



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
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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, Mr. Roland. Good afternoon. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 5-13(8): Inuvik Gas Project Signals New Era for NWT Power Corporation

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, many Northerners remember the exciting days of the 1970s, and the oil and gas exploration boom in the Mackenzie Delta and Beaufort Sea. We witnessed the discovery of some of the largest reserves of hydrocarbon resources in the world.

Today, along with my colleague, the Honourable Floyd Roland, MLA for Inuvik, I take pleasure in saying that the NWT Power Corporation is one of the first commercial users of these resources. Tomorrow, the NWT Power Corporation will join with the Town of Inuvik and the Inuvialuit Petroleum Corporation and their partners, Alta Gas Services Incorporated, and Enbridge Incorporated, in ceremonies to mark the arrival of the first commercial gas deliveries from the Ikhil field. The ceremony will include the start up of two new natural gas driven generators.

Of special significance is the Power Corporation's role as the anchor customer for the system. The corporation's conversion from diesel fuel was the economic key to the project, and brings many benefits to Inuvik power customers.

Over the minimum 15 year life of the project, the new gas supply will replace some 70 barge loads of southern diesel fuel imports to Inuvik. This will save Inuvik power customers an estimated \$20 to \$25 million by, in part, decreasing the future need for infrastructure to generate electricity.

Greenhouse gas emissions will be cut by some 100,000 tonnes, or 32 percent by new gas driven engines that run cleaner, quieter and more efficiently than diesels. This improvement will help the Corporation, and the NWT, play our part in achieving Canada's commitment to reduce pollution as part of the 1996 Kyoto clean air accord.

As Inuvik Gas Limited develops the town's gas distribution system, businesses and homeowners will be also able to convert to the new energy source for heating and other uses.

This development holds great promise for similar projects in other NWT communities located near natural gas discoveries or pipelines.

Along with Mr. Roland, I invite this Assembly to join me in congratulating the Town of Inuvik, the Inuvialuit Petroleum Corporation and the NWT Power Corporation on their achievement and this exciting new era in northern energy development. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Ministers' statements. Mr. Miltenberger.

Minister's Statement 6-13(8): Sharing Best Ideas

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the summer, I tabled a response to the recommendations of the Forum on Education. One of the areas that were highlighted in the response was the need to share the best ideas of educators across the Northwest Territories. In individual classrooms, teachers or other school staff are using innovative and interesting approaches for teaching different subjects and concepts. These approaches might work for other students in other classrooms but there has not been a good way to share them.

Efforts are underway to find ways to share information between schools and teachers. One excellent example of collaboration and sharing of best practices is a binder of material entitled "Promising Practices,

Ideas That Work in Northern Secondary Classrooms" which has just been produced by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. This document contains the ideas, techniques and strategies that have worked for teachers in northern classrooms.

The binder includes a broad range of topics including general teaching and learning strategies; strategies specific to certain subjects; strategies for program and student support; administration; school spirit and school wide events; and encouraging school/community interaction.

There are more than 104 different ideas in this resource binder. For each strategy, there is information on what the benefits are to the student, what material are needed, detailed how to instructions and a section called "Keep in Mind" which gives practical tips for making the strategy work for students. Each strategy also identifies the teacher who submitted the strategy

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and at which school they were teaching.

The binder will be distributed to all schools in the NWT and will also be available electronically. the hope is that this is only the beginning and teachers will continue to contribute their most successful ideas, adding to this initial collection.

Mr. Speaker, this excellent practical support material can only exist with the contributions of those who are working with our students on a daily basis. We appreciate the efforts of the many teachers who contributed to this resource binder and will try to encourage all educators to expand the sharing of ideas and resources. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Steen.

Minister's Statement 7-13(8): NWT Highway Strategy

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation has been working, since May of 1998, to complete background planning work on four major road projects as part of a strategy for highway development in the NWT. Today I would

like to provide you with a status report on this important initiative.

The four projects included in the Highway Strategy are the Slave Geological Province Transportation Corridor, extension of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, a road from Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk and finally, acceleration of Highway 3 reconstruction from Rae to Yellowknife.

The funding allocated to this initiative has been used to undertake economic, environmental, financing and pre-engineering studies for each of the four road projects. The majority of these studies are now complete.

Extensive consultations with all stakeholders were a key element of each of the studies undertaken. These included stakeholder workshops in Yellowknife and other regional centres, public meetings and interviews in each affected community and, one on one interviews with key stakeholders. Stakeholder Advisory Committees were organized to assist the department in establishing the scope for the study areas and reviewing the results.

The Highway Strategy initiative has been successful both in establishing a comprehensive database of information on new road construction in the Northwest Territories, and by involving all stakeholders in this process.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of future activities, the department intends to complete all studies that are currently underway and will undertake additional analysis as needs or opportunities arise. Department officials are currently preparing two reports that will present the results of the work completed to date. The first report will present a concise summary of the result for each of the studies undertaken. This report will be made available to stakeholders and the general public shortly. The second report will outline the departments's vision of the future NWT highway system and a plan of action to achieve that vision.

In closing Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that plans are now being made to present the study results and the vision for new roads to Minister Kakfwi's Economic Strategy Panel. I fully expect the panel will include the results of the Highway Strategy initiative among its recommendations for inclusion in this government's Economic Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Roland.

Minister's Statement 8-13(8): MDAPP Evaluation

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to provide the House with a summary of the success of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's Minimum Down Payment Assistance Pilot Program or as it is more commonly known MDAPP.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, this pilot program gave people grants towards the down payment of a home. Grants of \$10,000 were provided to those living below the treeline and \$15,000 grants were provided above the treeline.

As this was a pilot program Cabinet directed that an evaluation be conducted once MDAPP was completed. This was done because MDAPP was the first time a program aimed at stimulating the NWT's economy through housing sales was attempted. According to this review, the following results were achieved:

- almost 75 percent of the families surveyed indicated that they would not have been able to buy their home without the MDAPP grant
- 555 families, in 16 NWT communities became homeowners through MDAPP
- close to \$5.6 million was spent under MDAPP which stimulated almost \$70 million in real estate transactions
- families who received MDAPP report they expect to spend over \$3 million for renovations and improvements to their new homes in the next year
- 22 percent or 118 families assisted through MDAPP moved to the NWT in the last two years
- a further 59 families assisted by MDAPP moved from either another community in the NWT or a Nunavut community in the last two years, many of those surveyed said they had moved because of jobs
- during the pilot program there was no increase in the number of rental units available on the market. It is believed that this was due to a large number of families who sold their homes moved into rental accommodation.

Mr. Speaker, this evaluation shows that the pilot program was successful in meeting its stated objectives, which were:

- stimulate the sales of existing homes on the market which were having a detrimental effect on the demand for new home construction;
- encourage workers and their families from the south to become permanent residents of the NWT;
- encourage workers to move between communities to take advantage of job opportunities, and
- to encourage economic spin-offs through renovations,

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improvements and home purchases.

Mr. Speaker, while the evaluation met its stated objectives, it is apparent that continuing it may have negative affects on the private rental market and yield diminishing results as the housing market absorbs the assistance through price increases. For this reason there are no plans by the Housing Corporation to reintroduce this program.

Copies of the entire MDAPP evaluation will be presented to Cabinet and will be placed on the Housing Corporations's web page in the near future for public access. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ministers' statements. Mr. Steen.

Minister's Statement 9-13(8): Highway System Improvements

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Mr. Speaker, this year the Department of Transportation will spend over \$17 million to complete a large number of needed improvements to our highways. The department tries to find the proper balance between improving safety and level of service and extending the life of the system. At the same time, creating business, employment training and job opportunities for Northerners is a priority.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a brief summary of the larger jobs the department has undertaken. In the South Slave area, construction on the replacement of the West Channel bridge in Hay River will begin later this fall. The project is scheduled for completion in the new fiscal year. The department has completed 33 kilometres of chipseal overlay on the Mackenzie Highway north of the Alberta-NWT Border and a 10 kilometre chipseal overlay on Highway 5 near Buffalo Junction.

In the North Slave area, reconstruction and paving of Highway 3 between Rae-Edzo and Yellowknife began this year. Two projects will result in very noticeable improvements to 17 of the last 90 kilometres of this highway. At the Rae-Edzo end, safety will be enhanced by improving the grade and reducing the number of curves in a 12.5 kilometre section of the highway from 24 to six. This section of the road will be open to traffic by the end of this year's construction season. Application of a chipseal surface will complete this project next summer. At the Yellowknife end of Highway 3, a project to rebuild and pave 4.5 kilometres near the airport will be finished in the next few weeks. Finally, a major safety improvement to a short section of the Ingraham Trail with one of the highest accident occurrence rates on the highway system is underway. The project will be complete this year and will reduce the steepness of the grade and replace the three existing curves on the 2.5 kilometre section with a single, less severe, curve.

In the Sahtu, area, winter road improvements will continue this year. Permanent bridges will be complete at Canyon and Vermillion Creeks and a new bridge started at the Ochre River. A number of grade improvements will also be completed this winter in continuing efforts to extend the operating window of this important transportation connection to Sahtu communities.

In the Mackenzie Delta, the Dempster Highway celebrated its 20th Anniversary on August 18. A new gravel surface was applied to 34 kilometres of the highway between the Yukon boarder and the Peal River, and, 35 kilometres of the highway between Fort McPherson and Tsiigehtchic were reconstructed and widened. The amount of dust free surface on the Dempster Highway increased from 30 to 106 kilometres. Mr. Speaker, I drove this highway from Inuvik to Eagle Plains last weekend and I am proud to say that the condition of the Dempster Highway in the NWT is now considerably better than that in the Yukon.

--Applause

Mr. Speaker, our job is not done. In fact, we have a long ways to go. Our transportation goals can only be achieved if new money is found to invest in transportation infrastructure. It is with that in mind, Mr. Speaker, that I look forward to attending a meeting of all of Canada's Transportation Minister's at the end of September. While there, I will continue to lobby hard for the federal government to commit, in its next budget, long term funding for a national highway system. I will also call for an equitable method of allocating federal funding to smaller jurisdictions such as the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Members today that the Department of Transportation takes its responsibility for the safety of the highway system very seriously. While the department may not have the resources to do all of the work that we would like it to do, or to do the work as quickly as the travelling public might wish, we are making significant progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Steen.

Minister's Statement 10-13(8): The Trans-Canada Trail

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to speak to you about the Trans-Canada Trail, one of Canada's millennium projects. This project will establish 16,000 kilometres of trail from coast to coast to coast. The NWT Recreation and Parks Association is working with local communities, government departments and the Trans-Canada Trail Foundation to develop the trail in the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, I was asked to lend my support, on behalf of this government, to the designation of the Northwest Territories sections of the Trans-Canada Trail. These sections reflect the traditional and modern aspects of our transportation heritage in the Northwest Territories. The first section of the trail follows the Mackenzie River from Fort Providence at Great Slave Lake to Tuktoyaktuk on the Beaufort Sea. This is the territory's natural and historic transportation route. The other section is the Dempster Highway from the Yukon Border to Inuvik representing our modern transportation system.

The NWT Recreation and Parks Association is also planning the grand opening of the Trans-Canada Trail with an event called Relay 2000. The trailhead in Tuktoyaktuk will be the official start point of the relay. Water will be taken from the Arctic Ocean on February 19, 2000 and will be relayed along the Mackenzie River. Water will also be drawn in a similar fashion from the two

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other trailheads on the west and east coasts of Canada. A ceremony will be held in Hull, Quebec on September 9, 2000 to commemorate the end of Relay 2000 and the official opening of the Trans-Canada Trail.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive rule 34(6) so that all Ministers' statements filed with the Clerk can be delivered today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. You still have a minute and a half. The Member for Nunakput is seeking unanimous consent to wave his rules 34(6). Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Steen, you have unanimous consent.

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, an official announcement of the designation of the NWT routes was made at a regional press conference at Yellowknife City Hall today at 11:00 am. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ministers' statements. Mr. Steen.

Minister's Statement 11-13(8): Curtis Mercredi Wins National Grand Championship

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I recognized Mr. Curtis Mercredi in the visitor's gallery to call attention to the award of National Grand Champion he won in the National Airfield Maintenance Rodeo this August at the Vancouver International Airport. Today, I would like to tell the Assembly a little bit more about Mr. Mercredi and his award.

Curtis is an employee of the Department of Transportation who has worked at the Yellowknife airport since 1987; first as a trainee and then as a permanent employee in 1988. A father of two children, he was born and raised in the Northwest Territories and is a long term resident of Yellowknife.

To qualify for the national competition, Curtis came first at the Territorial Rodeo held at the Fort Smith Airport in June. Last year at the Winnipeg Airport, he placed second in the National Airfield Maintenance Rodeo. This year at Vancouver, he took first place.

The rodeo requires competitors from airports across Canada to run three pieces of airfield maintenance equipment through obstacle courses designed to resemble situations they regularly encounter in winter operations. The technician with the highest combined points is the over-all winner. At Vancouver, competing against the very best in the industry, Curtis placed first on two pieces of equipment and second on the third.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation is proud to have employees like Mr. Mercredi on its staff. As passengers, we fly in and out of our airports all the time without a second thought for our safety or security. It is thanks to our maintenance crews and workers like Curtis Mercredi, that we can travel so casually, at ease and in confidence.

I know the Assembly will join me in congratulating our National Grand Champion on his award and for a job well done in representing the Department of Transportation and the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Member's statement. Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 14-13(8): Streamlining Access to Seniors' Programs

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to raise an issue I have raised in this House several times, and it still continues to burden the people that we are supposed to serve and make things simpler so they can understand and be able to access programs and services for this government.

Mr. Speaker, I am talking about our seniors. Regarding the seniors' property tax collection notice, there is an opportunity for our seniors to be exempt from property taxes. Mr. Speaker, year after year, our seniors have the difficulty of being given notices and then having to fill out applications to be re-established on the tax exemption list. The same thing applies, Mr. Speaker, in the seniors' fuel subsidy. Year after year, our seniors are put into the situation of having to continue to fill out applications. Mr. Speaker, I have raised this issue in this House and so have several other Members. I, for one, believe there is a simpler solution and that this government should seriously consider looking at the possibility of streamlining these programs by simply allowing an elder to consent that information relevant to different programs be accessed by those particular departments.

You hear concerns from the department saying well, there is a question about conflict in regards to access to information and their pensions. I believe there is a process that we can use, which is a consent of the senior and the person who applies to these programs, once they apply they consent through a form and the department automatically puts their name into the system and every year it rolls itself off where these people do not have to continue with the burden of filling out these applications year after year and be able to access these programs and services without having to worry about another concern and which they should be enjoying their retirement and enjoying the time that they have with us so that they can continue on with life knowing that they have put their time in, they paid their taxes and now let us help them out to have the rest that they earned without having to bear the burden of filling out applications year after year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement 15-13(8): "Northern House"
Aboriginal Students' Residence

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to speak about an innovative idea that has been put into place at the University of Alberta, namely the Northern House that has been sponsored by the Native

Student Services Department. I might add that it is also being supported and promoted by

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various other departments within the University of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, the Northern House is a project that is actually a residence for aboriginal students from the Northwest Territories and Nunavut and currently has a support person and three students were enrolled in the first year of programs. The purpose, of course, is to provide support to these students who are away from their aboriginal cultures for long, long periods of time. The purpose is that they provide support to each other, as well as support from other staff persons. Mr. Speaker, this facility is just being started this year, and they do need a little bit of help for furniture, basic kitchen utensils, essentials, and a computer. They need a one-time small infusion of cash. I believe that this would be a very, very worthwhile project with this government as I know what it is like to be going to school. Fortunately, I had my family with me when I went to school, but this establishment is for single students, particularly for young students who, as you can see, are all in their first year of programs. So at the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister of Education some questions on this particular project for support. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Member's statement. Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement 16-13(8): Wild Mushroom
Industry

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak today about an economic issue which we know very little about but that has tremendous potential for a number of our people and our communities, but it is fraught with some real challenges. This past summer, we saw the first organized wild moral mushroom harvest here in the North Slave region. Last year's forest fire burn around the Tibbit Lake region, I am told, had the potential to harvest moral mushroom worth in the millions of dollars. That can be picked in a four to six week period. But this is a whole new venture for Northerners, and so only a small group went out to pick. One group of seven entrepreneurs harvested

over \$50,000 worth, and I am told it is much more than that, but that is the official reported, of morals early in the summer. Unfortunately, inexperience with international buyers resulted in the group losing much of their profit to individuals purportedly connected with organized crime. People were also physically assaulted, I am told, though charges have yet to be laid. The forest fire season this summer meant numerous new mushroom fields may be available next summer.

Morals are only one of several lucrative mushroom species for which there is a huge demand on world markets. The NWT may well be the most sought-after pine mushroom harvesting area next fall. Pine mushrooms sell anywhere from \$15 a pound to \$300 a pound, depending on the supply and demand at the time. While there is a huge potential for harvesting and income, it is also a sure thing that possibly violence and possible crime can follow. Next spring, it is possible that hundreds of pickers will come to the NWT for mushroom harvesting. The NWT needs to react quickly to this possible lucrative market, and we need to monitor and manage this resource for our own people. We need to be proactive on this. A first step could be to add mushrooms to the list of plants and animals protected under the Wildlife Act. This would give protection against exploitation of Northerners and their resources. Tomorrow I hope to be able to follow up with some questions on this, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Member's statement. Mr. Rabesca.

Member's Statement 17-13(8): Working Together During the Thirteenth Assembly

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We now have been working together for close to four years, and during that time, we collectively have had many issues to deal with. Some have been a pleasure, while others have tried our form of government to the limits. We have worked together to make the best decisions possible for our residents and believe that we have succeeded. We have accomplished a great deal over the life of this Assembly, and I feel proud to have participated in it all.

We worked very hard to ensure our constituencies have a say and our communities are treated equally and fairly. However, if it was not for the staff of this building and a good working relationship that is present here, we could not do nearly as much. To this, I would like to thank all the Assembly staff and the hard work and the perseverance. They are the people that really do most of the work.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the Government of Canada for their cooperation over the last four years. Without their support, many of the issues we have dealt with could not have been completed. As I stated previously over the last four years, we have taken this government from a deficit position to one of a surplus. We have successfully witnessed and took part in the creation of two new Territories. This one item is a very historic event, and we should be proud that we were able to put together and work towards a successful division as we saw in April.

There are still many issues that must be dealt with, however, our time is up and we must move on. The next Assembly will take up where we left off, and eventually we will have a territory we can be proud of. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Member's statements. Mr. Henry.

Member's Statement 18-13(8): Reporting Methods of the "Yellowknifer" Newspaper

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, after much consideration and encouragement from the people in this community, I feel that I must respond on the manner in which the staff of the Yellowknifer has reported on my involvement with the extension of a commercial grant from the City of Yellowknife to a local business of which I am a part owner. Since July 10, 1998 there had been no few than five editorial comments and numerous articles, some with a decided personal slant published on the subject. While I supposed I should be honoured to be Yellowknife's biggest news, I feel that the Yellowknifer's coverage of this story has gone far beyond objective, fact-finding and has steadily degenerated into a scathing, personal attack on my

credibility and reputation as an MLA and a business person.

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As a public figure, I expect a reasonable amount of criticism. After all, no one is perfect. I have come to realize that accountability plays a big part in the life of the public servant. Furthermore, freedom of speech and freedom of the press are guaranteed rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The freedom to speak and write freely about public administration is one of the many benefits of living in a democratic society. Without these freedoms, our government cannot function properly, so we all understand that the Yellowknifer has a duty to report on the way in which government officials, myself included, do their jobs. However, the editors of the Yellowknifer need to be reminded that freedom always comes with responsibility. Since when does objective reporting necessitate the kind of damning, brutal remarks published about me by the Yellowknifer again and again over the past several months? I ask why has the Yellowknifer set out to so damage my perception in this community that the well-being of my family has been affected?

I suppose one answer is that by sinking to the levels of a tabloid smear campaign, the publishers of the Yellowknifer hope to sell more newspapers and take home a bigger profit. Perhaps the editors think the people of Yellowknife would rather read light-heart satire and silly cartoons than actual news stories. I personally do not think they do. I also think that the issue of responsible journalism is too important to lend itself to simple answers. The reality is that we live in a community which has only one English-speaking newspaper, a newspaper with a captive audience and a great deal of influence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. For this reason, the people of Yellowknife deserve to know that what they read in the newspaper is reported on fairly, objectively, and accurately. They

also deserve to know that the paper cannot be used as an indiscriminate weapon.

Nick Russell, in a leading textbook on morals and the media in Canada, points out that freedom of the press continues to be earned or lost, depending on performance, and it brings with it clear responsibilities of stewardship. What does this mean in practical terms for the editorial staff at the Yellowknifer? Mr. Russell thinks it means that newspaper publishers who are, after all, only in the business to make money, do not own freedom of the press, the people do. Despite what the editors may think, the Yellowknifer does not have some kind of license allowing it to systematically and vindictively destroy someone's perception in the community. Our own Legislative Assembly agrees with Mr. Russell and has seen fit to protect members of the public from this type of behaviour by passing the Defamation Act. Under the act, a newspaper can be sued for publishing statements about a person, which are designed to harm their reputation, rather than simply reporting on the facts.

For example, a few years ago, a Hay River businessman successfully sued the local newspaper for publishing a defamatory cartoon about him. The court said that the suggestions were made by the paper about the businessman's character that were not fair comments and were intended to make people in the community ridicule him.

Judging from the conveniently anonymous editorial comment published in the Yellowknifer on Friday, July 17, 1998, July 31, 1998, August 7, 1998, May 7, 1999, and finally August 27, 1999, the editors seem to have embarked on a self-appointed mission to portray me as a shameless profiteer in the eyes of the people of Yellowknife.

The fact is that the business of which I am a part owner strengthens the economic well-being of this community and of the Territories and employs upward of 100 people in entry level positions and is a viable part of the Yellowknife business community, and I contribute to the tax base of this city.

In the editorial comment published on Friday, August 27, 1997, the editorial suggested that all MLAs who own their own business should place them in blind trusts. As an ordinary MLA, this requirement is duly unrestrictive and will discourage some business people from entering the public arena. In my view, a Legislative Assembly that does not have the opportunity to hear from and benefit from the

expertise of the North's business people will suffer a loss. Along with the rights to speak freely, citizens of this country also enjoy the right of free enterprise. This is one of the reasons Canadians enjoy such a high standard of living.

Mr. Speaker, in 1981, the Kent Commission on newspapers realized the kind of impact a newspaper such as the Yellowknifer can have on individuals who fall out of its good graces when it said, "In a one-newspaper town, it means nothing except the right of a proprietor to do what he will with his own...freedom of the press." The commission concluded that sometimes the practical reality in a one-newspaper town is that because "enormous influence without responsibility is conferred on a handful of people...(its) over-riding responsibility is to the society which protects and provides its freedom." Is the Yellowknifer living up to its responsibility to the people of Yellowknife by writing with a poisoned pen, shrouded in the anonymity of an editorial?

I am out and about in this community as an MLA, as a business person, a volunteer, a church member, and a parent. I, too, see and hear what people in this community have to say. What I do not understand is why Mr. Valpy, and I wonder how he can say that you are reflecting the views of the community. I went and visited this gentleman in his office regarding one of the editorials and was very surprised to see that I had never seen the gentleman before, and I have lived here for 23 years. I had thought I would surely recognize him considering his position in the community which apparently represents the views. I have never seem him at public meetings, I have never seen him within the business community, I have never seem him in my children's school, I have never seen him anywhere. So then I ask, where do you get your worldly perspective from? Where are you that you hear all these opinions and have all these people, why not have them put their views in writing or bring them to me directly?

Another author, J.L. Hulteng, warns newspapers against abusing their right to freedom of the press in his book, "Playing it Straight: A Practical Discussion of the Ethical Principles of the

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American Society of Newspaper Editors". In it he wrote, "To prevent further erosion, editors and reporters should refrain from excessive or unjustified appeals to public opinion. A knee-jerk invocation of press freedom every time some public official or

special interest representative criticizes the performance of the press will only harm the cause. Cry "Wolf" only when a genuine predator is on the prowl." This is something which the lampoonists at the Yellowknife should keep in mind.

In closing, I wish to remind the editorial staff of the Yellowknifer to heed the ethics of their own profession. Like public officials, they too owe a duty of fairness and stewardship to the public they sever, lest they offend the very principles for which freedom of the press was enshrined in the Charter in the first place. And before calling anyone a profiteer, they should take a good, long look in the mirror.

Mr. Speaker, I have not yet come to a decision as to whether I will allow my name to stand as a candidate in the December election. I will reserve that judgement for the next couple of week. I would like to sincerely thank my fellow colleagues for allowing me to continue with my statement, and I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Again, to remind the Members that Member's statements is up to two and a half minutes and, Mr. Henry, you have made a statement equivalent to three Member's statements, but I do appreciate you consulting with me and requesting that extension. Member's statement. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Pat Thomas with the NWTTA. There is only one more day to go Ms. Thomas, so see you tomorrow.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize, this might be the last chance to recognize

Pat Thomas, president of the NWTTA. She was running for president of that organization about the time I was running for MLA and if I would have known she was going to be here everyday I could have stayed home. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Ray Sonfrere, Band Councillor from Hay River Reserve. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 21-13(8): GNWT Position on Assistance to Giant Mine

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we are all aware, there are concerns with regard to the Giant Mine situation and I have a number of questions I would like to ask today. I will start with the first one for Mr. Kakfwi regarding the 15 day period here in which the union can formulate a possible proposal and work with other parties that might be an alternative to the current proposal that is before the receiver. I wonder if Mr. Kakfwi could tell me what the government's position is in regard to or in relationship to providing assistance to the union itself in developing a community-based proposal to take over the Giant Mine?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 21-13(8): GNWT Position on Assistance to Giant Mine

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the government has advised the union this morning that should they wish to undertake developing a proposal to forward to the receiver that they will receive assistance as would be provided to any other type of initiative from a business community, but that the government will not be party to the development of the proposal itself, we will not be actively helping to develop such a proposal, but we will also not be entertaining any suggestion that we would become owners of any type in a proposal. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 21-13(8): GNWT Position on Assistance to Giant Mine

MR. OOTES:

Can the Minister tell me what form of assistance can be provided by this government to the union?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 21-13(8): GNWT Position on Assistance to Giant Mine

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, there is assistance provided to individuals or groups that wish to develop proposals such as financing, in part feasibility aspects of proposals. Once a proposal, if it is developed, on the part of the union and other parties in partnership with the union, we will respond if we are requested to provide some sort of assistance financially for the development of a proposal.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 21-13(8): GNWT Position on Assistance to Giant Mine

MR. KRUTKO:

Can the Minister tell me if they can provide any

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assistance beyond just financial assistance?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 21-13(8): GNWT Position on Assistance to Giant Mine

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the conditions that the Government of the Northwest Territories accepted in dealing with this issue of Giant Mine being put into receivership and subsequently the receiver seeking to accept proposals for potential buyers was that once proposals were received, the government had undertaken to keep confidential all and any information that was received by us through the actions of the receiver sharing the information of the proposals with us and also with the parties themselves. We will not allow ourselves to be put in the position where we may be alleged to have used information that we received in that undertaking to advance alternate proposals at this time. We will step back and not be supporting any proposals. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 21-13(8): GNWT Position on Assistance to Giant Mine

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a concern here in relationship to the responsibility to the employees. That is their pensions, their separation pay, other issues with relationship to their current working conditions. Now the federal government has the Canada Labour Code. Are we going to support the employees to protect their rights? What is this government doing in order to help our people to ensure that their rights are protected and that all that is due and owed to them is met? Can the Minister tell me that?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 21-13(8): GNWT Position on Assistance to Giant Mine

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of the Northwest Territories has advanced certain positions with the federal government and the receiver. We have said that we want to ensure that the employees of Giant Mine receive fair treatment, that they are not treated frivolously or that parties do not undertake action which would undermine the status and the benefits that should be honoured and which should flow to the employees. We have said that to the federal government and we have stated that as well to the receiver. We will also look to proposals to maximize the economic benefits to the North, which includes trying to maintain as many jobs as possible. We have also said that it is fairly fundamental that the federal government commit to a reclamation plan in partnership with whoever will wish to purchase and take ownership of the existing mine. Those are positions that we have taken, we have shared those with the union, with the federal government and with the receiver. We will continue to work on that. You should note that most of the labour issues and the environmental issues are all issues that can only be dealt with and addressed by the federal government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 22-13(8): Support for Northern House

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Before I start I would like to congratulate the Minister on this new initiative, with the binder entitled, Promising and Practices, Ideas at Work in Northern Secondary Classrooms. It sounds like a very, very good initiative. Similarly, I hope that he will support this initiative that is being started by the Native Student Services at the University of Alberta which is for housing aboriginal students from the North. As I had indicated in my statement, Mr. Speaker, the students require a small one time cash infusion to help them purchase some furniture and a computer and I am wondering if the Minister could indicate whether the department is in a position to help them? As I indicated it is a very, very small, teeny amount of money and I am sure that it would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 22-13(8): Support for Northern
House

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware of the request. I have not had an opportunity yet to talk to the deputy about it, but it will be looked at within the context of the many other requests we get for funding, many of them in themselves could be considered teeny, but when added together come to a substantial sum. I appreciate the intent of what the folks are trying to do at the University of Alberta, so yes, we will be looking at this and it will be given serious consideration. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 22-13(8): Support for
Northern House

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that the equipment and the furniture is obviously, it is a one time infusion and it is a start up cost, so I would ask the Minister if he could do this, if he could endeavour to have a look at this as quickly as possible as there are people staying there now and they need this equipment as quickly as possible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 22-13(8): Support for
Northern House

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will commit to looking at this as quickly as possible. I recognize the urgency as the Member has indicated. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 23-13(8): Seniors' Property Tax Rebate

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. It is regarding my

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opening statement with regard to the seniors and trying to find a way to dealing with the property tax rebate that is given to them. One of the problems that we seem to keep running into in the smaller communities is that they have to reapply for such a program every year. I would like to ask the Minister, what is his department doing to try and find ways to resolve this and streamline it so it is a simpler process in which, once you become a senior, you are automatically put into the system that they know which property you own. It would be in the computer systems through MACA or the lands title system so people would know that you are a pensioner, because you receive a pension from the Canadian Pension Plan. I would like to ask the Minister, what is his department doing to streamline this program so it is simpler for people to receive the rebate and not have to deal with reapplying every year?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Return To Question 23-13(8): Seniors' Property Tax
Rebate

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker in response to the Member's question, the department has been working with other departments including the Department of Finance to try to address this particular situation. It appears that because it is a rebate there is some requirement for the people involved to actually apply for a rebate on an annual basis. I know the department has included on the back of the invoices, there is a statement on the back of the invoice advising whoever is getting the bill that they are entitled to a rebate if they apply for it. Also, they have the ability to apply even before they actually make payments under taxes. They have the ability to apply for a rebate. Therefore they do not have to come up with the money, that they can have a rebate anyway. Also, Mr. Speaker, the department is working with the social committee to try to come up with some form of plan to put all the programs that seniors would be exempt from into one. However, right now we are still in the planning stage and we are

working with the social committee on this plan, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 23-13(8): Seniors' Property Tax Rebate

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is the problem with the rebate program is that you have to apply for it every year and I think that is where the concerns of the seniors are. Is there a better system that say, instead of having to apply every year that automatically once you become a pensioner, I mean you are not going to get any younger, you are eventually going to get older, so once you receive your pension you should be automatically put into the system. Rebates for programs such as your property tax assessment and your fuel subsidy, should be automatically given every year. That is what I am asking, is there a possibility of automatically having these programs given to all the seniors in the western territory automatically without having to go through the rebate?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 23-13(8): Seniors' Property Tax Rebate

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department, like I said, is in the process of trying to address this particular issue. We are working with the social committee, we are working with all the departments, we are open to any suggestions from the communities or from the Members as to how to address this particular situation. I am told there are some legalities involved here where there may be a requirement for people to actually apply for rebates because it is a rebate. It is therefore hard to tie it in with other programs that are not rebates. We are not sure if we can streamline this all into one, but we are in the process of trying to plan and find a way to address this position. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 23-13(8): Seniors' Property Tax Rebate

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the suggestions that I put forth in my Member's statement is the possibility, through the Department of Justice and the Minister's Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, to come up with a consent form process where the senior automatically will consent to have their name renewed every year and any information that is relevant to the program, the government will be able to access that information through a consent form process so you do not have to go through this process year after year. Has the department considered looking at such a proposal as a means of making this system a little easier?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 23-13(8): Seniors' Property Tax Rebate

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the proposal, as suggested by the Member or any proposal, for that matter, will be taken into consideration by the department. If there are any benefits to the proposals, we will certainly include them in whatever the outcome of the plan is. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 23-13(8): Seniors' Property Tax Rebate

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister made reference to the possibility of having people call the department with suggestions and maybe even look at public meetings. Is the department willing to consider maybe a 1-800 line so that they can take suggestions from seniors instead of going through the process of public meetings so that seniors can have a say in how they would like the program developed? Is the Minister willing to consider that process for consultation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 23-13(8): Seniors' Property Tax Rebate

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will consider all proposal and all suggestions from the

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Members or from the communities or from the general public, and we will use whatever proposals are put forward that would, in fact, address the issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 24-13(8): Home Repair Program Access

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation. To follow up on his very enlightening report on the MDAPP evaluation which I think they spent close to \$6 million to help people buy houses without any means test or anything placed on the people who are able to purchase houses, whether they made a million dollars a year or \$50,000. Mr. Speaker, several of my constituents have come forward with dilapidated houses, their sidings falling off, windows in disrepair, that type of thing. What they are wondering is if there are any repair programs in the Housing Corporation's current programs that they are eligible for here in Yellowknife. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 24-13(8): Home Repair Program Access

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of programs that are available through the Housing Corporation for homeowners. The level of service or assistance they were to receive all depends on the income they would have. The biggest program we have is through the EDAP program, there is the

Independent Housing Program, there is also a seniors' program and we do have, within the EDAP system, programs where people can get monies to do some repairs to their existing homes. But again, all those programs are based on the amount of income that would be received in the households. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 24-13(8): Home Repair Program Access

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister's report had indicated that the MDAPP had put in \$5.6 million into their program, and there was no means test whatsoever. What I am wondering is, could the Minister increase the amount of money that is in that repair program so that people who have bought their houses on their own, with their own money, can repair their houses. Because many of them are now in very dire straits. I am wondering, could the Minister increase the repair program to maybe only half of what they put into the MDAPP, maybe only \$2 million, \$2.5 million?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 24-13(8): Home Repair Program Access

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that is an issue that can be dealt with in the next business planning process, that the Housing Corporation can look at trying to increase those levels of support we provide at present Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 24-13(8): Home Repair Program Access

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Considering the fact that there was no means test put in place for being eligible

for the MDAPP, would the Minister also look at increasing the maximum amount of yearly family income before they are regarded as ineligible for accessing this program? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 24-13(8): Home Repair Program Access

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department, on a regular basis, looks at its programs to see if the standards being set are too extreme or not. As I said earlier, we will be going through a business planning process and can be looking at those things. We have to keep in mind one of the factors of increasing our limits would place more demand on already shrinking resources within the Housing Corporation. A lot of the MDAPP funding that was used was through supplementary appropriation put through this House. We did use some of our own resources and thankfully, we are able to cover the rest of that from within because of some of the planning that was done from within the department. So all of this other information on trying to change the programs can be reviewed through the business planning processing and dealing with committees. As well, we will be looking at what we can reasonably provide residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 25-13(8): GNWT Costs Incurred in Court Cases

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi. It is regarding the potential costs incurred in the form of personnel costs or dollar amounts incurred by his department in the defence of government officials regarding that law suit against the government and various parties by Workers' Compensation. My question to the Minister is, can he confirm that indeed the department is incurring personnel or dollar costs in defending actions in that particular case? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 25-13(8): GNWT Costs Incurred in Court Cases

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take the question as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question is taken as notice. Oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 26-13(8): Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program

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MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a few questions with respect to Minister Floyd Roland's Minister's statement on the MDAPP evaluation. Since I can remember living in the Northwest Territories, we have continued to hear about the housing crises in the North, about overcrowding, and about lack of facilities in homes. I was just wondering how this \$5.6 million spent under the MDAPP, in the evaluation it fails to indicate how that responded to that housing crisis? Perhaps the Minister could draw that correlation for us. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 26-13(8): Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the MDAPP program had a number of objectives it set out to try and meet. One is to stimulate the economy through housing sales, one is to have families move to communities that have jobs and have people working from southern Canada move to the North and establish their homes. As well, part of the program freed up some of the public housing units that right now have families in them with a higher income levels. They were able to use the program to purchase their own home, move into their own home thereby freeing up some of the public housing units.

As well, with that I should state that the majority of the uptake on this was in the larger communities, so that had an impact as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 26-13(8): Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister stated that one of the goals was to have people from southern Canada take up residency in the Northwest Territories, that was one of the stated objectives of the program. Could the Minister tell me how many homes were purchased from people outside of the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 26-13(8): Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe I heard the question right, how many homes were purchased from people outside of the Northwest Territories. I do not have that information available. I do not believe we have had people selling houses that do not live in the Northwest Territories. I do not know if there were people who had homes that left prior to this program coming up and then having their homes sold on the market. We could go back and find that out, but I think we were asked on the objectives of this program and we have compared on a questionnaire that went out to a lot of the people that took advantage of the program and they supplied information, but the questions on that were not related to who was out of the Territories when they sold their homes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 26-13(8): Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I did not make that question clear enough. Part of the objectives of the MDAPP program were to encourage people to take up permanent residency in the Northwest Territories and to purchase homes here. How many of those 555 families, even approximately, just give us a ballpark figure, were related to that particular objective? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 26-13(8): Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that clarification. I misunderstood your earlier question. From the questionnaire, the information that they received, they were able to extrapolate that approximately 22 percent of those that used the MDAPP program moved from southern Canada into the Northwest Territories within the last two years. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 26-13(8): Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is one statistic in the Minister's report here which I find just a little bit, I do not want to say misleading, what other word could I use, we will not use that word, but it is interesting that 555 families in 16 NWT communities became homeowners. This leads the reader to believe that this was a widely taken up program and that it was a widespread benefit to quite a number of northern communities. If the real statistics were actually included in this, what would it look like? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 26-13(8): Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the information we provided in my Minister's statement states that families within 16 communities used the program. Yes, I have stated, department officials have stated, that the largest uptake has been in the larger centres such as Yellowknife, Inuvik, Hay River, Fort Smith, Norman Wells. We have had for example in Enterprise, one home was purchased through the MDAPP. Fort McPherson, Fort Good Hope and Nahanni Butte, communities of that nature have used the program. Again, as I stated earlier, and in a previous Session to this it was brought up, the fact that this program was benefiting the larger communities and we have said that was not a fact. There have been 16 communities that families have used this program to purchase homes and we have been open and up

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front about that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 27-13(8): Adult Education Workshop Results

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for Mr. Miltenberger, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. During the last Session, Mr. Speaker, I asked the Minister a number of questions about the departments adult education initiatives and the Minister, I specifically refer to a meeting that we had attended here in Yellowknife, where the Minister was good enough to attend with the four Yellowknife MLAs, with a group of adult educators here in our community. There was some concern expressed there about a number of matters. In any event, the Minister stated that a workshop was planned for August and that a review was being done and a plan developed. I wonder if the Minister could tell me if a workshop has been held and what may have been the results of that?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 27-13(8): Adult Education Workshop Results

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Attempts were made in August to try and organize the meetings that had been planned, but due to summer holidays for various parties it never did happen. There are two meetings planned for this month. One with the department and all the NGOs and one with the NGOs to discuss the issues and try to move forward on the matters that were raised back in June. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 27-13(8): Adult Education Workshop Results

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another concern at the time was predetermined funding for organizations, year to year funding was a concern. At the end of the year or near the end of the year a lot of these organizations do not know whether they will be able to obtain funding for the following year and it results in the layoff of staff. It was another item that the adult educators brought up at this meeting. I wonder if the Minister could tell me if he has been able to address that issue.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 27-13(8): Adult Education Workshop Results

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is our intent as a department to, in fact, look at the issue of multi-year funding with an eye towards accommodating that request, recognizing the very problems that my colleague has raised in terms of uncertainty, inability to plan and pressures on staff who are never sure whether they are going to be extended one year to the next. We recognize that is an issue and we are trying to address that with the funds that we have available. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 27-13(8): Adult Education Workshop Results

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, referring back to my original question with regard to the approach in adult education, could the Minister tell me if he is looking at a comprehensive approach to adult education throughout the territory? I am familiar with the Yellowknife situation, but my understanding is that it may be similar in all of the areas. I wonder if the Minister could tell me, he mentioned that they are looking at meeting here to look at some of the issues here in Yellowknife, but is this going to be applied across the Territories so we get a comprehensive policy being developed.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 27-13(8): Adult Education Workshop Results

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is another good point that my colleague raises and, in fact, yes, we are moving ahead with that commitment to look at adult basic education curriculum and reviewing the current policies with an eye towards trying to make sure that they are integrated and standardized. I have seen the first draft of the document that has been put together by the education, culture and employment staff. We would anticipate in the next few weeks hopefully to have something to be put on the table to discuss with the people that are involved in the business. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 27-13(8): Adult Education Workshop Results

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could advise, once they have a comprehensive plan if they could consult the stakeholders. Naturally the people in my community would be very interested in possibly providing advice and input into this. Could he tell me if he could pass it on once they have a

comprehensive document of some sort if they could consult with the stakeholders?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 27-13(8): Adult Education Workshop Results

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, it is a working group of government officials and some NGO staff that are working on this particular review and document. There is an intent to make sure that once we have a working document that it gets circulated and we do get a chance for some feedback from the people that are in the field. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 28-13(8): Improving NWT Highway Conditions

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MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is in response to the Minister of Transportation, Highway System Improvements statement. I would like to thank the Minister for taking a drive down the Dempster Highway from Inuvik to Eagle Plains. I think he picked the time when the highway was probably in the best condition. He should have been there two weeks earlier when it rained for two weeks, in which we had potholes galore. I would like to thank the transportation staff and the people that maintained the Dempster Highway because I believe with their hard work and effort they did bring the highway up to a suitable standard.

My concern is that we have to find new means of improving the road conditions not only on the Dempster Highway, but the Liard Highway. The highway systems are presently gravelled surface. I would like to ask the Minister in light of his trip to Ottawa to meet with the Canadian Transport Minister and also in consideration of National Highway Strategy, would he also consider meeting with the Research Council of Canada to find possible new methods and new means of resurfacing the highway systems which are presently being constructed with

gravel and the ones that are presently not being paved or where chipseal is being used, if we can find an alternative source to maintain the surface of those highway systems so that we do have a better highway system so when it does rain for ten days or two weeks that it does not turn into a washboard and that we have potholes all over the place. Will the Minister, consider if this is a possibility of something that he can look at with his department, federal counterparts and also the federal Minister of Transportation?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Return To Question 28-13(8): Improving NWT Highway Conditions

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for his comments on the condition of the highways. It was not my choice that we drove at that particular time. We did experience good weather going ahead, but it was raining all the way back from Eagle Plains to Inuvik, so we did not have all good weather. We saw the highway in both extremes of the weather conditions. We had no problems, Mr. Speaker, maintaining cruising speed within the speed limits. The highway condition was good. As far as including or considering new alternatives or new technology to maintain highway surfaces, Mr. Speaker, the department on an ongoing basis is continually in touch with other jurisdictions as to new technology being used. The highway staff is fairly up to date, the engineering staff is fairly up to date on other alternatives. However, there is no cheap alternative. They are all expensive. It brings to light, the major question here is there proper funding to maintain highway surfaces. I appreciate the Member's suggestions and we will take them into consideration. If, in fact, there is opportunity to gain further information at the meeting down south with the other transportation Ministers I will bring this up as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 28-13(8): Improving NWT Highway Conditions

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the conditions that we probably will not see in other parts of Canada except maybe in the Yukon, is that we do live in a different environment than the rest of Canada and we do have to take into account that we do have certain difficulties that we have to overcome such as the weather, permafrost, and other extremes which we have no control over. I would like the Minister to raise these concerns with his southern counterparts, but also make them aware that we are unique, we do have different challenges than they do. When it comes to funding, which you made reference to, we can access more funding to improve our road conditions in the North and I believe that is possibly one of the biggest factors is the lack of funding to do an adequate job to improve our road conditions so it is safe, not only at certain times of the year, but year round. I would like to ask the Minister to consider those points when he meets with his southern counterparts and raise them in light that we do have unique conditions that we operate under so that he can bring back the bacon along with some more money. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 28-13(8): Improving NWT Highway Conditions

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department will be suggesting at the meeting of the Transportation Ministers that a formula other than the length of the roads in each jurisdiction be used to arrive at a fair distribution of the funds for the National Highway Strategy. It is hoped that in this way we will achieve and obtain more funding than we would if we just used our kilometres that are in the Northwest Territories that would be considered as part of the national highway system. If we, in fact, obtain this, well then that would loosen up more funding, Mr. Speaker, that we could use towards improving the other highways in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 28-13(8): Improving NWT Highway Conditions

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe one of the areas that the department could seriously consider looking at is the whole area of a pilot project which we could do in conjunction with the federal government through the National Transportation Strategy and also the Research Council of Canada. I will use an example, in the Yukon a part of the Dempster Highway just north of the turn off of the first 15 kilometres they started to chipseal just to test it out as a pilot project. I would like to ask the Minister if he would consider the possibility of looking at using the Dempster Highway on the NWT side as an area of a possible pilot project so that we can look at such an initiative? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 28-13(8): Improving NWT Highway Conditions

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure the department will consider the Member's suggestions. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary. Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 28-13(8): Improving NWT Highway Conditions

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if he can get back to me regarding what ever comes out of his talks with his federal counterparts and the other jurisdictions in Canada so that we can see what method we can use to ensure this pilot project does take root and will be carried out in the next couple of years. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 28-13(8): Improving NWT Highway Conditions

HON. VINCE STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that what ever the department comes up with as ways to

improve the highway system and the highway services would be reflected in the business plans and whatever plans we would have would be discussed with the committees at that time. If the committee Members have suggestions as to possible options to improving the services of the department we would be wide open to suggestions. Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 29-13(8): Amendments Proposed in Bill 5

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to Mr. Miltenberger, with responsibility for the Workers' Compensation Board. Yesterday, Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, was passed in the Legislature. My question to the Minister is does this legislation prohibit the ability of workers to sue their employers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. I will have to rule the question out of order. Bill 5 is in the orders for today for third reading. You cannot ask questions on bills that are on the order paper. Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 30-13(8): Addressing the Teacher Shortage

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for Mr. Miltenberger, the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. Teachers outside of Yellowknife region are back to school this fall Mr. Speaker, and contract negotiations are ongoing, but I understand that mediation talks are scheduled now to get things back on track for November 3, 4, and 5, 1999. In the mean time, teachers may be carrying out some job action. It is possible such strike action might be taken. There is ongoing concern, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the retention of teachers here in the Territories. In Hay River there is a turn over of nine staffing positions there. Other provinces we know are having similar difficulties. British Columbia and Ontario apparently have not been able to fill all of their positions. The crunch is here and it is not getting any easier.

In April of this year, the Minister indicated that teacher recruitment and retention would be addressed through wages and benefits in the current contract

negotiations. These negotiations, as I have mentioned earlier, currently are stalled. Contract talks maybe the only place where this can be resolved. My question, Mr. Speaker, is because of the difficulty of retaining and attracting teachers, are we doing any sort of negotiations with other provinces to see how the issue of teachers supply can be addressed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 30-13(8): Addressing the Teacher Shortage

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated in this House previously, the turn over rate has dropped from 18 percent in the previous year to 12 percent. It is still a concern for us that we have teachers, preferably northern teachers, in all of our schools. At the end of this month I am heading out to the council of Ministers of Education of Canada meeting in Victoria and one of the issues that we hope to address is that very issue that my honourable colleague has raised in his question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 30-13(8): Addressing the Teacher Shortage

MR. OOTES:

Thank you. I preface my remarks with regard to the contract and mediation talks. Could the Minister update us as to what the status is and just tell us where we are at? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 30-13(8): Addressing the Teacher Shortage

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my colleague laid out very clearly the status. There have been

settlements in Yellowknife in the same ballpark that was settled in the UNW, but in the communities outside of Yellowknife, it is going to mediation as my colleague indicated and we are hopeful at that point that we will be able to get beyond of this current impasse. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 30-13(8): Addressing the Teacher Shortage

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know what the issues are on the table. I am wondering what we are doing in terms of the working conditions for our teachers, like class size, administrative support, resources and that sort of thing. What I want to know, is are we looking at that and are we comparing it to what teachers in other jurisdictions are getting? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

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Further Return To Question 30-13(8): Addressing the Teacher Shortage

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given the fact that we are in the process of negotiation in good faith with the teachers and this whole process is on its way to mediation and that the question that my colleague has asked was framed within the context of those negotiations, I am not able to reply specifically to that issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 30-13(8): Addressing the Teacher Shortage

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Part of our program is the Teacher Education Program that we run here in the Territories that I believe is having some success. Naturally we want to build on that. I am wondering if

the Minister can tell me what we are doing to promote that particular program because that has been touted as the principle means of us solving some of our problems here in the North and I think that is correct. Could the Minister tell me if they are initiating a program to promote that particular program in a more concerted effort?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 30-13(8): Addressing the Teacher Shortage

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Teacher Education Program is a very important program. There was a strategic plan done under the wise direction of the former Minister of Education now, the Minister of Finance, Mr. Dent, that laid out some of the issues that we are trying to deal with as well. It is the intent of the government, the Department of Education, along with the support of the Members, for example, to move towards degree granting, so that we can, in fact, get degreed teachers in the North, which is the goal. The diploma is the first step, but in actual fact the long range desired goal would be to have all our teachers be degreed teachers in the Northwest Territories. There are things being done to try and address that particular issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 31-13(8): Addressing Special Needs in NWT Schools

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. Earlier this year the Minister had met with the chairs from each of the NWTs Education Councils. There was a three day meeting that focused on the Report of the Minister's Forum on Education. The Minister had indicated at the time that special needs topped the list of issues that the chairs felt needed immediate attention. Also, that they were going to be getting together later on. What I am wondering is has the Minister implemented anything to address this need that was identified as the major area that needs attention? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 31-13(8): Addressing Special Needs in NWT Schools

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue of special needs is probably one of the most important priorities that we are trying to address. I would like to point out to the honourable Member that we continue to work within the budget that was approved by this Assembly, but we are attempting to do things like this Best Practices document that I will be tabling later today to help bring teachers together and make schools aware of the innovative things that are being done across the Northwest Territories. We will be having a follow up meeting in early October in Rae with all the board chairs as a second step of our initial meeting to try move ahead and discuss further some of these issues.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 31-13(8): Addressing Special Needs in NWT Schools

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a little difficult to hear the Minister. There is a bit of noise on this side of the House. Did the Minister indicate that he does not have any new money to put into the special needs area?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 31-13(8): Addressing Special Needs in NWT Schools

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I indicated was that we are continuing to operate with the money that has been approved in this Legislative Assembly for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 31-13(8): Addressing Special Needs in NWT Schools

MR. ERASMUS:

Mr. Speaker, I was wondering what has been done to comply with the motion that had been passed earlier to put more money into the area of special needs. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 31-13(8): Addressing Special Needs in NWT Schools

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this issue is a continued topic of debate in Cabinet within the broader context of planning for the financial future of the Northwest Territories. But today I just have to repeat that we are operating within the funds that have been allocated to us, that there has been no new money added to the budget for education.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

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Supplementary To Question 31-13(8): Addressing Special Needs in NWT Schools

MR. ERASMUS:

Mr. Speaker, I just want to indicate that I am very disappointed that there has not been any effort made to comply with a motion from this House that is supposed to give direction to the Cabinet. We will just have to wait and see if they are going to try to do anything in this area. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question period is over. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 31-13(8): Addressing Special Needs in NWT Schools

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Minister of Education, I am very aware of the motion in this House for more funding. With the issue of special needs, we are looking at what we are doing and how we do it so that we could hopefully improve on that. One example I can use is dealing with autistic children. There is an Autism Society in Yellowknife. I know, for example, in my community alone, there are at least three or four autistic children and they were, for the most part, not tied in as effectively as it could be. We are trying to connect those kinds of resources within the Northwest Territories within existing budgets to try to deal with some of these special needs issues. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 7, written questions. Item 8, return to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Mr. Roland.

ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

Reply 1-13(8):

HON. FLOYD ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to be very long with my replies to opening address. I thought of writing something out some time ago to try to prepare for this, but over time, I thought it is just best to speak off the cuff. I have learned a lot from my colleague, Mr. Miltenberger. He showed me that it can be done. Mr. Speaker, there has been much that has happened in the last four years. I recall coming in here with a suit that was actually a little too small, my hair was still black, and I felt a lot more fit. There have been a lot of positive change, as I see it, Mr. Speaker. We have all, I think, come away from this session richer than when we first came here, not in the sense of monetary value but in the sense of personal value. I know I have grown as an individual being amongst all my colleagues before division had gone on and happened. As well, I have been able to adapt to some of the barbs that have been thrown my own way from my colleagues, even on this side of the floor. They have showed me that it can be done in a quicker way. As Mr. Miltenberger keeps prying at it, I keep trying to resist trying to throw something back.

We have grown together as an Assembly. We have had some trying times and at times it feels like we have gone through a furnace but I know, as well, when we go through difficult times, it brings out the best in us. I know they will be looking back on the 13th Assembly and many people will look back and

remember the dark days of the 13th Assembly being the first two years. I recall a cartoon being done about me in a newspaper showing me wearing nothing but a barrel because Inuvik was being pillaged by the rest of the government.

But I think we have done quite well, and I have always believed in the people of the Northwest Territories that we can and show that through the difficult times, we can hold our heads high and show that by being positive, we can bring more out of it than we have lost. It has not been easy and I have had trying times of my own when I go back home and had to share the message with my constituents. In fact, I know the first few months of the life of this Assembly, it was quite difficult but I think we have come through those days. Although Mr. Dent has gone on to lay a bit of vision out there and he is painting some cloudy pictures on a somewhat blue sky in the last days of the 13th Assembly, and I believe his nickname is even changing too, but I will keep that for ourselves. I think we have done a great deal of work. We have seen the completion or somewhat of a completion of Nunavut's creation, and they are on their way. We are now, in the west, undergoing a lot of changes from the impacts of division and moving forward in that aspect. I think we still have some work to do in that area.

As well, when we talk about governments, we have come a long way in dealing with other governments within the Northwest Territories. I think the future holds a lot of challenge yet, but if what we have done is an example of what can be done, we have a lot of promise out there. We have talked about the resources available to us in the Northwest Territories, and there are a great deal of resources that have been untapped, both renewable and non-renewable, as well as our youth coming up. We have a large population of youth, and I think if the Youth Assembly is an example of what happens, we have a lot of keen young people out who could be eyeing our seats in the upcoming years and looking to put their mark on the Northwest Territories. We have seen great changes, and I believe we will see more changes.

But if I have shared my way of thinking with the departments that I have been fortunate to work with is that if we are involved at the front end of this change, we can have a positive impact as to where we are going to go as the Northwest Territories. I think the future is full of hope, but if we do not work together, that hope can somewhat be diminished because, as we have know and we have heard many times in a lot of our meetings, that the development of the

Northwest Territories has taken a long time. At sometimes I have said, in this House, that we have to look to when we first came in and the ideals we came in with and the ideas of change we brought with us. I think a lot of us can go back and say that we have met a lot of those ideas we came in with.

I know for myself that it has been a very good experience. I have wished for more time at home, but at the same time, I know my wife has mentioned to me on a number of occasions, she does not see me pulling wrenches anymore. I know when I have tried to do that on occasions, my hands do not quite meet to the task that they once used to. But I have also grown in another way here and that is, I feel, through a nurturing of staff and the Assembly helping us getting our work done. They put a lot of energy and effort into what we have done in the Northwest Territories, and there is a lot behind the scenes. Many people of the Northwest Territories only see a certain portion of this House and what happens in the life of this government, but there is much more that happens behind the

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scenes. I know, at times, I have been in a position where I feel, as a human race, I guess, we can say we have done good things and that there is hope for us in the future. But I have also sat back at times and said an extra prayer because I wondered where we were going as a human race and as a government. I know I can say that quite freely because I believe that what we have gone through has not been easy, not only for ourselves, but our families and as a Territory as a whole right from the unemployed person, the person in health care, the person looking for employment, and the person employed within the government. We have all felt the impacts of what we had to go through.

I was corrected, at one time, in my community when I said that this Assembly was doing good work, and I was corrected rather sternly, and I agree with what was said. In fact, it was not good work, it was necessary work. It was work that had to be done. If we all had our choices, we would have made other decisions, but we knew, by what was put in front of us, that the path for the future was going to be a difficulty, narrow and ragged path. But I think at the end of this life of this Assembly we can all, I believe, hold ourselves high and say, we have done work that was necessary, and I do not think we will see the payoff until a few years down the road that we have spoken so much about our youth that, in fact, the

decisions we made yesterday and today is going to benefit our youth. There is much that needs to be done. I continue to try and hold a brighter picture of the future. I think we need to look ahead to see the potential there and how we can capture some of the potential to benefit residents of the Northwest Territories. Not an easy task, Mr. Speaker, but to many occasions, I think we have risen to that task.

Sometimes we have come away feeling a little afraid, a bit burnt out. But I think, every day as we start, I know I start my day a certain way, Mr. Speaker, and I ask for the wisdom and guidance from the good Lord above because I feel without that, I am not sure where I would be in this whole process. If it has not been for the help I have received from my colleagues that are around here, from the wisdom given to me from previous Members as well, from the staff that help us day to day, they have given me much insight. I must say that my children, when I first got into this work, my son Justin used to ask me, "Daddy, why did they have to elect you?", and he said it in a tone that it was like a sentence I had to fulfil. But I think he has come to appreciate the work I do and that I think my family realizes, as well as many residents in the Territories that we all put it on the line here for the future and for the generations to come. We have made difficult decisions. I know for myself, I have told people back home that I will always come back and face the heat, if that was the case, but as well, I would always try and come back and bring some good news. And thankfully, since the first two budgets of this government, I have been able to go back home and show them that there is some positive to working cooperatively with the people of this Assembly. Hopefully, those things will come into reality in the future.

As I said, it has not been without difficulty, Mr. Speaker, but I think when we look back, we need to look at the positives we have done. The world is much too full of negative things. When you turn on the TV, you look at newspapers, we see the front pages with disasters and murders that are happening and so on. I think we need to, as a society, and this is coming from my own, is try to look for the lining in the clouds. And I think that is one way I have been able to manage working in this forum for, I guess, coming out as a survivor, in a sense, that we have, in all that we have done, come out with good things.

One thing I must say, going to the lighter, again trying to find that lining in the cloud, at different times I have had the opportunity to have lunch at an establishment here in Yellowknife and at times my colleague Mr.

Miltenberger would sit with me. At the end of lunch, we would get a fortune cookie, and every time that afternoon I would get up to make a Member's statement, he accused me of speaking as if I was speaking out of a fortune cookie.

--Laughter

He would scratch his head and wonder what I really said at the end of the day. So I must have learned something. But I have always said and tried to operate in being an up-front and open person, and I hope that my colleagues around here will be able to look back and say, with some reflection, on how we have worked together, that I have been open and honest and able to work with. There are always disagreements, but I think in the long run, even those disagreements have brought good things.

I have used a lot of parables in speaking to my colleagues in this arena. I will do one more, in a sense. I had used this earlier when we were speaking with members of the Aboriginal Summit. I think today, more than anything and of the future government as well, is that, as a territory we have come to a cross roads. We are on the brink of a lot of change, and it is challenging but yet it is exciting. We have many self-government tables that are going on that will change the face of the Northwest Territories and how government operates. That is why I saw if we can be involved up front, we can all work together to achieve a better Northwest Territories for the residents of the Northwest Territories for today and for the future.

But at that cross roads I use an example that again, coming from my previous work, that using an automobile as an example, in the Northwest Territories, when we first sat down as a 13th Assembly, we tried to put constitution package in place for April 1, 1999, and we worked feverishly for almost two years to develop what I saw was a Cadillac that could be in place and ready to go as of April 1, 1999. But as we found, as past Members and people working in the area of constitution for the Northwest Territories, that it was not easy to implement any real changes. It is an issue that goes to everyone's heart in the Northwest Territories. They feel an impact from any change we make at this level to the way they carry on their daily lives and work in the Northwest Territories.

The face of the Northwest Territories has changed. I look at the change we have gone through and I look at my own family. Mr. Speaker, my cultural

background is Inuvialuit and I am a registered Inuvialuit. But at the same time, when my children stand beside me, they stand beside me with their blond hair and blue eyes and if we ever had to stand up and show a card in the Northwest Territories, they would have a bit more difficulty than I would.

If you looked at them from the outside, they would not pass for what people would normally look as an aboriginal child. In fact,

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they do qualify as Inuvialuit. That is the thing I bring to the table. We need to be open to everyone in the Northwest Territories to show them that our differences are, in fact, what strengthen us, not what weaken us.

It goes back to this Cadillac, Mr. Speaker, we worked so hard to build this vehicle, to carry us across the bridge of April 1, 1999. When it got close to the date of April 1, we realized that was not possible. I reflected, in one of our earlier meetings when I discussed this vehicle, that instead we should be working on probably a Chevy. That is something that would get us across the line and keep us moving, that we can build on as a future generation. I think, in fact, when we came to crossing that bridge, we found the bridge was not built and we still have to complete that bridge. That is going to be the work of the next Assembly as well, is to build that bridge. That bridge, Mr. Speaker, has got to be built by many different people. Different nationalities, different cultures. That bridge will be built even stronger, I believe, if we endorse our differences and realize it is those differences that make us strong. In this world today, as a global economy, I do not believe we can say that we can live within ourselves or as an island. I do not believe that is possible anymore. Even to this level in our communities, we hear of the NAFTA and the Free Trade Agreement. I think that just shows that it can reach the smallest community.

Mr. Speaker, as my friend, Mr. Miltenberger suggested that I close, he must realize that the difference we are in two people is that because of my height I think I can go on a little longer than he can.

--Laughter

I had to get that in as a parting shot.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things I have done quite regularly and thank you for the opportunity as well, to

be able to do something for me that showed that I was still connected to my family back home in Inuvik. That was, as I either opened or I closed my Member's statements, I would send greetings back to my family back in Inuvik. I do that again, because I believe and I stood by and I am committed to what I say, that my family, my home is in Inuvik and that is where home is and that is where they have remained and they have watched me from afar on the TV or listened to the different news clips. In closing I would like to send greetings back to my wife and children and that I will be seeing them, hopefully tonight. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. We will take a 15 minute break.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. Good evening. We are on item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Henry.

ITEM 11: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 1-13(8): Report of the Special Committee on Western Identity

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Members of the Special Committee on Western Identity, I am pleased to present the report of the committee.

Division of the Northwest Territories into two new jurisdictions require many changes to take place. Legally, politically and socially. One area identified for review was that of the official symbols which includes, among others, the flag, the mace and the coat of arms.

Symbols such as these have always been important to the public they represent. A great deal of ownership and pride is placed on these images, images that are seen as a reflection to the world. It was, therefore, important to Members of the Legislative Assembly to ensure that the official symbols of the new western territory be truly representative of the new geographical region and its people. They must reflect the identity of the people and the land, an identity that would truly be worth celebrating. To that end, the Special Committee on Western Identity was established on June 4, 1998 to consider and make

recommendations on official symbols and celebrations for the Northwest Territories.

Each of the five committee Members had a keen and genuine interest in how the people of the new NWT would consider their new identity and were honoured to accept a position on the committee that would help to define and reflect that reality. A coordinator was hired to handle administrative affairs and ensure the business of the committee proceeded as directed. One of the main tasks of the committee was to review the current official symbols and heraldry of the Northwest Territories. Members needed to determine if the symbols were appropriate for the new territory or whether they should be revised or completely changed.

Designs for a new flag and coat of arms were deemed appropriate by the committee as well. It was crucial to the Members that the people of the NWT have an opportunity to communicate their thoughts on these symbols. A nation-wide competition for designs was initiated, which resulted in 250 submissions for ideas for the new flag and the new coat of arms. The committee is pleased to have selected three designs for each symbol and due to time limitations, has recommended that the work of the committee in this area be passed onto another committee of the 14th Legislative Assembly to carry on with the final selection process.

The final official symbol under consideration by the committee was a mace. The Northwest Territories needed a new mace that would reflect the new territory. A call for proposals was awarded to three artists well known in the North. The mace is due to be completed by the end of October and the committee recommends that it be unveiled at the beginning of the 14th Legislative Assembly in the new year.

To develop an awareness of 1999 as a special year of change and new direction for the territory, the committee developed a visual identity program with an event name and logo, "NWT '99,

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Catch the Spirit". A line of promotional items featuring the festive and colourful logo was developed and distributed at a wide variety of events in the NWT, Canada and overseas.

The NWT '99 spirit set the stage for western identity celebration activities which was another mandate of the committee. It became apparent to the Members

that the most appropriate way to celebrate the life of each community, would be in each community. It also seemed appropriate that each community should decide how and when during the year they would like to celebrate their identity in the new territory.

A one-time grant of \$5,000 was made available to every community in the Northwest Territories for events or projects which reflected our new western identity. Those events were posted on the NWT 99 web site calendar and communities are welcome to post photos of their events afterwards.

While official symbols may depict the land and the people, a true western identity in the hearts of the people is not something that happens over night. The new NWT is on a road to a new future and it is this future, "of one land, many voices," that will create new identity.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes my overview of the report of the Special Committee on Western Identity and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Nunakput, that the report be received by the Assembly and referred to committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Committee Report, 1-13(8) is referred to committee of the whole. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would request unanimous consent to waive rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 1-13(8) moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Yellowknife South is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 93(4) and have the report move into committee of the whole for today. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Henry, you have unanimous consent. Committee Report 1-13(8) will be moved into committee of the whole for today. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Erasmus.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Legislative Assembly that the Standing Committee on Government Operations has reviewed Bill 4, Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Statutes Amendment Act. We wish to report that Bill 4 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole.

And, Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5) and have Bill 4 moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Yellowknife North is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5) and have Bill 4 moved into committee of the whole for today. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Erasmus, you have unanimous consent. Bill 4 will be moved into committee of the whole for today. Reports on the committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologise for not being in my seat. I request unanimous consent to return to tabling of documents.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Thebacha is seeking unanimous consent to go back to item 13, tabling of documents. Do we have any nays?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Nay.

MR. SPEAKER:

There are nays. Mr. Miltenberger, you do not have unanimous consent. Notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 3, Bill 4, and Committee Report 1-13(8). By the authority given the Speaker by Motion 1-13(8), the committee of the whole may sit past adjournment until it is prepared to report with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

In committee of the whole of bills and other matters, we are dealing with Bill 3, Committee Report 1-13(8) and Bill 4. I would like to ask the wish of the committee. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend that we consider Bill 3, followed by Bill 4 and then perhaps the committee report, if we have time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Does the committee? Agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

We will start to deal with Bill 3, Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Bill 3. Mr. Dent, do you have any opening comments?

HON. CHARLES DENT:

On behalf of all Members of the Legislative Assembly, I would like to present Bill 3, the new and much improved Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. The bill before you will replace the current act, which is sadly out of date as a result of outdated terminology and numerous amendments over the years. In addition to the technical wording updating, there were two reports commissioned by the Legislative Assembly that made recommendations in two major areas. The first was the report of the Conflict of Interest Review Panel on its review of matters relating to the conflict provisions of the act. The second was the report of the MLA Compensation Commission that reported early

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in the life of this Assembly. Both of these reports Mr. Chairman, made a number of recommendations that were reviewed by the Management and Services Board.

After lengthy discussions with all Members, the bill before the Committee today provides a streamlined compensation system for Members of the Legislative Assembly. There are four principles that form the basis of a simple and accountable system for compensating MLAs those principles are:

1. Members are entitled to receive fair compensation for the work that they undertake and for their expenses in representing their constituents;
2. Members have a right to certainty -- to know their entitlements and to be clear about how allowances can be used;
3. The public has the right to understand the pay received by MLAs; and
4. MLAs have the right to be able to account for allowances in an atmosphere that is not clouded by issues and debate surrounding a system that Members of the public are unable to understand.

The proposed changes are major strides in providing the transparency that the public wants and will make the system easier to understand. One of the main changes would streamline the current system where MLAs are paid various indemnities for different aspects of the job, such as for committee and constituency work. These indemnities would be rolled into an annual salary. The bill proposes that the annual indemnity for a Member be \$71,000. This would mean that all of the 19 Members of the 14th Legislative Assembly would receive this as a guaranteed base salary. The only other salary payments will be to those Members who take on the additional responsibilities as Speaker, Premier, Minister, Deputy Speaker or Chairperson of a standing committee. The additional payments for these positions will be: for the Speaker, \$25,000; the Premier \$54,000; a Minister \$38,000; the Deputy Speaker \$5,000; and the Chairperson of a standing committee \$3,000. These amounts are clearly set out in the schedule to the bill.

The current act provides for non-accountable living and expense allowances. The bill before us today proposes instead that an accountable allowance be paid on the Members' behalf for accommodation in the capital city. The allowance would not exceed \$15,000 a year. Expenses will be paid for travelling on assembly, committee or constituency business. The bill also proposes streamlining Members' allowances to operate his or her constituency. The system is flexible, while still maintaining public accountability for

expenditures made by and on behalf of members. A detailed report containing the indemnities, allowances and expenses paid or reimbursed to a Member by the Legislative Assembly will be tabled annually.

Under current legislation, an increase or decrease in Members' indemnities, requires a decision of all Members and amendments to the act. Some concern has been expressed in the past about Members deciding how much of an increase or decrease they will receive. The bill before you today provides that any adjustments to Members' indemnities will match any increase or decrease in public service salaries. Another change in the system will be the deduction of \$100.00 for each morning or afternoon a Member fails to attend a sitting or committee meeting without a reasonable explanation. The bill also provides a transitional allowance for Members who do not become Members after a general election.

The name of the Management and Services Board will change to the Legislative Assembly Board of Management and its meetings will be open to the public. The regulations approved by the Board of Management will be published and the Speaker will table the Board of Management's policies to allow for public scrutiny. I think, not only the general public, but the Members will appreciate the fairness, simplicity, transparency, ease of understanding, and accountability of the proposed compensation system for Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Part 2 of the bill provides for the establishment of the Executive Council, the appointment of its members, and the selection of the Premier. It also provides for the appointment of a Deputy Premier and Ministers. In addition, Part 2 clarifies the termination date of the terms of office of the Premier, Deputy Premier, and Ministers.

Other major changes deal with conflict of interest. These changes include implementing the recommendations made by the Conflict of Interest Review Panel in its report last April. Panel members recommended changes in four main areas:

1. A stronger and more accessible Conflict of Interest Commissioner's office;
2. A defined procedure for dealing with conflict of interest investigations;
3. A less expensive and more timely alternative to full public inquiries where warranted; and

4. A regime where NWT residents know what is expected of MLAs and senior appointed GNWT staff and how and where to voice concerns.

I think it is important that we remind ourselves that the conflict of interest provisions were put in place so that the public may be satisfied and have confidence in the actions of elected representatives. The bill provides the definition of the obligation of a Member. It states:

A Member has a conflict of interest when the Member exercises an official power or performs an official duty or function in the execution of his or her office and at the same time knows, or reasonably should know, that the performance of the duty or function or the exercise of the power may further his or her private interests or the private interests of his or her spouse or dependent child.

The process for filing a complaint, its investigation and disposition, has been refined to make it less complicated for the complainant and the Member named in the complaint. The bill provides that a Member, or any person, who believes on reasonable grounds that a Member has contravened any part of the conflict provisions, may file with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, a written complaint setting out the grounds. In addition, the bill provides that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner may receive an oral complaint from a person where the Commissioner considers it appropriate to do so.

The efficiency and independence of the complaint process is apparent at this point. Once a complaint is filed, an investigation

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is conducted by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner who can find that the complaint was frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith and there are no sufficient grounds to proceed.

However, if the Commissioner determines that there was an infraction but that infraction was trivial or inadvertent, or due to an error of judgement made in good faith, the Commissioner can dismiss the complaint. The findings would be reported to the Legislative Assembly.

If the Conflict of Interest Commissioner determines there are sufficient grounds to warrant an inquiry, he or she would direct an inquiry before a sole adjudicator be held. A list of sole adjudicators will be

named by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. The sole adjudicator will conduct an inquiry in a manner provided for in the act and must report to the Legislative Assembly. Once the report of a sole adjudicator is tabled, the Legislative Assembly shall consider the report within 15 sitting days.

The other change to the act deals with paying costs related to a complaint. The bill proposes that the reasonable costs of a Member complained against shall be paid according to a policy of the Board of Management. The bill also proposes that no payment be made for a complainant's costs.

The other significant changes being proposed are in the following areas:

- disclosure by the Premier of a conflict in a meeting of the Executive Council;
- establishing a trust arrangement by the Speaker or Minister;
- application by the Speaker or Minister for authorization for a contract;
- all disclosure statements to be filed with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner;
- mandatory requirement for the members to meet with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner; and
- the appointment of a special Conflict of Interest Commissioner, where necessary.

If this bill is approved by the Legislative Assembly, it will come into force on December 7, 1999, the day after the next general election. This means that this Assembly will have provided the 14th Legislative Assembly with a new act that will allow Members to focus on the many significant issues that they will face. The Members, I hope, will see that they have a simple, fair, transparent and accountable compensation system. It allows for increased public confidence when complying with conflict of interest requirements as Members carry out their duties as elected leaders in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Chairman, I will do my best, on all Members' behalf, to answer any questions. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. As this bill has been referred directly to committee of the whole there is no

committee report. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister, Mr. Dent, if he wishes to bring in any witnesses.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Does the committee agree? Agreed. Sergeant-at-Arms could you escort the witnesses in. Mr. Minister, can you introduce your witnesses?

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have the real boss of the Legislative Assembly beside me, Mr. David Hamilton, and I also have with me from the legal division or legislation division, legislative counsel, Diane Buckland, and Mr. Mark Aitken, director of legislation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments on the bill. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think this is the culmination of a number of areas that were of concern. One was the commission that was established to look into Members' salaries and benefits. There was concern about the many multitudes of processes that were used to pay our salaries and in addition there were areas where we receive expense allowances. They are really costs that we incur on behalf of our constituents. It was difficult to understand that for many people and we appreciate that and it was pointed out in the report that was issued by the commission that was established. Also, we had the Conflict Review Panel who brought forward a report.

This particular bill incorporates all of those recommendations. I think it was time that we did this. It will straighten it out and I think it is a very positive step, in my mind, for us to have gone through this and taken action on it. It does take effect for the next assembly and hopefully those Members will not encounter the kind of difficulties that we have faced. I don't believe they will if this bill passes. It straightens out a lot of areas and it deals with a multitude of areas, both expenses and incomes for Members of

the Legislative Assembly, the Executive Council itself and then the conflict of interest area.

I am encouraged by this bill, Mr. Chairman. Certainly a lot of thought and a lot of work by a number of committees and reports have gone into it. As I said, the Member's compensation committee and then later the Conflict of Interest Review Panel. Those are my comments, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Mr. Ootes. Comments and questions. General comments. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, am in favour generally of this bill as has been indicated by my colleagues, Mr. Dent and Mr. Ootes. The bill will take effect for the next Assembly, the 14th Assembly, and it should make things a lot simpler of those Members. I know that when we took office I was quite surprised with the amount of money that we were making because I too was a member of the public at one time. I read the newspaper reports. I thought people made huge amounts of money and although some people still think that the money we make is a lot of money, I suppose it is, it is nowhere near the amount of money that people think that MLAs make. That is simply because of the reporting procedures by members of the press to continually, for one reason or another, add up all the office expenses, transportation expenses, constituency assistant's expenses, and everything else and roll it into one. It makes it seem as though it is part of your salary.

I know that I was quite surprised when I learned that I think the

Page 62

former Member from the Eastern Arctic was credited to making something like \$170,000. I think half of that was for his transportation to and from his constituency. Not half, but a great amount.

Hopefully, this will make things simpler and a lot easier to understand for the general public. I know it will certainly make it a lot easier for the MLAs who will now receive the same amount of money every two weeks, the same as all our employees receive a cheque every two weeks and that is what they make. In that way, it will make things a lot easier for the next group of MLAs.

One thing I may not necessarily agree with, it does not sit well with me, is the fact that some MLAs sit on more committees than others and may work a lot more than other MLAs but they will not necessarily be paid for that extra work. Sometimes there is a fair amount of work that has to be done on bills and those types of things, particularly the Social Programs Committee. They had to deal with 62 percent of the budget, or whatever, and there were an awful lot of meetings involved. Although it is the case that those people who sit on more committees than others will not be remunerated for those extra meetings, I am in favour of this new system because it makes it simpler for everybody, particularly, for the reporting.

Also, Mr. Chairman, the Conflict of Interest Review Panel came back with several recommendations. I particularly like the fact that once the Conflict Commissioner determines that there are enough grounds to warrant an inquiry, then he or she directs an inquiry be started. The Commissioner of the Northwest Territories then appoints a sole adjudicator, which is a totally separate person from the Conflict Commissioner, so there is no apprehension of bias. There are two different parties that will be doing the process now and I like that. I think that a lot of other people will like that process as well.

As well, we have indicated in the conflict provision whose legal counsel will be paid for and that type of thing. That clarifies that area. In the past, I do not think it was as clear so a lot of people argued about this and that. This now clearly spells it out. I think it is a lot better. It doesn't matter which way it goes, as long as it is clearly spelled out. I think it helps clarify the issue.

The way that the system will work in the future, I do not think that you will really need legal counsel anyway. The new system will help make things simpler and easier to understand.

Mr. Chairman, again I just want to reiterate that I am in favour of this bill. I realize that perhaps people thought it should have happened sooner, but there has been a lot of things on our plate. I think that putting new things in place for yourself are very difficult things to do. I think that the best thing we could do for the next Legislative Assembly is to pass this now so that they do not have to worry about it being the first thing that they have to do when they get here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

General comments? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I think that this Bill is long overdue with respect to MLA's compensation. There was a commission at the outset of our term of office and there were some recommendations made at that time. Now I am pleased to see that some of those recommendations are being acted on and we are making a more streamlined system in place for those coming back to the 14th Assembly. It was not only difficult for the public to understand the former compensation system, I think it was difficult for the MLA's to really understand it, as well, because it was rather convoluted. I think this is better.

I agree with Mr. Erasmus, to some extent, that some people may have a heavier workload and they will not be remunerated for it. Hopefully, we will get people in here who are willing to work and work hard and, not only look after just the interest of their constituents, but also serve on the committees and look at the broader issues of the budget in the NWT as a whole. I think that the remuneration that is being proposed is fair. I think that it is difficult for people to really get a good understanding of what is involved in doing this job until you are here and have done it.

I think the media has done us somewhat of a disservice in their reporting in the past about compensation for MLAs and this has already been alluded to by previous speakers here today. To suggest that travel to and from one's constituency, for example, is somehow a benefit that should be rolled into the total package of your pay, is not a fair comment. It certainly does create an exaggerated perception in the public which is not necessary to do. I think that what is proposed now is fair. Having done this job for the last four years, it is something that I can support having seen it from the inside.

With respect to the changes to the conflict of interest legislation, I think that I can safely say that no one is happier than I am that some of these rather vague areas in the legislation have been more clearly defined. I think we found out the hard way, and we found out through a fairly thorough test of legislation, that there were areas that needed to be more clearly defined. I believe that this change does do that.

I cannot say that I agree with all of the changes, again speaking from first hand experience. I will just quickly list some of the things that I do not agree with. I do not agree that any MLA should have access to

unlimited resources of this government in their defence. I think that how much they are expected to pay, how much expect to receive, should have a cap on it. I think the act says reasonable costs. I do not know what reasonable is. It will be determined by, I guess, the Management Services Board at the time. I do not think that unlimited access to government funds, particularly in the case where the person is found guilty, is an acceptable expenditure of government funds, tax payer's money. I object to that strongly and I want to be recorded as such.

As for the complainant not receiving any support for legal costs when a complaint is lodged, now that the system after the complaint is lodged is somewhat more defined, and hoping that we will never have another complaint of the magnitude that we have seen this government spend money on recently, I think that should be alright for it to go to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and then to an adjudicator if an inquiry is required.

If the system works, there should not have to be that much involvement from the complainant after the complaint is laid. That is how it should work and, like I said, I hope we are never

Page 63

faced with a situation like we have been through where there is a complaint that encompasses a magnitude of the issues that the last one did. I think that was flawed. I do not think that an enquiry can always be an non-adversarial process. I do not think that it is necessarily even an effective process of an enquiry when there is no opposing counsel present.

I think Anne Crawford stated in her report that she had never heard so many lies and half truths as were presented in that last inquiry. I am telling you that opposing counsel would have sewn up that problem because people would not have been allowed to get away with it as they did this last time. I am pleased with the progress that this bill makes towards making it a better system and will be supporting the bill. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Thank you Mrs. Groenewegen. General comments? Detail? Agreed? Clause by clause. We are dealing with Bill 3, Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, page 1, clause 1. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 2. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 3. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 6. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 7. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

On page 5, Clause 8. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 9. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 12. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 7, Clause 13. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 17. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 8, Clause 18. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 9, Clause 22. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 23. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 10, Clause 25. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 26. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 27. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 28. Agreed?

Page 64

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 29. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

On page 12, Clause 35. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 36. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 13. Clause 37. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 15. Clause 44. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 45. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 48. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 17. Clause 49. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 50. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 51. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 52. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 53. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 18. Cause 54. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 55. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 59. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 60. Agreed?

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 61. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 62. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 63. Agreed?

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Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 64. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 20. Clause 65. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 66. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 69. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 21. Clause 70. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 71. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 23. Clause 75. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 76. Agreed?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 78. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 79. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 25. Clause 80. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 81. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 82. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 83. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 84. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 28. Clause 85. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 86. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 87. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 31. Clause 88. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 89. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 90. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 91. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 92. Agreed?

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 93. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 94. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 95. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 96. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 97. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 98. Agreed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 35. Clause 99. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 100. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 101. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 102. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 103. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 104. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 105. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 106. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 107. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 108. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 109. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 40. Clause 110. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 111. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 112. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 113. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 114. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 42. Clause 115. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 116. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 43. Clause 117. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Clause 118. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 44. Schedule A. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 59. Schedule B. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Page 60. Schedule C. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Bill as a whole. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Does the committee agree that Bill 3 is now ready for third reading? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):

Bill 3 is now ready for third reading. Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you witnesses. We are now

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dealing with Bill 4, Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for this bill if he has any opening comments. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, the bill is necessary if we are to ensure that unique regimes and procedures respecting access to information and protection of privacy established in another legislation which were, in effect, prior to that coming into effect of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, remain operative after December 31, 1999.

The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, came into effect in 1996 and provided that, in the event of a conflict between the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and another act, the conflict would be resolved in favour of the other legislation for the period ending on December 31, 1998. After December 31, 1998, the conflict would be resolved in favour of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, unless the legislation in question specifically provided otherwise.

They revealed all legislation was undertaken by all public bodies to identify any provision that dealt with

access or privacy of information and then to determine if the provision:

- could be continued given the Privacy of the Access Act,
- should be repealed, or
- whether it required an amendment with a notwithstanding clause so it could remain operative after December 31, 1999.

Following the review, a bill was introduced during the 6th Session. But on December 2, 1998, the Information and Privacy Commissioner sent a letter to the Standing Committee on Government Operations outlining concerns. Consequently, the bill was not passed, but the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, was amended to extend the deadline from December 31, 1998 to December 31, 1999.

This additional time gave departments a time to continue their review of all their legislation in light of the comments of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

The additional review was completed and consequently revisions were made to those provisions in the original bill, which would have amended the Education Act and the Motor Vehicles Act. A subsection was added to the Education Act to allow a school counsellor to grant access to his or her notes to the student or parents of the student if the counsellor is of the opinion it is in the best interest of the student. A subsection was added to the Motor Vehicle Act, to clarify that only vehicle registration information, not a person's driving record, could be provided to the entities identified in the bill.

A revised bill was prepared and introduced in July of this year, but the bill died on the order paper. Further amendments have been made to the July version of the bill with respect to the Consumer Protection Act, and the Tobacco Tax Act, in response to concerns expressed by the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the Standing Committee.

Throughout this extensive review by departments, the Department of Justice worked with departments to ensure that the scope of the Access Act, was not unnecessarily limited and only the most limited number of provisions possible were given primacy over the Access Act. In fact, this bill amends only ten of the hundreds of GNWT statutes.

In some instances, it was determined that other legislation established a more compact and straightforward access or privacy regime than provided for in the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

In most cases, where the restriction on access is greater than the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the provisions deal with personal information. In other words, the tension between access to information and the protection of privacy is restored in favour of privacy. The advantage of giving primacy to the other legislation will be greater clarity and more precision.

This bill also provides for minor amendments to the Archives Act, and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. I will now call on Mr. Erasmus, the chairman of the standing committee, which reviewed the bill, to give his remarks.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, the Standing Committee on Government Operations reviewed Bill 4, Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Statutes Amendment Act, had its meetings on September 7, 8, and 9, 1999. The committee would like to thank the Minister of Justice and his officials for presenting the bill and responding to the committee's questions. As well, the standing committee had previously reviewed versions of this bill that were introduced in the House in December, 1998 and July, 1999. When the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, came into effect in 1996, it provided for a two-year grace period so that if another act had a conflict or inconsistency with it, the other act would prevail until December 31, 1998. In December, 1998 the Minister introduced a bill to amend ten acts that have provisions that conflict or inconsistent with the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The proposed amendments allowed the access and provisions of the other acts to apply in addition to or notwithstanding the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The bill also proposed to amend the Archives Act and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, itself.

The standing committee held a public hearing and consulted with the Information and Privacy

Commissioner appointed under the act, Ms. Elaine Keenan-Bengts. Due to the concerns raised by the Commissioner and the standing committee, particularly in relation to the privacy protection for personal information collected by public bodies, the original bill was not passed. Instead, a separate bill was passed to extend the grace period until December 1999.

The committee requested the Minister to examine the concerns to determine whether the bill might be improved in some areas. In July, 1999, a revised bill was introduced. This bill incorporated amendments responding to the committee's and the

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Commissioner's concerns about the Education Act, and the Motor Vehicles Act. A provision was added to the Education Act, to allow a school counsellor to give access to his or her notes to the student or the student's parents if the counsellor feels that it is in the best interest of the child.

The Motor Vehicles Act, amendments were changed to make it clear that access by various private bodies to records under the act would apply only to name and vehicle registration information, not to driving records.

The standing committee and the Information and Privacy Commissioner reviewed the revised bill and provided additional comments to the Minister. As a result, Bill 4 contains further revisions from the July bill. Changes were made to the amendments, to the Consumer Protection Act, and the Tobacco Tax Act, to clarify questions relating to the disclosure of information.

The standing committee appreciates the assistance of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the efforts of the Minister and the Department of Justice officials to improve this bill. The Minister has also made a commitment to the committee to address concerns relating to how information is collected by public bodies. The Minister advised that a process is under way to bring forms into compliance with the privacy protection provisions of the act so that individuals will better know what personal information is collected about them, how it is used and how to access personal information.

The committee also has an outstanding area of concern. Some of the acts amended by this bill, particularly the Insurance Act, and the Motor Vehicles

Act, allow personal information to be released by public bodies to private individuals or organizations. If the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, applies only to public bodies, the Commissioner and the committee were concerned that there are no legislative restrictions on the further release of personal information by private bodies and no penalties for such release. This is an important privacy concern.

In the case of the Motor Vehicles Act, department officials suggested that an obligation of confidentiality might be implied under the act. In the committee's view, this is not clear enough. The Minister also undertook to research whether the prohibition in section 59 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, against disclosing personal information might apply to private organizations or individuals. Members looked forward to receiving the results of this research.

If it is not clear that private individuals are included in section 59 prohibition, it is the committee's strong recommendation that the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, should be amended to create an offence and impose a penalty on private individuals or organizations who release personal information received in confidence from a public body.

Madam Chairperson, this concludes the standing committee's comments on Bill 4, Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Statutes Amendment Act. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. I would like to ask the Minister if he would like to bring witnesses.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Does Committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you please escort in the witnesses. Mr. Kakfwi. For the record, could you please introduce your witnesses?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On my right is assistant deputy minister of Justice, Mr. Gerry Sutton. On my left, from legislative counsel, Ms. Denise Gagnon.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. General comments on the bill by Members. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I feel quite strongly that when we start infringing on people's rights or restricting them access to information that may affect them and also information about themselves, where someone else may be able to use it against them, or use it for capital gains through surveys, has to be taken seriously. I believe that now a days, in the computer age, where information is accessed through computers and also forms of information, Internet, that people's rights and people's privileges to privacy are slowly being stomped away by infringement on the right to be able to have information about yourself kept secret. Also, being able to access information without having it regulated to a point where you have to go to court to get it.

I feel that there are some problems that I mentioned in the committee on how I feel about certain things, especially when it comes to a parent and their child's education, the information that is taken on their children when they are attending school by counsellors, that they should, as a parent, know what is happening with their child at all times. Regardless if it is through the justice system or the education system. I believe that when it comes to governments and legislatures, sometimes we overlook the human side of issues and look at more in regards to policies and implementing acts and regulations, for the government to take on more power, but limiting the powers of the people. I feel that we have to always keep in mind who we are here to serve. Are we serve the government, the bureaucracy, industry, or businesses that take advantage of using information to benefit their profit margins or the shareholders they represent?

When it comes to accessing personal information, I believe the people do have the right to know what is happening to information that relates to themselves and not find out about it, say in a newspaper, or come by chance you looked in a phone book and next thing

you find out that your address, your phone number, your date of birth and all the information that is relevant to you, shows up in an article because someone happened to legally, or illegally, access information on yourself. Once that information is stored either in a computer or put into a filing system, that information can be revealed or accessed by one agency which can turn around and sell it to another agency for a profit.

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Without having penalties spelled out in this legislation, all they get is a slap on the wrist and told not to do it again. It is too late for the person that the information may have had a drastic effect on their lifestyle, the people they know and their other family members because this information has been leaked. I believe this legislation should have gone farther in ensuring the penalties are clearly spelled out. Those penalties were harsh enough that no information will ever be revealed legally or illegally, or used improperly on any individual person in the Northwest Territories.

I feel we should have taken more time to deal with this bill and allow for groups of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and also interest groups would deal with the question of Charter of Rights and also the right to information through the new technologies that we have like computers, e-mail and also ensuring that we have a security system in place that any information taken will be private and no one will be able to access it. Allowing loop holes in legislation where people can take advantage of it, I believe has to be taken seriously and if we have to put teeth on any legislation that we put forth. With that, Madam Chairperson, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Any further general comments on the bill? If there are no further general comments, we will proceed with clause by clause. It is Bill 4 in your green binders. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Madam Chairperson, I do not recognize the quorum.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Eight, including Mr. Kakfwi is a quorum. Clause by clause. Bill 4, Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Statutes Amendment Act. Clause 1. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 2. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 3. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 4. Agreed? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Regarding clause 4, the disease registry, can the Minister explain if there is any penalties which will be either spelled out through other legislation and exactly what are those penalties for disclosing this type of information?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We will look for the information.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

We had agreed, through the standing committee this morning, that we would do a review of the penalties involved for not living up to the legislation. We had agreed to do that review this morning and we will be providing that information to Members when we have completed our work. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 4. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 5. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 6. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 7. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. On page 4, clause 8. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 9. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Clause 10. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. On page 6, clause 11. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 12. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Clause 13. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. To the bill as a whole. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 4 is now ready for third reading? Agreed?

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Bill 4 is now ready for third reading. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. That we consider the special report on western identity and I believe that is the last matter on the agenda.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Committee Report 1-13(8). Is the committee agreed to deal with Committee Report 1-13(8) now?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. General comments on Committee Report 1-13(8). Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, I had earlier in the proceedings read the overview of the Special Committee on Western Identity and I have some motions that I would propose now for the committee's considerations. Thank you, colleagues.

Committee Motion 1-13(8): To Adopt the Diamond as the Official Gemstone

Madam Chairperson, I move that this committee recommends that the diamond be adopted as the official gemstone of the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Please proceed Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The next motion is regarding the Arctic Grayling and I would make note that it was at the persistence of my colleague, Mr. Ootes who kept bringing this item before the committee and it is culminative with this motion that I am going to make today.

Committee Motion 2-13(8): To Adopt the Arctic Grayling as the Official Fish

Madam Chairperson, I move that this committee recommends that the Arctic Grayling be adopted as the official fish of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

The motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Henry.

Committee Motion 3-13(8): To Adopt the Tamarack as the Official Tree

MR. HENRY:

Madam Chairperson, I move that this committee recommends that the Tamarack be adopted as the official tree of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. Those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Mr. Henry.

Committee Motion 4-13(8): To Retire the Old Mace and Adopt the New Mace

MR. HENRY:

Madam Chairperson, I move that this committee recommends that the current Mace, used since 1959, be retired and placed on permanent display;

And further, that the new Mace of the Northwest Territories, commissioned by the Special Committee on Western Identity on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, be used at the First Session of the 14th Legislative Assembly.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Henry.

Committee Motion 5-13(8): To Pass the New Flag and Coat of Arms Projects to the 14th Assembly

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Finally, Madam Chairperson, I recommend that this committee recommends that the proposed designs for a new flag and coat of arms finalized to date, be passed to a committee of the 14th Legislative Assembly to allow that Assembly to carry out the next steps leading to the final selection and adoption of these new symbols. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Thank you, Mr. Henry. Does the committee agree that Committee Report 1-13(8) is concluded? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Since there is no further business I will now rise and report progress. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will now come back to order. Item 20, report of committee of the whole, Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 3, Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, Bill 4, Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Statutes Amendment Act, and Committee Report 1-13(8) and would like to report progress with five motions being adopted and that Committee Report 1-13(8) is concluded, that Bill 3 and Bill 4 are now ready for third reading and Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 2: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1999-2000

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member from Inuvik, that Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1999-2000, be read for the third time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 2, has had third reading. Third reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

Bill 1: An Act to Amend the Public Colleges Act

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Public Colleges Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 1, has had third reading. Third reading of bills, Mr. Miltenberger.

Bill 5: An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Third reading of bills, Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to have third reading of Bill 3 today.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake is seeking consent to deal with Bill 3 today. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Dent you have consent.

Bill 3: Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, be read for the third time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 3, has had third reading. Third reading of bills. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to give third reading to Bill 4 today.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Sahtu is seeking consent to deal with this Bill 4. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Kakfwi, you have consent.

Bill 4: Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Statutes Amendment Act

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 4, Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Statutes Amendment Act, be read for the third time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 4 has had third reading. Third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there will be a very brief meeting of the Management and Services Board at adjournment today.

Orders of the day for Friday, September 10, 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. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
20. Report of Committee of the Whole

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21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. This House stands adjourned to 10:00 a.m., September 10, 1999.

--ADJOURNMENT