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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1988

MEMBERS PRESENT

Hon. Titus Allooloo, Mr. Arlooktoo, Hon. Michael Ballantyne, Mr. Butters, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, Mr. Crow, Mr. Ernerk, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Kilabuk, Mr. Gargan, Mr. Lewis, Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell, Mr. McLaughlin, Mr. Nerysoo, Hon. Dennis Patterson, Hon. Red Pedersen, Mr. Pollard, Mr. Pudluk, Hon. Gordon Wray, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Red Pedersen): Orders of the day for Friday, February 12th.

Item 2, Ministers' statements.

Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return To Question 025-88(1): Wood Cutting Business, South Mackenzie Correctional Centre

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to the oral question, Question 025-88(1), asked by Mr. Gargan regarding the wood cutting program at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre. I have recently instructed my department to issue a directive that wood for sale at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre be sold at \$65 per cord. Senior citizens in Hay River and on the reserve will continue to be able to purchase wood at \$45 per cord. Further, I have requested that the department review the entire wood cutting program at the centre. I will advise the honourable Member as to the results of the review at a later date. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Nerysoo.

ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 026-88(1): Invitation To Opening Of Olympic Games

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a question directed to the Government Leader. Has the government received an invitation to participate in the opening of the Olympic Games?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Government Leader.

Return To Question 026-88(1): Invitation To Opening Of Olympic Games

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the Legislature that the GNWT and the people of the NWT will be well-represented at the official opening of the Olympics this weekend by Commissioner and Mrs. Parker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nerysoo.



Supplementary To Question 026-88(1): Invitation To Opening Of Olympic Games

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Government Leader indicate to the Members of this House why an Executive Council Member is not participating in the Olympic Games opening ceremonies?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patterson.

Further Return To Question 026-88(1): Invitation To Opening Of Olympic Games

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, due to the pressing business of the Legislature being in session, Ministers agreed that there would be insufficient time for us to attend events at the Olympics and it would be entirely appropriate for the Commissioner, as the titular head of this government, to represent our government and the people of the NWT at the official opening. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question 027-88(1): Radio And Television Services To Rae Lakes

MR. ZOE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Culture and Communications. I understand that one of the communities in my constituency has a serious problem with their radio and television services. I understand that the community has been without these services for a number of days now. I would like to ask the Minister, what is the department initiating at this time and when do they expect to have these services provided again?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Alloo1oo.

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, I have not been notified of such a problem. If the Member could clarify which community he is referring to, I probably could better answer his question.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Mr. Speaker, the community I am referring to is Rae Lakes. I understand that Tuesday night, with the storm that they had over there, the dish that provides the services for radio and television was damaged -- it blew over -- and I understand that the community has been without these services since Tuesday night. Now, I am wondering what the government is doing to revive those particular essential services.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, I will urge my officials of my department to get to the situation. I will inform the House as to what we are doing at a later date.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. You are taking the question as notice. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Nerysoo.

Question 028-88(1): Olympic Tickets To Cabinet Members

MR. NERYSOO: Mr. Speaker, this is a question directed to the Government Leader with regard to the issue of the Olympic Games again. Has the government or have any Ministers received any tickets to any of the various sporting activities and, in fact, will the government or any of the Executive Council Members be using those tickets?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Government Leader.

Return To Question 028-88(1): Olympic Tickets To Cabinet Members

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, although there have been invitations extended to various Members of the cabinet in connection with the Olympics, the timing is most unfortunate with this session, and a very important session, beginning right when the Olympics are scheduled. So, although we have received invitations, we have graciously thanked those who have offered us the invitations and explained that, due to the pressing business of this Legislature, we will be unable to attend. We support the Olympics. It is a great event for Canada, and we are very pleased that we can be represented by the Commissioner and his wife at the opening, but we felt that the business of the House must come first. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Nerysoo.

Supplementary To Question 028-88(1): Olympic Tickets To Cabinet Members

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. The Government Leader gives the impression that the Olympic opening will be on a day in which this House is sitting. I must remind the Minister that the opening is on a Saturday, and I want to ask again, why is no Executive Council Member participating in the Olympic Games opening? I can agree, Mr. Speaker, that the Parkers, Commissioner John and Mrs. Helen Parker, will be extremely good ambassadors but that is no excuse for the Executive Council Members not participating.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patterson.

Further Return To Question 028-88(1): Olympic Tickets To Cabinet Members

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is the first time I have ever heard this Legislature encourage us to go somewhere when the House is in session. Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with a number of extremely critical issues. The cabinet will be meeting immediately following the closure of this session this afternoon. We do not have time -- none of us has time -- to get on a plane and go to Calgary. We have important business associated with the transfer of NCPC, the position this government will take on the Meech Lake Accord, and we are going to be meeting all afternoon and simply unable to leave in time to make those events. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

Question 029-88(1): Conflict Of Interest Within LEA, Fort Providence

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to again direct my question to the Government Leader. This is with regard to his response yesterday concerning conflict of interest. That conflict of interest would be if a Member serving on a local authority was looking after matters that pertain to salary, benefits or housing. Mr. Speaker, since the November election, the three members that are on the local education authority got in by acclamation and one of them is a government employee serving as the chairman. In his letter addressed to the deputy minister of Education, the chairman has indicated clearly the status of the local authority with regard to the proposed adult education facility over a hostel facility. I would like to ask the Minister whether he is aware of this January 4th letter in which the local education authority has established that the adult education facility would take priority over the hostel facilities and whether this is a conflict, seeing as how this individual, the chairman, is looking after the interests of the department rather than perhaps what the communities wish to have; and, also bearing in mind too, Mr. Speaker, that there is only one chairman and two members that met informally to actually address this issue. I would like to ask the Minister whether there was a conflict.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Mr. Patterson.

Return To Question 029-88(1): Conflict Of Interest Within LEA, Fort Providence

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my understanding of the conflict of interest legislation in the NWT is that a member of a board, such as a local education authority, is in conflict if they have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter being discussed by the local education authority or board and they fail to disclose that interest and they participate in influencing a decision that may affect that indirect or direct pecuniary interest. I would reject the suggestion, Mr. Speaker, that the chairman of the local education authority is looking after the interests of the department. I am quite certain that there were no pressures put to bear on that particular person to take the department's position. That person was consulted as chairman of the local education authority and not as a government employee.

Quite frankly Mr. Speaker, I fail to see how whether an adult education centre or a hostel is a first priority within the mind of the chairman of the local education authority can be considered to affect that employee's direct or indirect pecuniary interest. I fail to see how an issue like that can have personal consequences on any person, including a government employee. So, I would



say, Mr. Speaker, that from what I know about this situation, there does not appear to be a conflict of interest. If the local education authority was not consulted, then that is something the members of the local education authority can take up with the chairman at the appropriate time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Gargan, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 029-88(1): Conflict Of Interest Within LEA, Fort Providence

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Chairman, just further to my question, the Minister also indicated the need for the services of a number of good people who have the confidence of their community to serve them in those positions. A copy of the letter sent to the deputy minister that I received clearly indicates the status of the Fort Providence local education authority in regard to the proposed hostel facility in Fort Providence. Further to the letter, the chairman has also indicated that he has met with members informally and from what I see here "informally" means he could have met them in a bar, in a coffee shop, anywhere; and there are only two members and a chairman that have come up with this position. As far as those meetings went, they are not even on record, and yet this chairman has clearly taken a position of a legal body which has not even met. I would like to ask the Minister again whether this is a conflict of interest.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 029-88(1): Conflict Of Interest Within LEA, Fort Providence

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, I think the Member is clearly questioning the authority with which the chairman speaks for the members of the local education authority. The Member is clearly questioning whether the members of the local education authority were properly consulted, as is his right to do. Mr. Speaker, I can agree that perhaps the chairman did not properly and fully consult members of the local education authority, but that in no way constitutes a conflict of interest.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Member is quite entitled to advance to me and to this Legislature, different views, other than those of the local education authority, on the correctness of the decision that they made. I would be very pleased to hear the Member's representations if he disagrees with those positions. But I fail to see how this remotely involves conflict of interest. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Gargan, supplementary question.

Supplementary To Question 029-88(1): Conflict Of Interest Within LEA, Fort Providence

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps for the record, then, I would like to ask the Minister if he might be able to request a copy of the meeting that took place in which this position was established; where this meeting took place; and were the minutes of these meetings recorded to establish these positions? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those details I am not aware of. I would like to take that question on notice.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. You are taking that part of the question as notice. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question 030-88(1): Radio And Television Services A Priority For Rae Lakes

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although he took it under advisement, I am not quite satisfied with the response that I was given to my previous question to the Minister of Communications. My question to the Minister is: Surely the department must have had some type of knowledge of this particular problem that occurred in Rae Lakes. It has been a number of days now, and if essential services such as radio and television were cut off elsewhere, in a municipality larger than Rae Lakes, I am sure the government would have moved more quickly. In this case it appears to me, Mr. Speaker, that the department or the government as a whole is not moving as quickly as they should to reinstate services such as radio and television in Rae Lakes. Although the Minister indicated

that he has not heard about this problem, I am sure that the Minister can undertake this and make it a top priority so that the services can be established again. Could I ask the Minister when he expects to have these services operating again? The word that I have received from the community is that these services will not be in operation until sometime next week and I do not believe that such repairs should take that long. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Alloofoo.

HON. TITUS ALLOOFOO: Mr. Speaker, I will assure the House and the Member that I will do my utmost to rectify what has been damaged by the wind. As I said before, I will take the question as notice and get back to him as soon as I can.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Pollard.

Question 031-88(1): Reason For Non-Attendance At Olympic Games

MR. POLLARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Government Leader and it refers to Mr. Nerysoo's earlier question in regard to Executive Council representation at the opening of the Olympic Games in Calgary. My question is: Is there any other reason that a Member of the Executive would not want to travel to Calgary to witness and participate in the opening of the Olympic Games? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pollard. Mr. Patterson.

Return To Question 031-88(1): Reason For Non-Attendance At Olympic Games

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Patterson.

---Laughter

Mr. Lewis. I am sorry. Mr. Pollard? No supplementary. Mr. Lewis, please.

Question 032-88(1): Attendance At AWG Versus Olympics

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Government Leader, why is it that just a week ago we decided to interrupt the proceedings of this House from March 9th until an unspecified time in the future so that Members could go to a foreign country, to Alaska, to the Arctic Winter Games, which would involve a tremendous amount of travel, at incredible cost? Yet they cannot take the time to spend one weekend in Calgary on Canadian soil to support a major international event which only comes to this country every decade or so. I found it incredible that so many Members of the Executive Council were eager to interrupt the work of this House to go to a foreign country, at great expense. I want to know why the Leader would support that move and would not support one day on Canadian soil to support a major international event.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patterson.

Return To Question 032-88(1): Attendance At AWG Versus Olympics

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, the first thing I would like to point out, as the Member well knows, is that the decision made with respect to adjournment of this Legislature was a decision made by the caucus, not by the government. It was made collectively by Members of this caucus. I would like to point out that as far as I know there are only two Members of the cabinet who are planning to attend the Arctic Winter Games in Alaska.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it clear that we support the Olympics. We have sponsored cultural representatives from communities in the Northwest Territories to attend cultural events in connection with the Olympics. I would like to point out very clearly to the Member that this government and this Legislature is represented at the opening of the Olympics, at the highest levels, by no less than the head of state, the Commissioner and his wife. Mr. Speaker, we are represented at the opening of the Olympics, in short. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Kilabuk.



Question 033-88(1): Government Leader As Delegate To Olympics

MR. KILABUK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Government Leader. He is being asked to be a representative at the Olympic Games in Calgary. Yes, we are elected representatives and you are being asked to be a delegate and to be our representative. We as representatives are trying to designate you to attend the Olympic Games opening. I would like to ask you now, are you still firm in your decision of not going?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patterson.

Return To Question 033-88(1): Government Leader As Delegate To Olympics

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the government looks forward to the day when athletes from the Northwest Territories will be participating in the Olympics. Unfortunately, none of our athletes are actually participating in the Olympics. Many of our athletes will be participating in the Arctic Winter Games and I think it is very appropriate that this Legislature should support them and recognize them and take a break after a month or so of sitting to allow some of our Members to attend the Arctic Winter Games.

As far as the opening of the Olympics is concerned, Mr. Speaker, we have some time ago explained to the Olympic committee that we will be represented and I would suggest we will be very well-represented by Commissioner Parker and his wife at the opening and appropriate arrangements have been made some time back to allow Mr. Parker and his wife to be at the official opening and visibly representing the Northwest Territories at that event.

I think at this late date it would be very difficult to make any changes and besides, as I have said, Mr. Speaker, there are pressing matters that this cabinet must deal with today that must be dealt with on an urgent basis, that prevent us from the pleasure of attending that event. We feel very confident that we will be very well-represented by the Commissioner and his wife. So, I think it is too late to change that decision, Mr. Speaker, and besides, I am entirely satisfied that the NWT will be well-represented in the person of our Commissioner and his wife who are well-known throughout Canada and will, I am sure, very adequately extend the best wishes of the people of the NWT on our behalf at the opening at this important national event. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

Question 034-88(1): Bison Quota For Fort Providence And Rae-Edzo

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Renewable Resources. It is concerning the bison herd in Fort Providence and I am just referring to the consolidation of hunting and processing of wildlife regulations. In there, there are certain quotas given to individual local hunters and trappers associations with regard to polar bears, musk-ox and caribou, with the exception of Fort Providence where a quota of 20 has been given to be shared between Fort Providence and Rae-Edzo. In other communities in other areas, like for example in Bay Chimo, 650 are distributed through Bay Chimo which distributes to the surrounding communities of Rae, Rae Lakes, Lac la Martre, Snare Lakes, Yellowknife, Detah, Coppermine. In other areas caribou...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Gargan, your question please.

MR. GARGAN: I would like to ask the Minister why there is a consistency in this particular consolidation with the exception of this quota that was given between Fort Providence and Rae. I would like to ask the Minister why this was done.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 034-88(1): Bison Quota For Fort Providence And Rae-Edzo

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, this is the first time that this kind of quota has been given out to that area, for wood bison on the north side of the Mackenzie. This year, for the first time, there will be a quota of 20. Like the polar bear quotas in the NWT, it is all unified. We have sets of quotas for polar bears that are divided by communities. For wood bison this year, there are going to be 20 for that area and hopefully next year, 1988-89, we will have doubled the quota to 40. It is forecast that the population will not be harmed by the taking of 40 animals next year. The population of the animals seems to be stable around 3000 at this point. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Is that a supplementary, Mr. Gargan?

Supplementary To Question 034-88(1): Bison Quota For Fort Providence And Rae-Edzo

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, if the quota that was given for 1987 has not been used as yet, the problem seems to be that the amount that was designated for Providence is not clear and the amount that is going to Fort Rae is not clear. I would like to also ask the Minister whether the definition of a sanctuary is still applicable with regard to hunting in a sanctuary. I believe that a sanctuary, as defined, means a refuge for animals. If we are talking about a quota being designated, how much is going to Providence? How much is actually going to Rae? And whether they are allowed to hunt in a sanctuary or are they looking at other areas to hunt these bison?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 034-88(1): Bison Quota For Fort Providence And Rae-Edzo

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, it is basically up to the two communities. On November 3rd of this year there was a meeting between Providence and Rae chiefs. Mr. Bonnetrouge, chief of Fort Providence, and Mr. Joe Rabesca, chief of Rae, are expected to meet together and come up with allocations of tags in those two communities. They will set how many tags are allocated for Fort Providence and Rae. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Further supplementary, Mr. Gargan.

Supplementary To Question 034-88(1): Bison Quota For Fort Providence And Rae-Edzo

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Chairman, I still cannot identify the rationale of why a community like Rae would be given a quota, considering the fact it is my constituency that the sanctuary is in. It is my group's trapping area that the bison are in and it is also the Deh Cho Regional Council area that this sanctuary is, where the bison herds are. I would like to ask the Minister what was the rationale behind giving a portion of that quota, whatever number it was, to the Rae band? How did the Minister come up with that decision?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 034-88(1): Bison Quota For Fort Providence And Rae-Edzo

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, the two communities have been co-operating with the department since the regional herds were put in that area. The co-operation from the two communities has been very good to ensure that the wood bison population will grow. The trapping and hunting in that area has been restricted for some time. They have sacrificed themselves by restraining their hunting and trapping in that area. The two communities have been doing that and hunting is also done in that area as much from Fort Rae as from Fort Providence. As I said, the tags will be divided by the two communities and if the two communities cannot come up with an agreement, as the Minister responsible for Renewable Resources, I may have to ask the Mackenzie Valley renewable resource management advisory board to come up with some proposal.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question 035-88(1): Quota System For Wood Bison

MR. ZOE: On the same issue that Mr. Gargan was asking about. I would like to ask the Minister, if I understand correctly, there were 20 tags that were allotted for this bison hunt. A number has been given to the Fort Providence band and also the Rae band. If I am correct it is eight tags going to Fort Providence, eight tags going to Rae and four to the general public, where they can get a permit to hunt buffalo in the lottery draw. I would like to ask the Minister if that particular quota system that was established still stands.



MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 035-88(1): Quota System For Wood Bison

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Oral questions. Mr. Pudluk.

Question 036-88(1): Transfer Of Fisheries And Oceans Responsibilities To NWT

MR. PUDLUK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I am probably bigger than the one sitting next to me, so I was noticed first. This is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources. I do not mind if he does not respond to my question right away. Prime Minister Trudeau's special representative, who was Bud Drury, came out with, I think, three reports and one of the reports when talking about devolution also talked about offshore issues -- oceans, for example -- and he made a recommendation about certain responsibility being devolved to the NWT. Has his recommendation been acted upon or has any work been done in that particular area? This question is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 036-88(1): Transfer Of Fisheries And Oceans Responsibilities To NWT

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This issue I think is in regard to Fisheries and Oceans regarding sea mammals and the management of that resource. First of all, I went to a meeting with the Ministers from the different provinces and they were discussing offshore management. We are studying that very issue of offshore management and sea mammals management with Fisheries and Oceans at the present time. We still have not taken over the responsibilities but we expect that sometime in the future that management will probably be devolved to our portfolio.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Oral questions. Mr. Pudluk.

Question 037-88(1): Revision Of International Agreement On Migratory Birds

MR. PUDLUK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask another question. Sometime in the past we had a major problem regarding the birds and I am aware that the Member for Nunakput worked on that and you, Mr. Speaker, have worked on it. It has been established that in order to hunt birds there is an international agreement and not just a Canadian agreement. Has the federal government or the territorial government revised the international agreement on hunting of migratory birds? I know that if I was in northern Quebec I could hunt birds anytime; I do not have to conform to an international agreement. Why can I not hunt birds when the birds are in my area? Can you try to change the migratory birds agreement because whenever the migratory birds are in our area, we are not allowed to hunt them and when they leave the North then we are allowed to hunt them. Because of this situation maybe the territorial government, the federal government and maybe the United States Government could open up discussions so that we will be allowed to hunt birds when they are in our area.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 037-88(1): Revision Of International Agreement On Migratory Birds

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our department at the present time is working on an agreement that would change the Migratory Birds Convention Act. The countries other than Canada have not agreed to our proposal yet but we are working on this at the present time and how we can allow territorial residents to hunt migratory birds. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ernerk.

Question 038-88(1): Motion To Review Migratory Birds Convention Act

MR. ERNERK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ludy Pudluk's question and my question will be similar. In June 1987, when there was a meeting in Tuktoyaktuk there were representatives from the territorial government and 10 Ministers from the provinces and a representative from the Yukon government. You are probably aware, Mr. Minister, that there was a motion passed to reverse the law on hunting of migratory birds. I understand the Minister's response but how far has this motion gone that was passed by the 10 Ministers from the provinces, especially the wildlife management people, and what work has been done about the motion that was passed at that meeting?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 038-88(1): Motion To Review Migratory Birds Convention Act

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, to convince the other countries that the hunting period should be changed, we have to convince them that the stock of these birds will not be in jeopardy. Right at this point all the information is that the migratory birds in question are multiplying. We are now working with other countries to show scientifically that this could be done. We have not convinced them yet, but we are working with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ernerk.

MR. ERNERK: The Minister has not answered my question. I referred to the meeting in Tuktoyaktuk, in June 1987, in which biologists from the 10 provinces and the two territories passed unanimously a motion to look into the fact that you could change the Migratory Birds Convention Act so that we Inuit in the NWT could hunt birds according to Mother Nature's law. I am referring to that motion and how far the discussion has gone with regard to other countries in respect of that particular motion that was passed in Tuktoyaktuk in June of 1987. I know there is an agreement by the 10 provinces to change the Migratory Birds Convention Act. The biologists agreed that the birds are not going to be depleted.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, as the Government of the Northwest Territories, we have to convince the countries taking part in this convention. We have gone as far as taking inventory of the birds that migrate between countries. We are in the process of making intervention to these countries. We have proven statistically, scientifically, that these birds are multiplying. Now we have to go into negotiations with other countries. We are right at that stage now. We have not formally met them yet but we are now at this point. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Ernerk.

Supplementary To Question 038-88(1): Motion To Review Migratory Birds Convention Act

MR. ERNERK: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The motion read that the Migratory Birds Convention Act be amended before the next hunting season, which is in 1988. I am wondering, since the Minister is having discussions with other countries and since there is an agreement within interprovincial wildlife management in Canada, whether the Minister is going to discuss this important matter with the United States before the next hunting season, which is basically April/May of 1988.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 038-88(1): Motion To Review Migratory Birds Convention Act

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, I cannot, at this time, assure the Minister that the hunting season will be changed by the spring. I could assure him that we have statistics that have been scientifically proven that the birds are multiplying. In the future I will be talking, not only to the United States, but also to Mexico on these issues. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pudluk.



Question 039-88(1): Charges Of Illegal Hunting Of Migratory Birds

MR. PUDLUK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to my colleague. This question is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources. How many people have been charged to appear in court regarding the migratory birds? I know that wildlife officers monitor and enforce the law regarding these, especially in terms of wastage. I know some people have been taken to court for killing birds out of season. Can you tell us how many people actually have been charged and had to go to court for killing migratory birds? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, I will take the question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Lewis.

Question 040-88(1): Labelling Of Trapped Fur

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Renewable Resources what this government is doing or what it plans to do about a recent announcement that a recent piece of legislation would require labels to be placed inside fur garments, indicating that the animals that went into these garments may have been caught by a leghold trap? Especially when we consider that the animals may have been shot, they may have died of a heart attack, they may have died of natural causes and in fact we do not know, in many cases, how animals in fact were caught. I would like very much to know what the government itself is planning to do, not through a third or fourth party. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lewis. Mr. Allooloo.

Return To Question 040-88(1): Labelling Of Trapped Fur

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said yesterday to that, we are working with External Affairs. On February 10th, the Minister of External Affairs, Mr. Joe Clark, informed Parliament that this is a step that the British government is taking and they are working to find ways to block these initiatives by the British Parliament. Right at this point, as the Government of the NWT, we are working with the Fur Institute of Canada and other groups of this country who deal with basically native areas in Canada, to come up with the best strategy that we could take as the Government of the NWT and we will communicate that to the Government of Canada. Also we have some fans in the British Parliament; we were talking to them directly and to other people who are in that area. By Monday I should know better what we are doing to block this initiative by the British Parliament. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Lewis, is that a supplementary you have? Go ahead.

Supplementary To Question 040-88(1): Labelling Of Trapped Fur

MR. LEWIS: I take it then, Mr. Speaker, that this government will in fact have no plan. It does not plan itself to do anything but it will depend upon other people to do work on our behalf. Is that what I have to take from what the Minister just said?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, could you clarify?

Further Return To Question 040-88(1): Labelling Of Trapped Fur

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, this Member very well knows that when the seal pelt price went away down there was a lot of impact on the native people. This new initiative has a lot of potential to damage our native communities in the NWT. As the Government of the NWT, we are working with native-oriented organizations to come up with the best plan to fight this sort of thing. We are working with them on what will be most effective to block this initiative by the British Parliament. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Ernerk.

Question 041-88(1): Government Action On Labelling Of Trapped Fur

MR. ERNERK: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. My question is again to the Minister of Renewable Resources. I am still not satisfied with his replies to the questions or with his statement to the House yesterday, in which he indicated yesterday and again today that, "I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that this government will be conveying our total opposition to such actions." I am satisfied with that. What I am not satisfied with, Mr. Speaker, is this statement: "Our positions will be communicated to the highest levels of government both at the national and international level. We have asked the federal Minister of External Affairs to take strong immediate action on our behalf." That is the particular statement that I am not satisfied with. What I am asking the Minister is, what are you doing to speak on behalf of the native people of the NWT who make a living out of trapping furs? What are you doing yourself? Many, many times the Government of Canada does not speak for the native people of Canada. What are you doing?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ernerk. Mr. Minister, Mr. Alloofoo.

Return To Question 041-88(1): Government Action On Labelling Of Trapped Fur

HON. TITUS ALLOOFOO: Mr. Speaker, first of all, my deputy minister, since he is the chairman of the Fur Institute has gone down to Winnipeg to meet with native-oriented organizations. I have communicated our concern as a government to External Affairs. I understand this is not going to come into effect until February 29th. We have a little bit of time but not very much time. I have asked my department to come up with the best possible strategy on how to fight the initiatives that have taken place in the British Parliament. I feel that the Government of the NWT alone cannot come up with the best option. We have to work with the people who know best how to deal with these things. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ernerk, is that a supplementary question? Go ahead then.

Supplementary To Question 041-88(1): Government Action On Labelling Of Trapped Fur

MR. ERNERK: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, are you planning to lobby with the British government, opposing this move? Are you planning to travel to Britain opposing this move? Are you planning to meet with the European parliament members opposing this move so that this situation does not have the same effect as on the sealing industry in Canada, especially in the NWT for Inuit?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 041-88(1): Government Action On Labelling Of Trapped Fur

HON. TITUS ALLOOFOO: Mr. Speaker, as I said before, we have to come up with the best option. It might be that I might be travelling over to England. We have not come up with the best option or the best strategy to deal with that. Like I said before we have to work with the native-oriented organizations of Canada to come up with the best option that would have the most impact on the British Parliament. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Oral questions. Mr. Nerysoo, did you have a question? Item 5, oral questions. Item 6, written questions. Mr. Arlooktoo.

ITEM 6: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Question W1-88(1): Ukkivik Residence Student Allowances And Renovations

MR. ARLOOKTOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a written question directed to the Minister of Education regarding Ukkivik students. Would the Minister responsible for Education look into the matter of raising the amount of the student allowance for students living at Ukkivik residence? Further, would the Minister look into the possibility of renovations to the residence, in particular the residence heating system. It has come to my attention that students must wear heavy clothing to bed at night and have been asking for more blankets in order to keep warm. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Item 6, written questions. Mr. Gargan.



MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like unanimous consent to return to oral questions. I have one question I would like to ask.

MR. SPEAKER: Unanimous consent is being requested to return to Item 5, oral questions. Are there any nays? Mr. Gargan is asking. Mr. Gargan, you have the floor.

REVERT TO ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 042-88(1): Increase In Senior Citizens Supplement Income

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On November 18th and yesterday, too, when the Finance Minister gave his Budget Address and also the chairman of the finance committee made his report, there was no mention about a motion that I presented on November 18th regarding an increase in the senior citizens supplement income. I wanted to ask the Minister of Social Services if this coming fiscal budget reflects any increase in the senior citizens supplement.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Return To Question 042-88(1): Increase In Senior Citizens Supplement Income

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we are all aware, the budget was formulated before this government came into place, although I have requested my department to review that as a new initiative. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. Item 5, oral questions. Item 6, written questions. Mr. Arlooktoo.

REVERT TO ITEM 6: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Question W2-88(1): Regular Physical Check-Ups For People Of Remote Communities

MR. ARLOOKTOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Health regarding the people that do not have regular physical examinations. They used to have a yearly physical examination way back in the 1960s, for example when the "C. D. Howe" would come into the community, to the South Baffin. During that time there seemed to be fewer chronic illnesses and the major illness that was around was TB. There was hardly any cancer then but at this time there are hardly any physical examinations done yearly to any people. As a result, medical conditions arise too late to be cured. Would the Minister responsible for Health look into the matter of regular physical check-ups for all people of the remote communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Item 6, written questions.

Item 7, returns to written questions.

Item 8, replies to Opening Address.

Item 9, replies to Budget Address.

Item 10, petitions.

Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, tabling of documents. Mr. Government Leader.

ITEM 12: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following three documents: Tabled Document 4-88(1), Conflict of Interest Guidelines for Ministers; Tabled Document 5-88(1), Fort Smith Region Reorganization; Tabled Document 6-88(1), Summary of Cotterill Report Prepared for Executive Council. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Tabling of documents. Mr. Ballantyne.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document: Tabled Document 7-88(1), The Northwest Territories Law Foundation, Fifth Annual Report for Fiscal Year Ending June 30th, 1987.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne. Item 12, tabling of documents. Mr. Arlooktoo.

MR. ARLOOKTOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table Tabled Document 8-88(1). It is a news article from Alberta Report on Cape Dorset. It is false information about the residents of Cape Dorset. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Item 12, tabling of documents. Item 13, notices of motion. Mr. Lewis.

ITEM 13: NOTICES OF MOTION

Notice Of Motion 3-88(1): Transfer Of Northern Canada Power Commission

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, February 15th, seconded by the Member for Aivilik, I shall move the following motion: Since this Legislative Assembly operates by consensus, and since while it is sitting, all Members are subject to the will of the majority, I move that the Minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Resources table in this House by Friday, February 19, the principles recently agreed to between the Minister and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development on the transfer of NCPC.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lewis. Item 13, notices of motion. Mr. Nerysoo.

Notice Of Motion 4-88(1): Calgary Olympic Games

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I shall be moving the following motion on Monday, February 15th, 1988: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hudson Bay, that the Speaker convey congratulations, support and best wishes from the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories to the City of Calgary, the Government of Alberta and to all Canadian athletes and cultural activity participants; and further, that this Assembly express through the Commissioner, John H. Parker, its warmest welcome to all visitors, participants and foreign athletes who are involved in the Calgary Olympic Games. Mr. Speaker, I will be seeking unanimous consent to proceed with the motion at the appropriate time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Item 13, notices of motion.

Item 14, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 15, motions. Mr. Nerysoo, did you wish to proceed?

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to seek unanimous consent to proceed with the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Unanimous consent is being sought. Are there any nays?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

Mr. Nerysoo, you have unanimous consent to proceed. We will take a short recess before proceeding.

---SHORT RECESS

We are on Item 15, motions. Mr. Nerysoo, your motion is in order. Would you proceed?

ITEM 15: MOTIONS

Motion 4-88(1): Calgary Olympic Games

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank Members for giving me unanimous consent to proceed.



WHEREAS the Olympics Games will be opening on February 13, 1988 in Calgary, Alberta;

AND WHEREAS this Assembly wishes to express its support and congratulations to the residents, including all the volunteers, of Calgary and Alberta;

AND WHEREAS this Assembly wishes to express its congratulations to all northern participants in the Olympic Games;

AND WHEREAS all Members of this Assembly wish to express their best wishes and support to all Canadian athletes;

NOW THEREFORE, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hudson Bay, that the Speaker convey congratulations, support and best wishes from the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories to all the City of Calgary, the Government of Alberta and to all Canadian athletes and cultural activity participants;

AND FURTHER, that this Assembly express through the Commissioner, John H. Parker, its warmest welcome to all visitors, participants and foreign athletes who are involved in the Calgary Olympic Games.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Since your motion is in order, would you like to speak to the motion, Mr. Nerysoo?

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that there are few occasions when the citizens of Canada and the residents of the NWT can feel proud of being able to sponsor a show that makes the international community aware of the expertise and the ability of Canadians to show itself. I want, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate those in Calgary who have worked hard to first of all attain the Olympic Games; in particular, to attain the Olympic Games to represent all Canadians.

I want to also correct, Mr. Speaker, an error I believe of Mr. Patterson's. Not necessarily refuting or arguing with what he said but these games are games in which we have had representation including athletes since 1968. Sharon and Shirley Firth in fact participated in the last Olympics in Sapporo. We are extending our participation; despite the fact that it may not be athletes none the less we have representatives from the NWT participating. Like the Government Leader, I would hope that it would be athletes in the future that would participate. I must say that such things like the Arctic Winter Games are a good developing idea that we have encouraged since 1970. I hope that we will continue that.

Mr. Speaker, there have been also situations in the development of these games in Calgary that require some serious thought, in particular the question of the Lubicon Indians who are under pressure in terms of their claim and the unwillingness of the Alberta government to deal with that issue. I think we have been a government that has been very supportive of the issue of aboriginal rights. None of us here, in all of our discussion, can refute the arguments that have been put forward by those aboriginal people in Alberta. They have a legitimate claim. They have a legitimate right to negotiate those claims. But our absence should not, in any way, show to the rest of the world that we are unable to support those issues on their behalf. It is always important that we have representation to make other Canadians and other citizens of the world aware that those issues have to be resolved; that they cannot be hidden under the guise of the argument that we shelve those issues just to present to the world a situation that there are no problems. There are problems and they have to be resolved. We have to as a government, as a Legislature, make the rest of the world aware of those issues. My feeling is that our representation at these types of international festivities and these types of games can only encourage and develop knowledge throughout the rest of the world on the concern that we have, rather than hiding ourselves.

#### Assembly In A Position Of Representing NWT

Mr. Speaker, it is also important that we recognize that we have a role to play and a position of representing the rest of the NWT in these types of events. We cannot ignore that responsibility. As such, we have to ensure that those who are participating on our behalf receive that type of support from this Assembly, from the representatives who are in this Assembly, wherever possible. That is the reason why I rise today to make this motion and hope that all Members of this Assembly will rise to support this particular motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. The seconder of the motion, Mr. Crow, the honourable Member for Hudson Bay.

MR. CROW: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a seconder I would like to express my support for this and I will just make a brief comment. The mover of the motion has already expressed the views that I have, to have all the Members of the Legislative Assembly support the motion. During the question period of the Executive Council -- after listening to all the discussions this morning it is too bad there is not going to be a representative from the Legislative Assembly at the Olympic opening but I feel that we can convey our messages through voicing our support from the Legislative Assembly. I would like to say that I am in support of the motion as a seconder because the people of the NWT should support the Calgary Olympics because it is just not going to be the NWT residents that are participating. There are going to be all kinds of people there from different areas. It is just too bad that we do not have representatives at the opening of the Olympic Games in Calgary at this time. I think that all the Members are aware that these types of recreational activities are not really available here in the NWT. I would like to say that I am in support of the motion as a seconder and I would want all the Members to support the motion. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Crow. To the motion. Mr. Wray.

Minister's Letter To Alberta Minister

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Minister of sports and recreation, I have no hesitation in supporting this motion whatsoever. I just wanted for the record to indicate that letters were sent by me to my colleague in Alberta, to Mr. King, the chairman of the Olympic organizing committee and to my federal counterpart, Mr. Jelinek. With your indulgence I would just like to quote from the letter to Mr. Weiss, who is the Minister responsible in Alberta, and the other two letters are similar: "On the eve of the Olympics, I wanted to tell you how proud we are that our close friends to the south are about to take centre stage as host of the most significant sports event in the world. The Executive Council has asked me to convey our best wishes, confirm our strong support for this tremendous spectacle. We are pleased to participate in this event with a contingent of cultural performers who, I am sure, will add significantly to our portrayal of the cultural diversity of Canada. The Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, John H. Parker, will represent our government at the opening ceremonies on behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories. The Alberta government and you, as Minister responsible for amateur sport, are to be congratulated for your support in bringing the Olympics to Canada and to Alberta. Again, my best wishes and those of my colleagues for a most successful Winter Olympics." As I said, similar letters were sent to Mr. King and to Mr. Jelinek. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Wray. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

Motion 4-88(1), Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed, if any? Let the record show that the motion was carried unanimously.

---Carried

---Applause

The Chair would like to recognize in the gallery, Mr. Walter Kudelik, deputy mayor of Hay River and president of the NWT Association of Municipalities. Welcome.

---Applause



Item 15, motions.

Item 16, first reading of bills.

Item 17, second reading of bills. Item 18, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Report of the Standing Committee on Finance on the 1988-89 Main Estimates; Bill 1-88(1), Appropriation Act, 1988-89, with Mr. Gargan in the chair.

Point of order, Mr. Pudluk.

MR. PUDLUK: Mr. Speaker, regarding the order of departments schedule, I wonder if the Government Leader would consider moving the policy on conflict of interest guidelines ahead of discussions on departments?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pudluk, that is not a point of order. The committee can just move it into committee if you so wish when you get there. Mr. Gargan in the chair.

ITEM 18: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

PROCEEDINGS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO CONSIDER REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE ON THE 1988-89 MAIN ESTIMATES; BILL 1-88(1), APPROPRIATION ACT, 1988-89

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): The committee will now come to order. We will be dealing with the report of the standing committee on finance on the 1988-89 main estimates and also with Bill 1-88(1), Appropriation Act, 1988-89.

Bill 1-88(1), Appropriation Act, 1988-89

Would the Minister of Finance like to make his opening remarks at this time?

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I consider that the Budget Address yesterday constitutes the greatest component of my opening remarks. What we would recommend, after conversations with the chairman of SCOF, is that we get right into the budget after the chairman has made his opening comments. Mr. Patterson will be prepared to deal with the Department of the Executive immediately. As we go through the budget, department by department, I might have some comments to make on the report of SCOF; but I think Mr. Patterson is prepared right now to deal with the Department of the Executive. I will reserve any further comments for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Would the committee chairman like to respond? Mr. Pollard.

MR. POLLARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is agreeable to myself, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Does the committee agree that we proceed with the Department of the Executive?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): I will ask the Government Leader, then, to make his opening remarks first. The Department of Executive.

Department Of Executive

Minister's Opening Remarks

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Department of the Executive is composed of a number of small but important agencies. It includes the activities of the Commissioner's office and the Ministers' offices; the cabinet secretariat and the Priorities and Planning Secretariat, which provide services to Ministers and their committees; the audit bureau, our government's financial watchdog; and the Regional Operations Secretariat, regional directors and regional Executive offices. The office of devolution and the bureau of statistics within this department also report to me.

There are several other agencies which are part of this department but which report to other Ministers. These are: the Aboriginal Rights and Constitutional Development Secretariat; the Energy, Mines and Resources Secretariat; and the Women's Secretariat. I would like to ask that you question the Ministers responsible regarding the budgets for those agencies.

Mr. Chairman, the budget that I am presenting here is for \$13.9 million. This is down from last year's budget of \$14.2 million, for a two per cent reduction. The proposed continuing person years also dropped from 164.5 last year to 160.5, a reduction of four per cent over last year. My intent is to present you with a budget that reflects financial restraint but without sacrificing service and support. In other words, Mr. Chairman, we are going to try to do what we have been doing in the past but with fewer resources. The way we propose to do this is through even more careful management of the resources that we have.

I would like to comment on two specific areas. One is the office of devolution. You will see that we have budgeted \$218,000 for this office to continue. Those of you who were Members of the 10th Assembly may recall that this office was scheduled to close this year. However, I do not believe this would be wise in view of the significant level of devolution activity that is still going on. There are a number of initiatives including health, arctic airports, and highways, which require ongoing attention. I want to assure you that we plan to absorb this \$218,000 within the proposed budget.

#### Additional Funds For Ministers' And Government Leader's Travel

I should also tell you that we have budgeted an additional \$300,000 for Ministers' and Government Leader's travel. It is time to recognize that we have not been realistic in budgeting for this activity in the past. Consequently, for the last three years the Executive Council has overspent the amount budgeted for travel. Nor do I expect that trend to stop. Ministers are expected to travel extensively in the NWT and there are greater than ever demands for us to travel in the rest of Canada and even, on occasion, internationally. For example, we plan to be represented at every provincial hearing on the Meech Lake Accord. We recently sought and obtained representation on yet another major federal-provincial body, the Council of Atlantic Fisheries Ministers. We may well determine that we must travel to England to fight this new legislation which would threaten our fur trapping industry. So our travel expenses will probably be quite high for some time to come.

I should also mention in that connection that as Government Leader, I intend to emphasize intergovernmental affairs. I expect to travel often to provincial capitals and to Ottawa to make the views of northerners known and respected in the South. And, like my predecessor, the Hon. Nick Sibbeston, I am committed to visiting as many regions of the NWT as I can. However, I do not consider this a non-discretionary area of the budget. This House has given me authority over the management of the Executive branch of the government. I have established controls to ensure that travel money is wisely spent. I myself will be watching and, if necessary, controlling the use of charters, for example.

To make a long story short, the budget for the Department of the Executive this year is lean but serviceable. I look forward to your comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Pollard.

#### Comments From The Standing Committee On Finance

MR. POLLARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The standing committee on finance met with the Minister responsible for the Executive on January 8, 1988 and asked a number of general questions. It discovered there is no single mandate for the Executive, Mr. Chairman. Each committee has its terms of reference and there is a manual which governs the responsibilities of the Ministers. There were no new programs in the Executive this year and, with regard to performance evaluation, there is no specific measurement system. Performance is measured according to how well the Executive meets its goals and objectives.

There was a decrease of 5.3 person years at that time and there were seven positions which had been vacant for more than six months. The Government Leader has made comments on travel and we were told that due to travel as carefully monitored, the Government Leader and ministerial travel, will be increased as part of a greater emphasis on intergovernmental affairs.



The highlights, Mr. Chairman, were: a two per cent reduction in the budget; the continuation of the devolution office due to ongoing initiatives; increased travel for Government Leader and Ministers. Concerns and issues were with the travel. The committee was concerned with the large increase in travel budgets, particularly in a zero growth budget. Although the Minister provided an explanation of the increase, Members expect the travel budget to be carefully monitored.

The Ottawa liaison office was questioned as well as the salary increases for the two staff members of that office. There was a concern there to the Members. The Members also requested clarification of the role of and value of the office. In the audit bureau, there was a concern that the decrease in the travel budget for the audit bureau would reduce the ability of the bureau to fulfil its mandate. Even without the decrease, Members of the committee felt there was a problem having audits done in remote communities, particularly in a timely manner. The Minister was asked to consider not cutting this program. With regard to the Fort Smith reorganization, the feeling was that the Fort Smith reorganization has had a major impact on the budget. Members asked the Minister for an explanation of the new organizational structure and we hope that the Minister will provide that for us in this committee meeting.

Salary increases. Members were concerned with the variation in percentage salary increases throughout the government and the Minister attempted to clarify the factors which affect the salary figures. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Pollard. Are there general comments? No general comments? Does the committee agree? Mr. Butters.

MR. BUTTERS: Is the Government Leader intending to remain in his seat during the question period and will he not be requiring witnesses?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, with the consent of the committee, I would ask that Mrs. Louise Vertes, who is the deputy minister to the Executive Council, and Ms Janet-Marie Fizer, the finance officer, be permitted to enter the committee to assist me during the detailed review of our budget.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister, bring in your witnesses.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Nerysoo, your point of order.

MR. NERYSOO: Point of order, Mr. Chairman. I would like to get a copy of the conflict of interest guidelines that would be part of this particular discussion if I could, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): This is not a point of order. This is a request to the Minister. Does the Minister have copies to circulate to the Members at this time?

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, those guidelines were tabled this morning and I think the Clerk could undoubtedly arrange to have copies circulated. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Ernerk.

MR. ERNERK: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Just before we got into the committee of the whole, I think the Member for High Arctic was requesting that we have copies of these conflict of interest guidelines in front of us before we get into the discussion of the Executive. I, too, would like to see those copies in front of me while discussing the Department of Executive, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for listening.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): We will recess for about five or 10 minutes until we have those copies in front of us.

---SHORT RECESS

The committee will come to order. We are on general comments on the Department of the Executive. Mr. Nerysoo.

MR. NERYSOO: If I could ask a couple of questions. First with regard to the liaison offices, in particular the liaison office located in Alberta. Has the government considered a change in the responsibilities of that particular office? Is the government going to be making the Assembly Members of this House aware as to those changes?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

Edmonton Liaison Office Useful And Busy

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Turning to the Edmonton office first. This office, I believe, provides very valuable support and assistance to NWT residents while they are in Edmonton. For example, the office plays an important role in arranging medical escorts, administering the patient comfort allowance fund, managing funeral arrangements and related services for the Department of Social Services and the chief coroner, assisting students needing financial assistance or assistance, helping people who need access to social services and acting as a contact to vital statistics for lost birth certificates, etc. It also assists our government in carrying out duties in Edmonton by co-ordinating meetings, federal-provincial and with our provincial counterparts, provides secretarial and communication services, etc.

There are a number of other functions which I do not want to provide in great detail, Mr. Chairman, but there are a considerable number of services to the business, travelling and general public provided by that Edmonton office. There is quite a resource library that is used by tourists. We get a lot of requests for information. We sell commercial and motor vehicle licence registrations, assist groups planning tours into the NWT. So, Mr. Chairman, in short, there is no plan to change that office. I think it is a useful and busy office and we have no plans to change it.

Changes To Priorities And Function Of Ottawa Liaison Office

With respect to the Ottawa office, Mr. Chairman. I can inform the Legislature that, in keeping with my determination to give a higher profile to the intergovernmental affairs activity generally, I am looking at some changes to the priorities and the function of the Ottawa office. But I can assure the Member that there would be no intention to reduce the responsibilities of that office. Rather, the intention would be to strengthen that office and make sure that that office is used as a basis for putting the NWT on the national map and ensuring that our interests are guarded against and represented in Ottawa, in particular, but also in provincial capitals. I hope that answers the question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments. Mr. Nerysoo.

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you. I have no serious concern with regard to the last portion of the comments that were made by the Government Leader. However, I do not think an Ottawa office necessarily deals with the issue of the western provinces. In fact, our biggest opposition in many instances is, in fact, the western Premiers -- the Alberta Premier, the Saskatchewan Premier, the British Columbia Premier -- who seem to be our biggest opponents in our efforts to attain participation in federal-provincial or provincial type meetings, including First Ministers' meetings, or for that matter, the western Premiers' meetings. So I can congratulate the Minister for his efforts on the Ottawa office but I do have concern that we may not improve our relationships if we do not consider a reorganization of the responsibility of the Edmonton office, in particular the political responsibility that could be improved upon in the Edmonton office, as opposed to centralizing it in Ottawa.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: I would like to make it very clear to the honourable Member that I believe that the Edmonton office primarily exists to provide service to the public, service to NWT residents while in Edmonton, service to Albertans travelling to the NWT or doing business in the



NWT. I do not see it, except very incidentally, as an intergovernmental affairs type of function. I think the intergovernmental affairs presence outside the NWT is in the Ottawa office. And so while I very much agree with the Member that we have challenges in the western provinces, the Alberta office has not been staffed nor mandated to deal with intergovernmental affairs matters except incidentally as, for example, in the setting up of meetings with Alberta Ministers, and the like. So I think if that kind of work were to be undertaken, it would be under the direction of the Ottawa office or, of course, our staff in the intergovernmental affairs area in my office in Yellowknife. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments, office of the Executive. Mr. Nerysoo.

#### Review Of Conflict Of Interest Guidelines

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could ask the Government Leader, in terms of the conflict of interest guidelines: Has there been a major review of the conflict of interest guidelines and are there going to be any suggestions of changes to reflect what Mr. Parker in Ontario suggested, in terms of the appropriate changes to ensure the possibility that legislation could be introduced in which any breaches of the conflict of interest legislation could result in legal action?

The other thing, in terms of the conflict of interest rules -- and I perused it very quickly -- none of the rules apply to families. So I am asking, do the conflict of interest rules also apply to families in terms of ministerial responsibility? Because the conflict of interest rules under the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act also apply to every Member's family and it does not apply in this particular case.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Patterson.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, first of all, there was a review of the conflict of interest guidelines that were in place, conducted by myself and the cabinet upon taking office. We have strengthened and added to previous conflict of interest guidelines and we have tried to take into account what we knew of the judgment made by Judge Parker in the Sinclair Stevens matter. Mr. Chairman, Judge Parker set up a very high standard of disclosure of personal affairs in his recommendations in reviewing the matter of Mr. Stevens and if I can direct the Member to procedure two in the guidelines I tabled today, that section which requires Ministers to "disclose in writing to the Government Leader, in a manner suitable to him or her, all assets, interests or memberships which could give rise to a conflict of interest and confirm that the necessary action has been taken by the Minister to divest themselves of any financial holdings or interests and positions (paid or unpaid) which would be in violation of the letter of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act or Elections Act and the spirit of these ministerial guidelines". That section is our interpretation of how the principles of the Parker inquiry should apply to Ministers in the Northwest Territories.

The disclosure that is proposed in these guidelines, Mr. Chairman, would be to the Government Leader so that I would be apprised at all times of any situations in which any of my Ministers might put themselves, knowingly or not, in a situation in which they might put themselves in a conflict. So, that section requires disclosure and, I think, is in keeping with the spirit of the Parker recommendations.

#### Guidelines With Regard To Families

With regard to the matter of families, Mr. Chairman, I think that a review of the guidelines should make it clear that in a number of sections, for example, section 3, which states that "No conflict should exist between the private interest of Ministers and their official duties", and section 4, "Ministers should exercise care in the management of their private affairs so as not to benefit from use of information acquired during the course of their official duties", and section 5, "Ministers should not place themselves in a position where they could derive any direct or indirect pecuniary benefit or interest", the spirit of these guidelines would definitely include families. I think certainly, the reference to private interests and private affairs clearly would cover families and that is our intention. The reason it is not specifically spelled out is that in the

Northwest Territories, if you talk about families or relatives, with the extent of extended families and the number of people that many Ministers are related to, it is difficult to draw the line; but I can assure the committee that "private affairs" and "private interests" certainly refer to family and that was clear in our lengthy discussions on these guidelines.

I think there is a danger, Mr. Chairman, if one makes these guidelines too specific, that they will simply not apply to every situation and I would have to say, generally, that I believe there is a matter of judgment required on the facts or circumstances of a particular case and that judgment, I suppose, is the responsibility of the Government Leader and ultimately the Legislature and it is a judgment that was formed based on what we already know about precedents in other cabinets and in other courts or inquiries where these matters have now been discussed. Recently, of course, there have been a number of very public conflict of interest situations which I think have helped to clarify the standards of public conduct in this country. So, those would all be borne in mind in applying these guidelines. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Nerysoo.

#### Minister's Official Duties Extend Beyond His Department

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I have been given some assurances that it would apply. However, one of the problems, Mr. Chairman, in terms of the Parker situation in Ontario is that the so-called "trust" relationship that Mrs. Stevens was put in was really, in many instances, not considered a trust situation. He questioned the relationship in that, in allowing a spouse to be placed in a position in which she held the assets and, in any of the discussions that took place, could not in fact avoid completely any type of influence or effect by Mr. Stevens. I do not want to raise the issue of Mr. Stevens in this particular House, but the application applies to Ministers no matter where they are and it applies to those in positions despite the fact that you say "official duties". I mean, your official duties extend beyond your department. It extends to decisions that are made by the Executive Council generally on policy and, in fact, on decisions that relate to government expenditures throughout government and not only to the so-called official duties as Minister of Public Works or as Minister of Personnel, or whatever, but rather it extends to your overall responsibility.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, I think the Member's point is well taken and I agree with his point. I think that is why we have adopted guidelines which feature disclosure rather than the establishment of blind trusts. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Butters.

#### Appointments To Ottawa Liaison Office

MR. BUTTERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wish to pursue two items which the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta has already discussed but I would wish to pursue them a bit more. In the case of the Ottawa office, which the Government Leader indicates he wishes to see set up so that it will put the NWT on the national map, just what is his plan in that regard? I understand that Mr. Pilot has been let go, if that is the correct way of describing it, because I believe that he has another year to serve in his term before he reaches the age of retirement. So, as Mr. Pilot has been let go, I wonder if the Government Leader could indicate how Mr. Pilot will be replaced in that position and what new terms of reference and responsibilities will be assigned to the new occupant of that job.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Butters. Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Bob Pilot, who has provided excellent public service to this government for some 35 years -- I guess to this government and to the federal government -- will be retiring this spring. At the moment, Mr. Chairman, it has not been determined who will succeed Mr. Pilot. We are, however, looking for someone who can vigorously protect and advance our interests, both at the political and at the bureaucratic level in Ottawa and at provincial capitals and at provincial legislatures.



The determination of my government is to enhance our intergovernmental affairs presence. We understand that many critical decisions are being made in Ottawa -- sometimes at the bureaucratic level, sometimes at the ministerial level and sometimes in Parliament -- and that we need someone who is plugged into the political and decision-making network, someone who understands the interests of the North, and someone who can carry out those duties with vigour and effectiveness. It will be up to myself, in consultation with cabinet, to determine who might best fulfil those functions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Butters.

MR. BUTTERS: I am pleased to learn that Mr. Pilot has not been fired, which is a story that has circulated in the last few weeks, in view of the very, very long years of service that he has given the North and its people, both when he was a member of the force and later as regional officer with this government, deputy commissioner and as a servant of the people of the North in the Ottawa office. I would like to say that I found both Mr. Pilot and his predecessor, Claire Barnabe, extremely helpful, and the services and the function of that office most useful to myself as Minister and as an ordinary MLA when I had occasion to visit in that capacity.

I would suggest, with respect, to the Government Leader that he not fall into the trap of selecting an official wearing a blue tie. I do not think we need to have that office politicized by bureaucrats of any card-carrying stripe. I would suggest that we have got good service from the professional officials, the professional bureaucrats. I would warn him against politicizing that office. No comment is required on that point, Mr. Chairman.

#### Services Provided By Liaison Offices

With regard to the service provided by both liaison offices. I have inquired of the Clerk for the last 20 minutes for a copy of the letter which he received from Mrs. Vertes relative to the services which those liaison offices provide ordinary MLAs who may happen to be in Edmonton or Ottawa, carrying out the business of constituents. I do not have that copy of the letter before me as yet, but if I recollect, there was a number of support services which the government is willing to extend to ordinary MLAs. I am assuming that although the letter was written by Mrs. Vertes, it also has the support of the Government Leader.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will say that I do appreciate the Member's advice on what sort of person we should be looking for in the Ottawa office, and I also endorse his comments about the excellent service that has been provided by Mr. Pilot. Mr. Chairman, I will confirm that indeed we believe it is extremely important that these offices be available to assist and support Members of this Legislature who are representing the Legislature in official duties outside the NWT. I think it is extremely important in a consensus government that the government, the Executive branch and the legislative branch work together. In fact we are working together in a presentation from the Legislature and the government this coming week in Ontario. I will confirm that the offices in Edmonton and in Ottawa are open to the use of Members of the Legislature for office space, secretarial services, arrangements of meetings, gathering information, expediting, and in such matters as delivering information, letters, assistance with passports and those kinds of things. This is indeed encouraged by our government. I think those offices will be found, as past Members have found them, to be very useful to Members travelling outside the NWT. They are at your service. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Butters.

#### Disclosures As Required By Conflict Of Interest Guidelines

MR. BUTTERS: Again, pursuing the line of questioning that was begun by Mr. Nerysoo. I would like to move to the conflict of interest provisions and one very brief question at this time, although I would reserve the right to have the opportunity at some later date during this session to come back to that particular document, should further scrutiny suggest that questioning is required, or a possible amendment or suggested amendment to the wording as presented to us. I would like to receive from the Government Leader his assurance that since the 90 days for disclosure are now up, all of his cabinet colleagues have disclosed to him the requirement that is indicated in provision two of the procedures.



CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, since these guidelines were completed, actually 90 days has not quite elapsed. If one were to count each day, I think the 90 days since the guidelines were adopted would be up next week. I can assure the Member, however, that although there are still some matters to be tidied up and I have discussed with some Ministers arrangements that they are required to make in order to conclude certain affairs that would have a bearing on these guidelines, these arrangements are under way and I am assured that very shortly all of the disclosures required will be made to me. Sometimes it is somewhat complicated to conclude the necessary transactions required to meet the spirit of these guidelines, Mr. Chairman, but I have had discussions with all my colleagues about what is required and I am quite confident that everything will be finalized very shortly. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Butters.

MR. BUTTERS: Now that I no longer enjoy the fiscal professional support of all the staff that I had as Minister of Finance, my adding has deteriorated but I still feel that over 90 days has progressed since the 13th of November.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, let me explain that the guidelines were a very important item of business at the strategy session that we had at Snare Rapids in late November. At that time, I can assure the House, lengthy discussions were undertaken reviewing existing guidelines, strengthening those guidelines and developing new guidelines. We took, I think, a great deal of care to make sure that we fully understood all the situations that might be considered and described in these guidelines and it was only on January 15th that, after at least three detailed discussions, these guidelines were finally concluded and placed in the manual which has been developed to govern all matters respecting the Executive Council and Ministers. I suppose, Mr. Chairman, that technically 90 days of taking office has been concluded but I have to inform the Member that in fact the guidelines were not concluded immediately after we took office. So, we have agreed that the few Members who are still concluding their affairs will require just a little bit more time but I am quite confident that those Members are proceeding quickly to resolve those matters and that by next week I will be able to say that all disclosures have been provided to me. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Nerysoo.

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to follow up, firstly, with the last comments. Does that include contractual arrangements with governments as well? Disclosures and, in fact, I guess I could say, a withdrawal from contractual arrangements with the Government of the NWT?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, the answer is yes, of course. I would like to just clarify perhaps, Mr. Chairman, that the guidelines that I have tabled today are guidelines we have developed for ourselves in addition to the requirements of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act and the Elections Act. So we have established new and additional guidelines and I would like to point out that the disclosure requirement was not required when the Members of cabinet took office. We developed these guidelines and agreed on them after we took office. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you. Mr. Nerysoo.

Medical Services Through Edmonton Liaison Office

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to ask a question of clarification from the Minister. Earlier you indicated that the Edmonton office was responsible for providing services in the medical area. Is that true or is it in fact presently the responsibility of the National Health and Welfare offices in Edmonton, with a contractual arrangement?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.



HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, the Member is correct that the primary responsibility does rest with National Health and Welfare. However, the reality is that we have a lot of NWT residents who seek assistance from our office and therefore we work very closely with National Health and Welfare in administering their program. In fact, we directly administer the patient comfort allowance fund on behalf of National Health and Welfare. So there is a close working relationship there. But the responsibility is primarily that of National Health and Welfare, as the Member indicates. I might point out that the medical escorts service for employees of the Government of the NWT and their dependants, which is provided by the Edmonton office, saves the Department of Personnel considerable expense in providing escorts from home communities. I think last year we estimated that we have saved over \$6000 by providing patient escorts out of our office in Edmonton. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Nerysoo.

MR. NERYSOO: I just wanted that clarification. I want to indicate that in fact it is my personal opinion we should assume the responsibility for the medical services side in the Edmonton office anyhow. I just do not think we are receiving adequate service from National Health and Welfare and I think that in terms of the decision on transfer, I hope that we in fact improve that particular office to directly take on the responsibility of providing service to the residents of the NWT. I think it is not a very good service that we are getting at this time. I just commend those people that are doing the job out of the Edmonton office at this particular time.

One other question, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the Edmonton office, is there also going to be a change in terms of who heads up that office in the upcoming year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, the lady who represents us in Edmonton and has been doing that job for some years has been in ill health recently. She has just had surgery. She is beyond the retirement age and at the moment we are waiting to see how she recovers from surgery. So I cannot tell the House at this time whether she will be able to continue or not. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Nerysoo.

#### Policy Of Budget Secrecy

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to ask, Mr. Chairman, in terms of the budget presentations, whether there is a policy change in government and in the Executive Council about this so-called secrecy of the budget and whether or not we are now changing that particular part of the budgetary presentation and whether Executive Council Members are now being allowed to make public, elements in the budget prior to the presentation to this Assembly.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, I think that would be an appropriate matter to refer to the Minister of Finance. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Ballantyne.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: This is a question that has come up every year as long as I have been with the Assembly -- the so-called secrecy component of the budget. We have some obvious problems and it is something I will be dealing with, with the chairman of the SCOF committee. There has been some talk about a fall capital budget and the Executive Council has a number of options that we are going to be presenting to SCOF and to start that discussion, I think that in fairness to the departments, it would be very difficult to do anything in this regard for this year but we want to look at it. There are some real problems with having the capital component of the budget, all of it, in the winter session.

There are also certain realities I think we have to understand. The budget process, especially the capital component of the budget process, is discussed at very significant length at the community and at the regional level. The Ministry of Public Works, as you know, publishes in newspapers in the fall, capital projects that will be carried on in the next year, so the budget document that we are talking about, at least parts of it, have very general circulation.

In past years there have been problems back and forth where the cabinet has said that the Legislative Assembly has leaked components of the budget and there are other years when the Legislative Assembly says that the cabinet has leaked portions of the budget. I think that what we are going to have to do in the next year, and I have made a commitment to the chairman of the standing committee on finance, is that in conjunction with the discussions of the relative merits of a fall budget we should come up with a protocol that everybody fully understands, as to how a budget will be handled. I am prepared, whenever the chairman of the committee is prepared, to sit down and talk about some of these issues.

I really want to emphasize that any Minister who makes any comment about something in the proposed budget makes it with the very distinct qualification that of course it will depend on approval of the Legislative Assembly. I think that is an important thing for everyone to recognize. As I said, many of our projects are made available to the public through the newspapers in the fall before a session and, as I said before, for instance with the DPW and the MACA budget, our capital projects are discussed at some length at the community and regional level.

I agree with the Member that, after some years of some confusion, it would be in everyone's interest to rationalize the process, to rationalize what components of the budget are and should be secret and to rationalize disclosure procedures for Members of the Legislative Assembly. So, we are prepared to look into it and sit down with the standing committee on finance to see if we can rationalize some of these systems which seem to cause problems every year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne. Mr. Nerysoo.

#### Unique System Of Budget Presentation

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister for the comments. I just want to say, though, that in terms of the budget presentation, we are the only Assembly in the country, or for that matter in the world, with the parliamentary system, that is, in fact, given the budget prior to its presentation to the Assembly or, in fact, prior to its introduction by government. So, in that sense I think that the system is much more open to our participation in determining the budget but I think that that is also questionable in the sense of what influence the Members of the Assembly will have in terms of the priorities of the budget or, for that matter, what decisions are made that influence the presentation of the budget to this Assembly. I think that, in your discussion, that particular item has to be resolved.

In terms of a policy, Mr. Chairman, and in regard to whether the Government Leader undermines the authority of the Minister of Finance, that certainly has to be resolved as well in terms of the jurisdiction and the authority of the Minister of Finance, because in most other jurisdictions the Minister of Finance has complete control over the budget and the priorities in which that budget is given, and not necessarily cabinet. They only influence what is said like every other ordinary Member. But in this particular case, in our situation, we dictate generally. The Executive Council Members determine, really, what the priorities are in their particular departments; and that is unusual. In most other jurisdictions that does not happen.

But I want, Mr. Chairman, to pursue one particular item and that has to do with the presentation of our government, or at least our standing committee on finance, in terms of public disclosure, because in my short experience on the standing committee on finance, it has not been Members who have been disclosing information with regard to the budget for this upcoming year. In fact, changes to the budget were being made that, despite the fact that we were in review, were not made known to the standing committee on finance, but in fact they were made public and not made known to the standing committee on finance. It may not have been that we disapproved of that change but rather needed the explanation as to why those changes took place. It is difficult, I guess, for Members like myself who have been here for nine years to be told in the standing committee on finance that we are not to disclose information and yet to have the Executive Council Members disclose that information themselves. I think that if the rule applies to ordinary Members, then surely to God it has to apply to the Executive Council Members as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.



Public Involvement In Planning Cycle

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, I can only echo the words of the Minister of Finance and agree with the Member that we do need to clarify the whole question of information about, particularly, capital projects. I think in looking at that question we have to realize that it has been a tradition of this government to involve regional councils, local education authorities and local municipalities in advising on budget priorities. The planning cycle for projects requires a certain amount of public involvement, so there are many ways in which information can come to the attention of the public as well as the points mentioned by Mr. Ballantyne -- the tight deadlines for construction that our present winter budget approval requires and the need to, or the desirability, at least, of providing advance notice to contractors on major projects so that northern companies will have a chance to prepare themselves to bid once the budget is approved. So, I think the Member's point is very well taken, that this is a matter that needs to be carefully reviewed. The rules have to be clarified and should apply equally to all Members, I agree. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ballantyne.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Yes, just to clarify one remark made by Mr. Nerysoo. The federal Minister of Finance does not have the total responsibility for setting priorities for the government. The federal Minister is responsible to ensure that those priorities are carried out in an acceptable manner set out by legislation. The Member will recall that when Mr. Wilson had a desire to change the universality of social programs he found out very quickly that Ministers of Finance are brought under other political pressures. So I think the priorities of the government are decided by the Prime Minister and cabinet; but the Member is right, the Minister of Finance holds certain specific and distinct responsibilities set out by legislation, which is also the case here with our new Financial Administration Act, and as such he has a different responsibility in this area than other Ministers. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Kilabuk.

Ottawa Office Assisting Students

MR. KILABUK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to get back to the topic about the office in Ottawa. We discussed this in our committee meeting. The office in Edmonton has a very good purpose, as I heard it, and it is utilized by the people going to the hospital. Regarding the office in Ottawa, I would like to ask if there has been any consideration of utilizing it for other purposes. There are a lot of students who go to Ottawa. Maybe this office can be used also for the people who go there for training. They can use that office to pass on information that is required. This is a suggestion and a question, if it could be considered. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that is a good idea that the Member has. I think that if there are students in Ottawa, we should make sure that the Ottawa office is made available to them to provide services and support. I do not believe that at the moment we have many students from the Eastern Arctic in Ottawa. Most of the recent graduates from high school in the Baffin are attending universities in the Maritimes -- Acadia University and Dalhousie University in Halifax. I can also mention to the Member that the Department of Education now has assigned a person from the Baffin regional office to assist and support those students, to maintain regular contact with them and to visit them from time to time to ensure that they are doing well and that they get any help they need. But students who are in Ottawa can easily be helped by the Ottawa office, and I will follow that suggestion up. But, as I say, I do not believe at the moment that we have any or many students in Ottawa but that does not mean we could not use the office in future years when we have more students in Ottawa. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you. Mr. Kilabuk.

MR. KILABUK: (Translation) Mr. Chairman, supplementary. My reasoning was that there are some students who have gone to school somewhere in Ontario from my community. I was asked by one person how else he could be helped because he is far away from home. The reason I had this suggestion was that perhaps if he needed some help or information, then Ottawa is much closer to him where he is than is his home. Thank you.



CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you. Mr. Lewis.

Evaluation Of Function Of Liaison Offices

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, I would also like to address these remarks about both the Ottawa office and the Edmonton office. The major criticism the standing committee on finance had of several things that our government does is that we really do not evaluate many of our programs very well. In the case of the Ottawa office, it started off when the government of that day did not know what to do with a senior official of this government. That person was given a job in Ottawa with no job description and no idea about what he had to do. The second person that went to the Ottawa office went there because he was a very sick individual who had given great service to this government for a long period of time. He similarly did not know exactly what his job was. The next person in that office was assigned to it because that person was told that because of Liberal connections that would be a good kind of person to have in Ottawa. We are now at the stage where another appointment has to be made and it begs the question about what that Ottawa office really is for. And we never evaluate exactly what many of these functions are before we decide to carry on with them.

In the case of the Edmonton office, it started off as a Department of Information place to tell all Canadians about what a wonderful place the NWT was. Then it was decided, because again someone was needing a reassignment, that it should be a place where students get counselling and assistance. So over a period of time, both the Ottawa office and the Edmonton office have taken on different shades of responsibility. It is very much, Mr. Chairman, like an old building that you find in many of our communities. It starts off being used as a school, for example, and then gets old and they decide, "Well, let's use it for something else." Really, what should have happened is that it should have been knocked down. For an example we have a huge building in Inuvik which has been a subject of controversy for many years because you did not know what to do with it, simply because you started off with it. We are doing the same thing in Ottawa and we are doing the same thing in Edmonton. We start doing something and then we decide what it should be afterwards, instead of deciding whether we need it or not. I would prefer, before any decision is made about filling the Edmonton or the Ottawa facilities, that we really decide what it is that they have to do instead of reinventing it every few years in light of what may seem to be priorities at that time. I find both facilities to be very, very unclear in my mind as to their use or whether we are getting value for money in either of them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

Services Provided By Edmonton Office

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, I have tried to state very clearly that the Edmonton office, in my view, performs a number of very valuable services. In fact, through the revenues that are generated by that office selling commercial and private motor vehicle registrations and driver licence renewals and providing at significant reductions of cost medical escort services for employees of the GNWT, it pretty well pays for itself. The Edmonton office clearly provides, I think, essential public services. For example, last year in a one year period that office handled 26 funeral arrangements. Now, Mr. Chairman, if we left funeral arrangements to the Government of Alberta or the Department of National Health and Welfare, I am certain that we would sooner or later come across a situation where, because of lack of knowledge of transportation routes, local customs, the sensitivities that surround these delicate matters, there would be bad or difficult or insensitive decisions made and we would be called upon to do something to avoid that kind of problem.

I read out some of the functions of the Edmonton office at the beginning of these questions: arranging medical escorts, administering the patient comfort allowance fund in conjunction with Health and Welfare Canada, managing funeral arrangements, arranging quick access to NWT health care numbers. It is a very simple function but a patient who goes to an Alberta doctor may not have his health care card number. Our office can quickly find it and can also act as an advocate for the patient and assure the doctor that there is indeed an NWT health care plan system and that doctor's fees will be paid and therefore the doctor should see that patient. They also act as advocate for access to social services and as a contact on vital statistics for lost birth certificates. These are all very tiny but extremely important functions. As I have also stated, there are many



Government of the NWT departments that have dealings with government departments in Alberta for whom these offices are critical, as well as in promoting commerce. So, Mr. Chairman, the role of the Edmonton office is not at all foggy or in dispute and I could table, if Members wish, quite a detailed list of the kinds of things that the Edmonton office does.

#### Role Of Ottawa Office

With respect to the Ottawa office, Mr. Chairman, I agree that it has evolved over the years. It began very much as an administrative type of office. It was initially located in the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Around the early part of the 1980s it moved out of DIAND and established more of an intergovernmental affairs presence. I agree that it is extremely important that the role of that office be clarified and I have been working with the incumbent, Mr. Pilot, to refine a description of what that office should accomplish and can do, based on his experience in that office.

I think it is also extremely important to recognize that the person who works in the office must receive direction and if the person working in that office does not receive direction and if there is not a strong intergovernmental affairs emphasis placed by the Government Leader on his or her activities then, of course, there may not be a great deal to do. But as I have stated to this Legislature, I want to strengthen the intergovernmental affairs activities of the Government Leader's office and I expect that full use will be made of the Ottawa office and a great deal of direction will be provided by my office about expectations for that office.

I have done some work on the role and responsibilities and duties of that office, which I would be pleased to share with Members. However, I can assure the committee, Mr. Chairman, that this is not a problem that we are trying to find some reason to justify, that this is not a sinecure for employees that we can put nowhere else. This is going to be a busy, active office carrying out a very strong intergovernmental affairs function which is a top priority of this government and so we are not adrift wondering what to do with this office. We know precisely what we want in Ottawa. It is a very critical function with the degree of devolution and the degree of dependence that we still have on the federal decision-makers in matters such as the constitutional development of the Northwest Territories, the First Ministers' Conference on Aboriginal Rights, which we hope will revive, etc.

I hope that answers the Member's question. I agree there was confusion in the past but that, I trust, will not mark the approach this government takes to both those offices.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS: As I understand it, the two offices then will become quite distinct in the roles that they play, in the sense that the one in Edmonton will have this role of providing a service to northerners. However, when we look at the Ottawa office that does not seem to provide the same kind of service for people that travel from the Eastern Arctic. During our SCOF study of the budget, we discussed the whole issue of equity, in other words, people of the Northwest Territories having access to similar kinds of services. If the people who live in Alberta are going to get this wonderful service in Edmonton, what about the people who go through Winnipeg, the people who go through Montreal into southern Canada, how do they get a similar kind of service to that which the people from this side get when they go to Edmonton?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

#### Volume Of Services Justifies Office In Edmonton

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, I think it would be wonderful if we could provide similar offices in Winnipeg, Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto which are also departure points for people who come to visit the Northwest Territories but I think we have to look at the economies of scale. Now, with respect to Edmonton, it is a gateway to the Northwest Territories for highway travellers and for commerce in a far greater volume than one might find in the other areas mentioned. When we look at the volume of patients seeking medical treatment in Edmonton compared with the volume in the Eastern Arctic, the numbers are much higher. So, Mr. Chairman, it was justifiable to establish that kind of a presence in Edmonton based on the volume and the use.

In Winnipeg and Montreal, of course, and Churchill for that matter, we have services for medical patients in place. This government has arranged extensive medical transient facilities and there are interpreters who, in most cases, greet patients who are travelling to those centres who might require their assistance, so there is not a total lack of services for Keewatin and Baffin patients. But I think the volume of transactions and requirements in the West is what dictates that we can afford to establish such an office.

There may be some day when we can consider doing so in the Eastern Arctic as well. As I said, recently we have assigned someone to look after the needs of students. Happily there are increasing numbers of Eastern Arctic students who are going to university in the Maritimes and in Ontario and Quebec. There is an officer of the department now mandated to look after those students, to be their contact point, to accept their collect telephone calls and to visit them once or twice a year. So we are trying to do the best we can but I do not think we have the volume yet to establish offices of the scale that we are able to justify in Edmonton. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS: This will be my last comment on this, Mr. Chairman. I was not suggesting that we do provide that service in Winnipeg, in Montreal and in Toronto. What I was trying to do was to suggest that what we have in Edmonton is a level of service that exists because we built it up. The fact that it existed gave it a role which has increased over the years and simply because it exists and because all kinds of people take advantage of it does not mean to say that we really need it.

#### Level Of Service Not Justified

For example, for some time in Edmonton there were four or five people who delivered cheques by hand to students on the various campuses in Alberta until an evaluation was done of the service and it was decided that although we were not that impressed by Canada Post, delivering cheques to students was something that perhaps we were doing that did not need to be done any more. It was too expensive. So, therefore, by getting rid of those five people we made a big saving of money and we made the students more independent. We, in fact, found that with many of the things that were going on there was a level of service that could no longer be justified.

The argument that we have a highway in the West is the weakest argument as to why we should have an office there. I would argue that because we have such a fantastic transportation system in the West, it makes it easier for people. The ones who have the difficulty are the ones who come from the more remote places who maybe need to get some access to information about their medical cards and so on. There has been a long history in the West of communication to Edmonton, for many, many years, so therefore the existence of that office is less justified now than it was, say, 20 years ago. So, my argument is not to give the same level of service to the Eastern Arctic that exists here but simply to say that we no longer need that; there is no point in having it any more because now people are very independent as compared to the time when that office was set up. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Lewis. Office of the Executive. Are there any general comments? Are there any further general comments? Does the committee agree that we go through the details of the Executive? Mr. Nerysoo.

MR. NERYSOO: Yes, Mr. Chairman, if I could ask a few more general questions prior to getting into the detail. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he is reviewing the role of the regional directors and assistant regional directors in terms of their authority and responsibilities in the regions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

#### Guidelines On Relationship Of Deputy Ministers, Regional Directors And Ministers

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, a great deal of attention was paid to the roles of deputy ministers and regional directors by the 10th cabinet. In fact, following a great deal of discussion and consultation with deputy ministers and regional directors, guidelines were approved finally in January of 1987 setting out the relationships between deputy ministers, regional directors and, of course, the Ministers. Those guidelines are in place and there is no present intention to revise those guidelines.



However, I can tell the honourable Member that we have recently conducted a two day meeting with deputy ministers, regional directors and Ministers, at which certain minor administrative matters were raised which required clarification based on these guidelines. I have set up a small working group of deputy ministers and regional directors, who are going to work with Mrs. Vertes in an ongoing way, to ensure that those administrative problems that come up, from time to time, will be worked out. Matters such as signing authorities for leave, can be smoothly and consistently dealt with in all regions and in all departments in the same manner. This ongoing working group, I am confident, will make sure there are no hiccups in the application of these guidelines but there is no real intention to change the basic guidelines. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Nerysoo.

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate whether or not this committee is going to also review other issues that may be affecting the administrative responsibility of regional directors? In particular, with regard to decisions that are being made by regional superintendents at the direction of deputy ministers that may, in fact, not be communicated to regional directors. Or that the responsibility of the regional director will be to co-ordinate the various departments in carrying out their responsibilities in the regions. Is that particular issue going to be discussed with this committee?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, the purpose of the working group that has been established is precisely to deal with problems of that nature which might arise from time to time. There are occasionally problems of communication between headquarters departments and regions in such a vast territory as ours. I consider it extremely important that the regional directors have a co-ordinating role to ensure consistent application of governmental policies over all departments. In order to have that co-ordinating role, the regional directors must be informed of what directions are being provided at the ministerial and deputy ministerial level to superintendents and staff of departments in the region.

#### Senior Management Committee

When there are problems in communication, then there are mechanisms by which these problems can be clarified. In addition to the committee I mentioned, there is a senior management committee which meets from time to time and can clarify any problems that come up. I understand that senior management committee meets at least four times a year and ensures that there is co-ordination between the regional and headquarters levels, as much as possible in such a large territory. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Nerysoo.

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could recommend to the Government Leader that he consider reviewing more than just the issue of administrative responsibilities of the regional directors, that he should consider in that particular review, not only the co-ordinating responsibility of the regional directors but the actual decision-making authority of the regional directors. It seems that decisions are being made by regional superintendents, who have been given authority by deputy ministers, running in contradiction to what the regional director would have wanted. As such, it seems that there is really no need for the regional directors any longer. Despite the fact that we know they are necessary, their jurisdiction, their authority is now limited. I think that, and I would recommend that the co-ordinating body review that particular aspect of authority of the regional directors.

Further, Mr. Chairman, just to indicate to the Government Leader that direction is being given to the regional superintendents by the deputy ministers with no information to, nor contact being made with the regional directors by the deputy ministers. None whatsoever. I think it is important that we clarify very clearly the authority of the regional directors. I just wanted to remind the Government Leader that it was the mayor of Iqaluit who publicly raised the reduction of authority and the centralization of much of the authority of running government in Yellowknife, so that the regions were, in fact, losing a significant part of their responsibilities for administering programs and services on behalf of our government. I think it is an issue that has to be dealt with by the Government Leader and by our Executive Council.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

Regional Directors Provide Sensitivity To Regional Character

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I come from the largest region of the NWT, and the one that is sometimes happily furthest away from Yellowknife. I can assure the honourable Member that I fully understand the important role played by regional directors and the need for regional directors to provide some sensitivity to the way territorial policies and programs are changed and modified, so as to be appropriately delivered according to the unique character of the region.

We have established guidelines which provide a co-ordinating role for the regional director. I might mention that regional directors do report to the Government Leader so that problems that do occasionally arise can also be dealt with by myself. I think it is fair to say, Mr. Chairman, that in implementing these guidelines we have observed occasions where a deputy minister might not be as sensitive as he or she might be to the importance of getting regional input in implementing policies and programs. Correspondingly, it might also be said that, on occasion, regional directors are not entirely or always sensitive to the limitations of headquarters policies and financial limitations. So I think it is extremely important that as we apply these guidelines there be a procedure where we can constantly ensure that they are working.

I accept the Member's advice that this must be paid careful attention, that it is a delicate balance and that is why this special working group has been reconstituted to respond to some of the complaints that arose at the last two day meeting I referred to. I can assure the Member that I am going to be sensitive to the importance of implementing those guidelines carefully. However, I would like to make it clear that I consider the co-ordinating role of regional directors to be extremely important and it is not my attitude that they are unnecessary or superfluous. I think they have a hands-on understanding of what is going on in communities and can provide valuable advice to deputy ministers and Ministers in implementing policies with sensitivity. So, I thank the Member for that advice. I am still somewhat new at this job but I am going to be doing my best to make sure that that kind of co-operation between headquarters and the regions works well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Nerysoo.

Participation In Region Led To Success

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted, for the information of our Government Leader, to indicate that -- well, first of all, he has always been extremely articulate about how successful the transfer of the hospital and nursing stations was in the Baffin Region and in particular in Iqaluit. Much of that success came from the role being played by the regional director at that particular time. I just want to indicate that there has been very little of a role played by the regional director in Inuvik when it comes to the question of transfer of the hospital and nursing stations in the region. I am just going to say that if the case is that we are going to be successful in ensuring that the regions have an influence on those kinds of transfers that those people that are directly located in those regions should continue to participate. I think the success of the Baffin transfer comes through those people who were in the region, who knew the circumstances of that region; that has made it successful. The situation is clear that it did not happen in the Inuvik Region, or for that matter in the Mackenzie Valley. So, just as a matter of information, I want to make you aware that that happens.

One other question, Mr. Chairman. Is the government reconsidering changes in the regional offices, including the possibility of reviewing assistant regional directors and whether or not they might be able to make some changes?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Mr. Minister.

Review Of Government Organization

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, as I believe I mentioned in the House the other day, the cabinet is planning as its next strategy to take a look at government organization, the question of decentralization and centralization, the question of the role of regional councils, and the role of regional bodies. At that time, in looking at the role of regional councils and the role of regions



in our government, I am certain that we will be taking a look at the regional Executive offices and whether changes might be appropriate. But it is all wrapped up in the regional and tribal council review and the questions of decentralization which we have decided to specifically concentrate on in our next strategy session. At the moment though, Mr. Chairman, I would have to say that by and large, considering the size of the Territories, I think we have quite an efficient and sensitive administration and I would be surprised if radical changes to the regional Executive structure were to emerge from this review. But, it is a matter that the cabinet will be considering in detail. Undoubtedly we will be reporting the results of this in-depth consideration to the Legislative Assembly at the first possible opportunity. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Butters.

MR. BUTTERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The preceding Member has stomped the issue into a bloody rag on the ground but I do want to make a few comments and I will make them in general comments rather than during the pertinent section. I appreciate that the Government Leader, representing as he does, a far-flung community, realizes the importance of the regional office; and when he was an ordinary MLA and as a Member of the Executive utilized the services of that office to ensure that territorial government programs were carried out. Those programs were not being carried out by headquarters in Yellowknife but by the regional offices. I know Mr. Nerysoo and I are speaking to the converted, but when that committee re-examines these guidelines or re-examines the role and function of the regional director, one must remember that we live in a million and one-third square miles and the type of administrative line management that works in BC or Saskatchewan, does not necessarily work here. What we have in place is a unique form of administration but it works for us.

#### Service Would Be Diminished In Regions

I think that any move made to diminish it or destroy it would diminish the service that is currently being provided to people of the North. I fear and feel that the diminishment of the office of regional director and the responsibilities of the regional director that has taken place to date, has emasculated the regional offices -- not only the regional director's office but also the regional superintendent's office. They do not want to make decisions any more on the programs that have been devolved to them to see implemented. They are afraid to make decisions because they could be overturned or countermanded by the people who sign their performance reports in headquarters. They are afraid of those people. Senior officials of this government are blinkered by the fact that they live in the capital city; while they travel occasionally to the regions and the small communities, they really do not know what is going on out there.

The people who know what is going on in the small communities are our regional and our settlement officers. To see the administration being hamstrung by these guidelines and these regulations which have removed from them the responsibility and the authority to implement and carry out the programs is saddening to me. I would hope that it would be saddening to the Government Leader as well, who, as I said, represents a constituency such as mine which is far-flung from this Yellowknife centre. I would hope that, in his role as Government Leader, he will move to correct these omissions and sins of commission that occurred previously and develop guidelines which will allow the deputy ministers of government to develop the programs with their policy connections in the Executive Council and conversely to allow the regional directors and superintendents in the region to implement and carry out those programs as servants of our government and of this Legislature. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): Thank you, Mr. Butters. Mr. Ernerk, do you have comments?

MR. ERNERK: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First of all I would like to echo the statements made by Mr. Nerysoo and Mr. Butters because I feel the same situation is going on with regard to the issue of regional directors, meaning the regional directors in the Keewatin Region and the other parts of the NWT. It seems to me that these people really do not have power any more. They do not seem to know what is happening with their departments. I can tell you this because I experienced a situation the other day where the regional director had no knowledge of what happened to a particular situation that I was somewhat involved in for a short period of time.

Now, in some ways the issue of decentralization is a good one but you must have some beef to go with it. Decentralization, if you merely transfer bodies, does not make any sense to me. Decentralization, if you are going to make available more employment opportunities at the local

level, is a good idea. A couple of years back I can recall from CBC reports, the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs indicated something to the effect that if the people cannot come to us for jobs, we will bring the jobs to them. That is a good idea but if decentralization is not going to provide any more jobs at the community level, to me it does not seem to make that much sense. If it means that it is going to shake up what I call a smooth, working relationship between the regional superintendents and managers as well as the regional director, it does not seem to make any sense. So I can only echo some of the statements that have been made by two honourable Members to my right in the past half hour or so.

CBC Report Of Meeting In Iqaluit

One of the things that is sort of bugging me the last couple of weeks is a CBC report that I heard coming out of Iqaluit. It is that the Government Leader had a public meeting in Iqaluit, where at least 75 people attended the meeting -- this is according to the CBC report -- I do not know what happened, I was not there but I can only depend on what was said by the CBC reporters, both in English and Inuktitut. The Government Leader apparently indicated that he had a lot of plans for Iqaluit -- capital projects, I believe. He also indicated that some parts of his statements were not to be repeated because they still had to be approved by the Legislative Assembly when we meet here.

Is there a policy of telling one group of people and telling the others not to repeat what was said? I mean my point is this, Mr. Chairman, that if you are going to say anything in a public meeting in Iqaluit and not let the Members of the Legislative Assembly know prior to this, it does not seem to make sense especially since we have to approve those things at the next session of the Legislative Assembly, which is now. I am really concerned about that. I do not want to hear reports coming out of CBC of this nature before they come to the Legislative Assembly. Enough.

(Translation) If we are going to operate in the Legislative Assembly effectively, and if we are going to make decisions on the money to be used in the budget, as an elected representative, I think we are going to have to hear it in this House before it is said outside. Because we have to approve them or disapprove them even though those comments were made by the Government Leader, as an elected representative of his region it would still have to be...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): I will recognize the clock and report progress. I would like to thank Mr. Patterson and the two witnesses.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Mr. Gargan, please.

ITEM 19: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE ON THE 1988-89 MAIN ESTIMATES; BILL 1-88(1), APPROPRIATION ACT, 1988-89

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering the report of the standing committee on finance on the 1988-89 main estimates and Bill 1-88(1).

Motion To Accept Report Of Committee Of The Whole, Carried

Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the chairman of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Is there a seconder to that motion? Thank you, Mr. Ernerk. To the motion. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed?

---Carried

Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Announcements, Mr. Speaker. There will be a meeting of the standing committee on legislation on Monday at 9:00 a.m.



ITEM 20: ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of the day for Monday, February 15th at 1:00 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Oral Questions
6. Written Questions
7. Returns to Written Questions
8. Replies to Opening Address
9. Replies to Budget Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Tabling of Documents
13. Notices of Motion
14. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
15. Motions
16. First Reading of Bills
17. Second Reading of Bills
18. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters: Report of Standing Committee on Finance on the 1988-89 Main Estimates; Bill 1-88(1)
19. Report of Committee of the Whole
20. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned until Monday, February 15th at 1:00 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

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