Con Mine Contract Offer

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to speak on a happy occasion for quite a few people. I am speaking particularly about the ratification of the offer at Con Mine. I would like to congratulate the workers on ratifying their contract offer. They have gone through a very difficult time in their lives. It was the longest strike at Con Mine in the history of the mine. Mr. Speaker, the members will be meeting with the company officials tomorrow to find out when they will be going back to work. I am sure the 150 workers there are happy that they will actually be going back to work, and I am sure that the Members here also join me in offering them congratulations. Hopefully they will be back on the job very quickly. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Member's statements. Again, just to remind the Members about the rules regarding Members' statements. Most Members are within that two and a half minutes, but for those who go over two and a half minutes and require unanimous consent, the request for unanimous consent is to conclude this statement and is not there to carry on. I notice sometimes that Members go beyond another two and a half minutes, so it is like having two Members' statements in one day. Just to remind the Members that the purpose of unanimous consent is to conclude your statement, not to carry on. Members' statements. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 5: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

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Return To Oral Question 51-13(7): Business Input into Protected Area Strategy

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is in response to a question asked by Mr. Henry on March 29th in regard to input of the business community into the development of the Protected Area Strategy. It is anticipated that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development will approve the strategy by June, 1999. Once approval is received, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development will be printing copies of the strategy for public distribution. The department will also prepare an executive summary brochure for distribution throughout the Northwest Territories.

In response to another oral question asked by Mr. Ootes on March 24th, 1999, to the Minister of Justice regarding the administration of firearms program.

Return to Oral Question 35-13(7): Administration of Firearms Program

On March 24, 1999, you asked several questions with respect to the administration of the Firearms Program in the Northwest Territories. The Government of the Northwest Territories is currently not involved in the administration of the Firearms Program. Consistent with our objections to the new legislation, the GNWT, like the Governments of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba, decided not to participate in the implementation or administration of Bill C-68, which is the federal legislation introducing the new Firearms Program. The Firearms Program was transferred to

the federal government between July and September of 1998. Since the transfer, there have been no costs incurred and therefore no charges back to the federal government in this regard.

Within the federal government, Justice Canada is responsible for the administration of the Firearms Act. In order to administer the act, they entered into an agreement with the RCMP to deliver the program. The Office of the Chief Territorial Firearms Officer is operated by the RCMP under this agreement but does not employ RCMP officers. Accordingly, there are no costs incurred by the GNWT in the administration of the Firearms Act and therefore no charges back to the federal government.

At the local level the RCMP had intended to use a variety of arrangements to ensure that local firearms officers were available in each community. For example, they had hoped to be able to enter into an agreement with municipal governments to have by-law officers also appointed as local firearms officers. Where these arrangements are not yet in place, services are apparently provided directly by the Office of the Chief Firearms Officer. The Office of the Federal Chief Territorial Firearms Officer would be able to provide information on who has been appointed as local firearms officers in each community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 6: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a constituent of mine from Enterprise, soon to be your constituent I am sure, Winnie Cadieux, the vice-chair of the Enterprise Settlement Council.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me an honour to present the mayor of Aklavik, Mr. Charlie Furlong, and also the newly elected chief from

Aklavik, Mr. Charlie Furlong. Welcome to the Legislature.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 71-13(7): Continued Operations of Giant Mine

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address my question to the honourable Mr. Kakfwi, in relationship to my statement earlier today on the Giant Mine situation where I referenced the fact that I have tried to get a group of people together. A number of business people are interested, as well as the executive of CAW of Giant Mine in looking at the possibility of a consortium that would, down the road, be able to take over the operation of Giant Mine. This naturally would be of benefit to all, especially here in the north, if it is northern controlled, northern business people, northern employees. I wonder if the Minister could tell us, in relationship to that, what his discussions have been with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in regard to the continued operation of Giant Mine.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 71-13(7): Continued Operations of Giant Mine

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had a meeting with DIAND Minister, Jane Stewart, last Monday afternoon in Ottawa. We both agreed that neither government is interested in taking over ownership or in operating the mine but that we are interested in helping whatever way we can to ensure that every possible opportunity is given to the private sector to continue to, for instance, to take ownership of the mine and/or to manage and operate that mine and that both governments will do what we can to make sure that is provided for. That is the agreement we had.

We have also said that the public should be assured that there is no immediate danger in regard to the arsenic that is stored underground. The federal government is committed to do what it can to ensure that and that, at some time or other, we will provide perhaps greater clarity on exactly what, if anything, will be done to address that particular problem. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary. Mr. Ootes.

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Supplementary To Question 71-13(7): Continued Operations of Giant Mine

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs has certainly expressed its interest in handling the mine on a maintenance basis but not on a reclamation basis. They certainly are not committing any funds to that which is contrary to what information I had received at an earlier time. Naturally, any group taking over this particular mine would be very concerned about that end. Could the Minister tell us exactly what this government's stand is and what the federal government's stand is with regard to the environmental problem. Will they accept the responsibility for that?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 71-13(7): Continued Operations of Giant Mine

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my understanding that if there is no one left in the room claiming responsibility for that particular mine the federal government may be in a position where we would have to address that question. At this time, because there are court proceedings underway and there are still some possibilities that there may be some way for the federal government to ensure that the private sector, in one form or another, could help address the environmental liability that is currently with the Giant Mine properties, they will not make any categorical statement in assuming liability for that situation. They are prepared to work with the private sector and in the

course of discussions with the private sector, maybe in the course of negotiations about potential buyers of this property. The federal government may be in a position to address the liability question in a situation like that. So they are, in short, trying to keep close counsel. They are not prepared to say categorically that the \$250 million liability created by the arsenic storage is clearly and categorically a federal responsibility at this time. But they see it as their responsibility to do what they can, working with the private sector if possible, to make sure that is addressed in one form or another. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

I would like to remind the Members about issues that are in front of the courts and that what you ask or the kind of questions could lead to influencing the courts. I was not aware that the issue of Royal Oak is still in the courts. If it is, then Members are not allowed to ask any questions regarding Royal Oak until such a time as the courts have concluded their decision. Just so that I am clear, Mr. Kakfwi, is there still a court proceeding regarding Royal Oak?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, there was a court decision on Friday that said that the properties will be put in receivership, so the courts have appointed a receiver to take care of the business of Royal Oak and what to do with the assets of Royal Oak. In that sense, it is no longer in the courts. For anything to change, a receiver would have to go back to the courts to...

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 71-13(7): Continued Operations of Giant Mine

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, thank you for your direction on that. It is in the interest of our government because of our Power Corporation, because of the many number of employees that are involved for us to do what we can. It is an investment, in my opinion, to ensure that this particular operation keeps going with the number of people, families, and indirect employment that are involved which could number 500 employees by the time we deal with the suppliers and services. My question for the Minister is, could he ensure that he dedicates some resources within his department to provide cooperation, certainly moral

support, but possibly some financial resources, if feasible, to assist this potential consortium that I have been trying to help get off the ground? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 71-13(7): Continued Operations of Giant Mine

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, we are, as a government, interested in making sure that if the mine does shut down, that the arsenic stored underground is addressed clearly and emphatically by the federal government if no one else would assume responsibility. We have said that, if possible, we would like to keep the mine operating and we will do what we can to help the private sector find a way, if it is possible, to keep it operating which may mean to politically lobby the federal government as early as possible to assume some or all of the liability for the environmental costs. We have also said that if it needs to be shut down, if the mine is no longer viable, then it should be shut down gradually to minimize the impact it would have on the economy of the city of Yellowknife, on agencies like the Power Corporation and the fiscal situation of the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 71-13(7): Continued Operations of Giant Mine

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it was good the Minister clarified that we do not have an environmental responsibility in this situation and that it is the responsibility of the owners of the asset or the federal government. I appreciate that clarification, but my question, Mr. Speaker, was to see if the Minister would commit his department's attention to this matter, because in my figuring the equation of a shutdown is not there. I want to see that mine keep going. As a government, we need to, as a government, be very concerned about that and I am wondering if the Minister would address the question of providing both very strong moral support and possibly some financial or other resources to work with a potential consortium that I have identified? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi, two questions.

Further Return To Question 71-13(7): Continued Operations of Giant Mine

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of the Northwest Territories may potentially end up with the liability for cleaning up the surface lands on which the

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mine is situated. The liability would be in the neighbourhood of \$8 million to \$10 million, which we would be quite prepared to assume if we do not get any financial assistance from the private sector to address and there is no financial assistance coming forth from Royal Oak or any of the other parties involved in this.

We are prepared to discuss with the representatives of the consortium, if there is such a consortium, that the Member has mentioned to discuss the merits of a proposal that they may be developing and it would be premature to suggest that the financial assistance would be provided. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 72-13(7): Cost of the Minister's Forum on Education

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are in follow-up to questions I asked in the House last week and also issues that I raised in my Member's statement today. First of all, I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment if he has a total cost to date on the ministerial forum that just recently concluded? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return To Question 72-13(7): Cost of the Minister's Forum on Education

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The anticipated final cost of the ministerial forum, more specifically the strategic planning process which will result in a new strategic plan, is approximately \$350,000.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 72-13(7): Cost of the Minister's Forum on Education

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, repeatedly the Minister has suggested that 31 of the recommendations are non-monetary recommendations, that they will not require any money. I have had a chance to look over the recommendations contained in the report, 44 recommendations. If I could, I mean they include words like; a major research project, additional special needs, resources for training teachers, pupil/teacher ratio which should be on par for their jurisdictions. When I read through these, more resources, career counselling, broadening of educational experience, vocational programs, I read all of these and I am sorry, but I fail to see how any of these things could be conducted without additional resources, so I am wondering if the Minister could please again, maybe, even if he has a copy of the report in front of him specifically tell us where he thinks there could be a shuffling of resources when there is such a shortage that could address some of these major initiatives indicated in the report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 72-13(7): Cost of the Minister's Forum on Education

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very clearly there are some big ticket items in the ministerial forum when you speak, for example, of the pupil/teacher ratio. The Minister of Finance articulated today how we are attempting to reallocate funds from last year where there were savings, so we were able to, for instance, maintain the pupil/teacher ratio so there was no increase, that we were able to top off and maintain the Healthy Children's Initiative, we were also going to find some money for youth employment and adult

education. This is a function of some of the savings that were realized due to social and income support being less than anticipated, as well as the amount of the student financial assistance being drawn on that we had anticipated. So, we re-profiled and recirculated those particular funds.

In regard to the ministerial forum, I have the departmental staff working on pulling out their recommendations one by one. I have a breakfast meeting set up tomorrow morning at 6:45 a.m. to meet with the staff, as well as the support staff for the ministerial forum to see how we can best move ahead with getting specific implementation advice in regard to the forum recommendations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 72-13(7): Cost of the Minister's Forum on Education

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I want to say that I appreciate what the Minister is saying and we do not expect him to wave a magic wand and all these problems and concerns to be alleviated, but the minister's forum went out at a cost of \$350,000, has compiled this list of recommendations. As I said earlier, I do not think there is any real surprise in there.

I was curious about the Minister's comments last week when he said, you have told us what to do, now how can we do that? Is the intent of that comment that now the people who have identified the problems are going to be expected to identify the solutions as well? I do not think they have the broader context that we have here in the Legislature in terms of the budget and the variety and sizes of communities and different problems. I just wonder if you could explain that for me, you have told us what to do, now how do we do that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 72-13(7): Cost of the Minister's Forum on Education

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if I can attempt to clarify that I will be happy to. The Member indicated in her Member's statement that this is a challenge to us all. What my intent was in those comments was to, in fact, build on what the public has told us which was articulated by the members of the ministerial forum, which is why I indicated the plan was to consult again with the ministerial forum members themselves, as well as the DEAs and DEC's to

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look at specific ways we could try to address some of the recommendations made in the ministerial forum.

Very clearly we are not going to go back and do a public process again, but now we are going to call upon the people who are in the business in the various regions and communities as well as the broad experience brought to the table by the ministerial forum members to try to look at ways of how we can respond to the recommendations. They gave us the what, now in my opinion it is a need to build on and develop the how to do it. We are going to be looking at the experts in the field and try to reflect community and regional concerns, as well as the broad experience brought to the table by the ministerial forum members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 72-13(7): Cost of the Minister's Forum on Education

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I also indicated last week, I am very concerned that we may have elevated the expectations of people by conducting this forum and that now teachers, educators, parents are waiting to hear what we are going to do about these problems. I am going to ask the Minister to respond to how we might convey or communicate some hope to the educators who are out there existing without things like textbooks, classroom assistants, just basic supplies to do their jobs. We hear there is always no money, but how are we going to communicate hope to them, we cannot afford any more turnover I do not believe with our shortage of teachers in the north. What communication strategy or what are we going to say

that is not just going to completely discourage the people who are out there working the communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 72-13(7): Cost of the Minister's Forum on Education

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance has articulated the situational circumstances regarding the budget. This House and the Members opposite have been working with the departments now for many months trying to come up with a budget that will help us live within our means but address some of the issues. We have taken the direction we can from the committees in that regard. The DEC's within the regions, my understanding is, all have somewhat of a surplus, so I cannot speak specifically to the Member's statement that there are no textbooks in the communities, but I would be very happy to look at that item if the Member wanted to give me greater information on that particular issue.

We are also in the process of entering into negotiations with the NWTTA in regard to the salaries and benefits of teachers, which will address an issue that has been raised in terms of possible pay increases. The Minister of Finance very clearly said that we have two choices and I, like the Minister of Finance, am optimistic that if we take the positive road in terms of identifying revenues, working together with the aboriginal governments to, in fact, get more revenues that we can address some of these issues in the longer term. In the immediate term, we are going to be restricted to the options that have already been outlined and we have been discussing in this House in the last few days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 73-13(7): Health and Social Services Inquiry

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to my Member's statement, I made reference to the call for a public inquiry about the quality of health care in the Northwest Territories, especially from the residents in

the Mackenzie Delta in regard to the petitions tabled in this House. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister a question I asked of the previous Minister of Health and Social Services about establishing terms of reference, the question of membership for the Ministerial Forum on Health and Social Services. He mentioned that there will be, possibly will be ready by mid-April or late April, can the Minister tell the House what progress his department has made to meet this goal?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 73-13(7): Health and Social Services Inquiry

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department has been working quite hard on this issue to try and come up with a set of terms of reference and I hope to have those terms of reference before this session is done and, if that is possible to do at that point, I would be sharing it with the Members of this Assembly. I am hoping that before we are done and recessed from this session that I would have a set of terms of reference. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 73-13(7): Health and Social Services Inquiry

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe it is very important for them, especially for the smaller communities and the regions to have an opportunity to make presentations to the ministerial forum. I would like to ask the Minister, how does he envision this happening to ensure that the smaller communities will be able to have an opportunity to raise their concerns and make an attempt to go to all communities?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 73-13(7): Health and Social Services Inquiry

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member stated, it is a very important initiative for us in the Western Territory now to review our progress as we deliver programs and services on behalf of the residents of the territory and the terms of reference will include going to each, as I see it, constituency to receive input on the delivery of Health and social

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services. Hopefully the terms of reference will also include a number of other initiatives that the department has been looking at to try and go out with a focused document to get some constructive feedback as to how we are delivering services in the west. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 73-13(7): Health and Social Services Inquiry

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that any forum that is established in this government should reflect the Western Territory and constituents that we represent. I would like to ask the Minister, what is going to be done to ensure that we have representation from the different ridings and regions on such a committee so that we do get a feel for the regions and the different aboriginal communities up and down the ballot?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 73-13(7): Health and Social Services Inquiry

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the things we are looking at doing is definitely trying to get representation from across the Northwest Territories, north to south, east to west. One of the concerns that we do have is the size of the forum. The larger the size of the forum, the more dollars we will have to pay out for travel and so on. We are wrestling with that right now within the department as to the size of the forum that would go out and trying to balance the

interest of the forum, whether there be professional people on there, as well as lay people, and getting regional representation in there as well. We are wrestling with that right now and trying to make sure we address those concerns. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 73-13(7): Health and Social Services Inquiry

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me exactly how many days does he expect this forum to carry out this public consultation to communities and also, when does the Minister intend to table a final report in this House? Are we talking days, months, years? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Roland. Two questions.

Further Return To Question 73-13(7): Health and Social Services Inquiry

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot give the Member an absolute date as to when we see this forum completing its work. What we are hoping to do with this minister's forum is to go forth and receive input from the residents of the territories and produce a document that would enable the future Assembly, the 14th Assembly of this territory, to look at what would need to be done to try and change or move forward with some initiatives that would improve the delivery of the health care system as we know it now. I am hoping that we can start this off in the very near future. Once we have the terms of reference and we let all the boards and the Members know where that is going, we would be able to move forward shortly after that into an actual forum travelling throughout the territory, at least one community in each constituency, to receive input. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 74-13(7): Meeting the Needs of Educators

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the honourable Mr. Miltenberger, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, I am quite astounded at the amount of money that this forum cost, \$350,000. Like all consultations, we go out there and do these consultations, but we cannot seem to deliver any results because we do not have any money. The whole question becomes why are we doing consultations when we know ahead of time some of the problems?

My specific concern related to the report lies in the areas of our educators. At the moment, teachers' spirits are not that great. They are not receiving the benefits and the wages of a few years ago and it is harder for them to do the job because class sizes have increased and program delivery seems to be enlarging. It is very discouraging. My question for the Minister is, in his report he states that resources should be directed towards training teachers, program support teachers and special needs assistants, to better prepare them to meet the needs of all students. We do not have any money, Mr. Speaker. How are we going to meet that need of the teachers? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 74-13(7): Meeting the Needs of Educators

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At first, I would like to point out that I think that this review and minister's forum was a good investment. It is probably dollar for dollar, in my opinion, the best strategic plan investment made by the 13th Assembly. Over 1,000 people were consulted and at least 15 communities visited. I think it is always worthwhile to go out for something of this magnitude and importance to get direct, first-hand feedback from the people that are living in the communities that are using the services that we provide as a government.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 74-13(7): Meeting the Needs of Educators

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make reference to the Minister's statement that yes, it is good to have strategic plans, but there has also been criticism by the fact that we are not devoting any dollars to solving some of these major problems. The Minister stated himself 31 of 42 are non-monetary, but I think if we were to digest these, I think the figure would probably go down substantially from what I can see. I cannot see any in here that are non-monetary, not that number certainly. My question for the Minister is with regard, again, back to the report. It is very clear from our discussions, this is from the report, with communities that the pupil/teacher ratio should be decreased overall and classroom sizes maintained at manageable levels. How can the Minister respond to that when there is no effort to try and reduce the pupil/teacher ratio? Can the Minister tell us if he will continue to pursue the pupil/teacher ratio on an aggressive fashion? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Again, what reference to the minister's forum? The document has not been tabled in the House, so making reference to something that is not in the hands of the Members will be ruled out of order. However, the Minister did make a statement on that report being tabled. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know that there is a problem with pupil/teacher ratios in the territories. I wonder if the Minister could tell us if he will address this issue to ensure that the pupil/teacher ratio is reduced? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 74-13(7): Meeting the Needs of Educators

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Finance pointed out in his statement, in fact money has been put in, reinvested, in fact maintained to ensure that the pupil/teacher ratio did not increase. The lowering that the Member has

asked about is better than an increase since it is already the highest in Canada. I share the Member's concern about the pupil/teacher ratio and as we move towards realizing more revenues I will be making every effort to ensure that we get the funds we need to lower the pupil/teacher ratio and start to address some of the broader education needs. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 74-13(7): Meeting the Needs of Educators

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a well known fact that some district education authorities are fundraising on their own. This seems to be a situation in a number of areas and I am wondering if the Minister can tell us if he will look at what kind of revenues these education authorities may be raising? Certainly, if that is the method they are turning to, we do have a critical problem. For example, I understand that in Inuvik they have a full time fundraiser allocated. If education authorities are turning to raising their own funds, we definitely have a critical problem. Can the Minister advise us if other areas are doing this same thing? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 74-13(7): Meeting the Needs of Educators

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not think there is necessarily anything wrong with fundraising. I also know that most DEC's, in fact all DEC's are running a surplus of one magnitude or another, anywhere from about five percent up to ten or so. I think fundraising is going to be part of the culture here. I do not think it should be used to try to fund core programs or to offset wages or whatever, but I think it is a way of life. The community I live in for sure, everybody fundraises for one thing or another and schools, in Fort Smith for instance, the French Club fundraised to go to Quebec. They got some assistance, but they raised a lot through their own hard work. I think that promotes a lot of positive attributes in young people and it makes the community work together as well. I will commit to ensure that fundraising is not used to

replace core funding, but I do not think we should dismiss it out of hand as a sign of a system that is in terrible distress. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 75-13(7): Implementing Education Efficiencies

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are also for the Minister of Education Culture and Employment. The other day, I happened to hear the Minister indicating that there was not any new money to be put into implementing the recommendations from the report that my two colleagues have been questioning him about from the minister's forum and that he indicated that he felt that there were areas where we could be more efficient in implementing our current programs and services. I was wondering if the Minister has had an opportunity to identify any areas to become more efficient so far? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 75-13(7): Implementing Education Efficiencies

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated earlier, the departmental staff has been working since last week on pulling out the recommendations looking for possible efficiencies. I am not in the position at this point to give the Member any specific examples of where I think money could be saved or reallocated, barring of course another very mild winter for continued lower use of income support or student financial assistance, which is where we were able to move money from last year. At this point, I am still looking and I intend to report back. I have written to the committee about the possibility of, at their convenience, meeting to discuss the issues to get feedback.

I would also like to point out that we have just spent months on

this budget process and I would appreciate all the help I could get from my colleagues on the Social Programs Committee in terms of trying to identify any movement we can find in terms of being able to reallocate budget resources. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 75-13(7): Implementing Education Efficiencies

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am assuming that in the course of looking for inefficiencies, if there are any, that perhaps the Minister and his staff would also find areas where we have inefficient staff. Otherwise, there would not be inefficient use of money. What would the Minister propose to do with those types of situations with inefficient staff as well as inefficient situations? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 75-13(7): Implementing Education Efficiencies

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is somewhat of a hypothetical situation anticipating what may or may not be found out of the efforts to look at organizational efficiency. Like any corporation, this government has processes in place to deal with what the Member called inefficient staff. Should that situation arise or that type of situation be identified, we will look at each case very carefully on an individual basis. At this point, I do not think it would be appropriate to comment any further. It is a hypothetical situation anticipating something that may or may not be proven out. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 75-13(7): Implementing Education Efficiencies

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister indicate how he will be responding to the House? The way he is going to move into some type of a report that we can debate in the Committee of the Whole, or how will he be doing this?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 75-13(7): Implementing Education Efficiencies

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my intention to move with all speed to implement the process that I have laid out over the last couple of days in terms of consulting with the four Members and the DEAs and DECAs, pulling the work to the table that the departmental staff have been labouring at over the last couple of days in coming up with specifics on the nonmonetary issues we have gone over; and I would be more than happy to share with this House and the committees in addition to the outcome of the strategic plan, which will deal with the longer term issues and direction of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 76-13(7): Economic Viability of Small Communities

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier regarding the social and economic viability of the smaller communities, especially where we have high unemployment, high number of people on social assistance, income support. I would like to ask the Minister exactly what this government is doing to encourage his departments to try and assist those communities by whatever economic opportunity comes along such as government contracts, either sole source, negotiated, or basically publicly tendered to ensure that the maximum benefit of public funds being spent on these projects are used to its maximum in our smaller communities? I do not say this lightly because I feel there are a lot of young people out there who want that opportunity to work, but do not feel comfortable when they see people from outlying communities or the larger centres

coming into the ridings like the Mackenzie Delta, the one I represent.

I would like to ask the Premier, what is he doing to encourage his cabinet colleagues and other deputy ministers to ensure that they get the maximum benefit to our smaller communities to generate jobs and also help stimulate the smaller community economies?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 76-13(7): Economic Viability of Small Communities

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the record of this government shows that there are contracts that are going into the smaller communities in terms of sole sourcing, in terms of negotiated contracts. In some instances, there are public tendering processes that are in place. However, the intention here is that, through the history, if you go back as far as the history of this government and over the last few years, quite a majority of the contracts, the work that this government has, goes into the communities, and we try to make some arrangements with the communities to make sure that as much money stays in the small communities as we can.

There are situations today particularly, Mr. Speaker, with regard to, in your riding, there are arrangements through land claims agreements, are there. We are talking specifically of the economic measures and the Gwich'in Land Claim Settlement that is there. However, the interpretation of it still has to be worked out between this government, the federal government, the Gwich'in, and the chiefs. Once we have that interpretation that all parties understand, then it will be clear on how to deal with these issues at that time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary. Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 76-13(7): Economic Viability of Small Communities

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hope this is not a holdback to any opportunities that come from my riding. There are other groups within my

constituency besides land claims organizations. There are individual contractors, band development corporations which follow through from the

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Indian Act, it does not have anything to do with land claim agreements.

Mr. Speaker, it is awfully hard to tell someone who has been in a family business for some 40 or 50 years in which they are having problems just to make payroll or keep their businesses in operation. Simple projects such as labour contracts, slashing willows along the road or basically even a contract to paint a ferry. It seems like these contracts, for common sense purposes, should automatically be given to those people who do not have the skills as operators on trucks or cat operators, but who have common bush skills and are able to deal with the bush environment and work in that environment, yet it seems like even those contracts are being taken away from our small communities. Again, can the Minister tell me, is that the reason why a lot of these contracts are being held up in our communities is because of this uncertainty on land claim agreements?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 76-13(7): Economic Viability of Small Communities

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is no holdback to these communities. It certainly will help to clear up the interpretation of Chapter 10, economic measures in the Gwich'in Land Claims Agreement, particularly as it encompasses the communities that the honourable member represents. It certainly would help to go a long way in how this government and the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the people they represent, on how this economic measures chapter would be interpreted. It will go a long way to clarifying this uncertainty here, but there are different interpretations from different people in the different communities saying that this chapter means this or means that. On the government side, we are trying to accommodate as best we can with the type of policies we have once the contracts come out. I think we have accommodated the best we can, under the circumstances.

As the honourable Member asked, what I am doing as Premier to work with the Members of the Cabinet in dealing with this issue, this is a new Cabinet, these are new Members on Cabinet who are responsible in certain areas in dealing with contracts. This issue has come up, and we are aware that there are concerns that are coming from different sectors of the communities and we are aware that the interpretation of Chapter 10 should be done as soon as we can. We are willing to move on it as fast as we can so that we all know what it means. However, in the meantime, we will continue to work with the honourable Member and different Members of the community to try to look at the different cases as they come. We will see how we could move forward from here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 76-13(7): Economic Viability of Small Communities

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it is great that we are trying to work these things out with Chapter 10, but the problems extend further than Chapter 10. It is the local band members in the communities and the band corporations which are established under the Indian Act that are having the problem of getting these contracts. I believe, right now, the relationship between this government, the Department of Transportation, and the chief and the band council is probably at its all-time low where there is not much trust or faith being put into this government, when they try to take away economic opportunities, what little there is, for band corporations to get involved with. I would like to ask the Minister what is he doing to improve the relationship between the communities, band corporations and band councils in regard to contracts with this government?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 76-13(7): Economic Viability of Small Communities

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, we are aware of the situations that have come forward. It certainly would be good once we have an approach on behalf of the chief and band council on

how they could work together with us. On the other hand, there are different strategies that this government is attempting to do. Like I said, we are a new Cabinet and this is a new Northwest Territories. The Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has the task of working on an economic strategy. The purpose of the economic strategy is to look at what we have here in the Western Territory here in terms of different sectors, on the oil and gas, forestry, tourism, infrastructure we have on the highways, the kind of human resources we have. We look at the whole thing that we have so we know how to approach each one of them. So, perhaps this might be one of the areas in which we could take a comprehensive look. I do not think this situation is unique to the honourable Member's particular riding. There are other constituents in the Western Territory that have a similar type of a problem, that they are overall a tribal corporation and then there are band councils with their own community corporations, and there are individuals within each communities that would want to get into their own private business, and they may, in time, be competing with the band or even the tribal corporations. These things have to be worked out.

Again, I think it is very important to stress that there are different chapters within land claims that have been negotiated on behalf of the whole tribal council. My understanding is that for every member in the whole tribe, these land claims are negotiated and there are chapters that we have agreed on, but the problem there is that the interpretation of these different chapters have not been done. We are willing to move with it, as a government, for some months now and the ball is not in our court. We are waiting so we can move along and try to have a clearer understanding of what it means in terms of economic measures in the land claims agreements for, let us say, the Gwich'in area. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary. Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 76-13(7): Economic Viability of Small Communities

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that it sounds a little complicated just in regard to what is being

said here. I would like to ask the Premier if he could possibly do an internal review of the department in the Inuvik or Yellowknife offices to see why we are having so many problems in this area in regard to working with these communities and small companies in our communities when it comes to contracting and ensuring the economic viability of our communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 76-13(7): Economic Viability of Small Communities

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will work with the respective Ministers to take into account what the honourable Member is saying and we will see if there are any complications or problems in the way the department is conducting its affairs. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 77-13(7): Fundraising by Education Authorities

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. The issue of fundraising that we just alluded to and the Minister thought that this was a good thing. Mr. Speaker, I have a very large concern with this. Fundraising for a school trip for something is one thing when it is an extracurricular activity, but when we have to do fundraising in communities to raise money for basics and essentials of a guaranteed education. I will tell you fundraising does exist, it is called taxes. Then it goes into the public purse and then we are responsible for distributing that.

Fundraising and volunteerism, to begin to rely on them as an integral part of your education system is very dangerous and this is why. It is because it does not then guarantee fair and equal access to quality education for all northern students. I can assure you in communities like Hay River and Yellowknife, your pool to access fundraising and volunteers from is much larger than in smaller communities. What is the message this government would be saying if we allow fundraising and volunteers to perform a core part of

the delivery of education services in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 77-13(7): Fundraising by Education Authorities

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have the information that the Member is talking about in terms of the communities and the amount of money that they are raising for core issues. I can say that the formula that the department uses to allocate money to DECs, DEAs and schools has no room in it for fundraising. It is a fairly complicated formula based on population, per capita and courses that are offered and very clearly it is based on those kinds of needs. The fundraising issue, if the Member has more specific information I would be very happy to look at that and see if, in fact, there are critical problems to the extent that DEAs or DECs have to resort to fundraising to meet core needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 77-13(7): Fundraising by Education Authorities

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that we need to ensure that there is a standardized and universal access to quality education for northern students, and I believe to start trying to supplement that obligation we have with funds that are raised on a voluntary basis or resources raised on a voluntary basis is very slippery and slow. I would be very hesitant to see this government fall prey to that. I believe that one of the recommendations in the report even suggests that the department should be assisting in helping people arrange for fundraising. I would like the Minister's comments on that. This will be my last question because there are other Members that would like to raise specific issues relative to their communities about fundraising. I just hope that the Minister would agree with me that this would be a very precarious position for the government to take. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 77-13(7): Fundraising by Education Authorities

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and this government, in fact, agree wholeheartedly that the right to standardized access and standard of quality of education is fundamental and is something we strive to achieve. The issue of fundraising has been raised by the Members opposite in the context, as they have portrayed it, as being a key part to supplement core funding, is not something that I have been aware of and is of a major issue that yes, if that is in fact the point or do we reach that point where people have to fundraise or communities have to fundraise to keep the schools running as opposed to fund raising for extracurricular activities or special needs that they have identified then yes, I think it would not be in the best interest of the territorial government or the people of the Northwest Territories. The expectation was that they would have to resort to finding extra money in that particular way. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 78-13(7): Trade Mission to Nunavut

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier, and it relates to my Member's statement today. I believe it is fairly obvious from media reports that other Canadian jurisdictions are aggressively pursuing business opportunities in Nunavut. Can the Premier tell me whether his government is considering a trade mission to Nunavut? I would point to trade missions that his predecessor took to the Middle East where there was successful fundraising created for the Aurora Fund. Again, Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is, is he considering any trade missions from the business community of the Northwest Territories to introduce

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himself to the government and the business community of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 78-13(7): Trade Mission to Nunavut

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have only just been separated for 19 days, and it sounds like the honourable Member already misses Nunavut. Division just happened very recently and, as we know, we are still providing programs and services to Nunavut, so there is still a very close working relationship with the Government of Nunavut. We will be providing the programs and services, as a government, for some time into the future. However, the honourable Member in his Member's statement made reference to the fact that there are architectural firms in this community that were not invited to participate in the public tendering process, I understand in the Member's statement. I think the Member made reference to it. If that is the case, then certainly I think it is a good idea to meet with the Government of Nunavut.

There has already been some discussion with myself and the Cabinet mentioning the fact that we should have some arrangement like a memorandum of understanding of some sort with the Nunavut government. We have that sort of arrangement with other jurisdictions. The Yukon government, for example, the Alberta Government, for example, I think with the Government of Manitoba there was an MOU prior to division. There is a working relationship between different jurisdictions already. This is one possibility of some sort of arrangement rather than a trade mission that we could look at as well. However, I would not mind approaching it by discussion between the Premier of Nunavut as well as the Premier of the Yukon, and see what possibilities there are in terms of a closer working relationship or a continuation of a working relationship between the different companies that are in the Northwest Territories and working in Nunavut. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question period is over. I will allow the Member, if he wishes, to conclude his question. Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 78-13(7): Trade Mission to Nunavut

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not particularly miss Nunavut, but I can assure the Premier that the business community, not only now, but certainly for the past couple of years, has been missing the business opportunities that could be created. I am very serious when I say that I think it is imperative that the Premier take this seriously. There are a lot of businesses that could benefit from the work that is going on in Nunavut and, therefore, the people of the Northwest Territories will benefit from that economic activity. My question to the Premier is, has he planned any other trade missions or is it just a status quo when we sit and wait for people to come in or are there plans for trips to other jurisdictions to promote northern business? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 78-13(7): Trade Mission to Nunavut

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I take the concern very seriously. In terms of working with other jurisdictions, we took initiatives to, all the time, whenever we travel down south, make the emphasis that we are open for business in the Northwest Territories and that we have firms that are capable of participating in business in Alberta. As well, we signed an MOU with the Government of Yukon recently to develop a closer working relationship. It is aimed at trying to see how we could work closer together. There are opportunities for businesses from the Northwest Territories participating in other jurisdictions. Certainly, this hopefully will lead to it.

In my comment about talking with the Premier of Nunavut on having a meeting in the future, some of the topics raised would be to see how we could work closely together in Nunavut and maybe continue with the kind of relationship that we have in terms of the business opportunities that are there. This could be a subject of discussion when we are going to be meeting with the Premier of Nunavut.

No, it is not going to be a status quo. We will not be sitting around waiting for people coming to us to see whether we could participate. I think we should take the initiative and say yes, we want to continue to work in Nunavut and that the businesses that are here have the expertise of working in the north. We should try to promote that. That is the intention for us to look

at. The division has happened very recently. We are still getting familiar with how things are working. I think we have to continue in that working relationship. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Question period is over. Again, another reminder to the Members regarding question period. I have noticed, on several occasions today, that Members are using their final supplementary to ask two questions. That is against the rules. In that case, the question could be disallowed or else we will ask the Minister to answer only one question. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, replies to budget address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of standing and special committees. Item 14, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 15, tabling of documents. Mr. Miltenberger.

ITEM 15: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 29-13(7): Minister's Forum on Education Final Report, March, 1999

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled The Minister's Forum on Education, Final Report, March 1999. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Tabled documents. Item 16, notices of motion. Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 16: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 18-13(7): Support for Ms. Roberta Vaneltsi

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice on Wednesday, April 21, 1999, I will move the following motion.

Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member

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from Hay River, that the Legislative Assembly supports the efforts of Ms. Roberta Vaneltsi to secure meaningful visits and contacts with her children, Roman and Petra Cerny, including visits to their home in the Northwest Territories.

And further, that the Premier and Executive Council are strongly encouraged to request the federal government to take all possible measures to assist Ms. Vaneltzi in being reunited with her children, including contacting the Government of the Czech Republic in expressing its strong concerns in respect to the fact that the children are being denied the opportunity to visit their mother in Canada and are being denied the right, as aboriginal children, to be exposed in a meaningful fashion to their aboriginal history and culture. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Notices of motion. Item 17, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 18, motions. Item 19, first reading of bills. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 19: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 17: Appropriation Act, 1999-2000

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 17, Appropriation Act, 1999-2000, 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? Motion is carried. First reading of bills. Item 20, second reading of bills. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 20: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 17: Appropriation Act, 1999-2000

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 17, Appropriation Act, 1999-2000, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the Government of the Northwest Territories to make operations and maintenance expenditures and capital expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000. 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? Motion is carried. Bill 17

has had second reading and accordingly, the bill stands referred to the committee of the whole. Item 21, consideration in committee of whole of bills and other matters. Bill 17, Appropriation Act, 1999-2000, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

ITEM 21: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

I would like to call the committee to order. In the committee today we have Bill 17, Appropriation Act, 1999-2000. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Thank you. The motion is in order. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. I will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER:

Good evening. The House will come back to order. We are on item 22, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Krutko.

--Applause

ITEM 22: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 17, Appropriation Act, 1999-2000, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, seconded by Mr. Antoine. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 23, third reading of bills. Item 24, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 24: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of Caucus at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning and of the Standing Committee on Government Operations at 11:00 a.m.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, April 20, 1999:

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

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17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 18, Loan Authorization Act, 1999-2000
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 17, Appropriation Act, 1999-2000
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. This House stands adjourned to Tuesday, April 20, 1999 at 1:30 p.m.

--ADJOURNMENT