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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Speaker

The Hon. Red Pedersen, M.L.A.
 General Delivery
 Coppermine, N.W.T.
 XOE OEO
 (403) 873-7629 (Office)
 (403) 873-5788 (Home) (Yellowknife)
 (403) 982-5788 (Coppermine)
 (Kitikmeot West)

Allooloo, The Hon. Titus, M.L.A.
 5024 - 57th Street
 Yellowknife, N.W.T.
 X1A 1Y6
 (403) 873-7113 (Office)
 (403) 873-4813 (Home)
 (Amittuq)
 Minister of Culture & Communications
 and Renewable Resources

Angottitauruq, Mr. Michael, M.L.A.
 General Delivery
 Gjoa Haven, N.W.T.
 XOE 1J0
 (403) 360-6600 (Office)
 (403) 360-6704 (Home)
 (Natilikmiot)
 Deputy Chairman
 Committee of the Whole

Arlooktoo, Mr. Joe, M.L.A.
 General Delivery
 Lake Harbour, N.W.T.
 XOA ONO
 (819) 939-2363 (Home)
 (Baffin South)

Ballantyne, The Hon. Michael, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 1091
 Yellowknife, N.W.T.
 X1A 2N8
 (403) 873-7658 (Office)
 (403) 920-2963 (Home)
 (Yellowknife North)
 Minister of Finance and Justice

Butters, The Hon. Tom, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 1069
 Inuvik, N.W.T.
 XOE OT0
 (403) 979-2373 (Office)
 (403) 979-2373 (Home)
 (Inuvik)
 Minister of Government Services and
 NWT Housing Corporation

Cournoyea, The Hon. Nellie, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 1184
 Inuvik, N.W.T.
 XOE OT0
 (403) 873-7128 (Office)
 (403) 977-2405 (Tuktoyaktuk)
 (403) 979-2737 (Inuvik)
 (Nunakput)
 Minister of Health and Public
 Works & Highways

Crow, Mr. Charlie, M.L.A.
 General Delivery
 Sanikiluaq, N.W.T.
 XOA OWO
 (819) 266-8940 (Home)
 (Hudson Bay)

Ernerk, Mr. Peter, M.L.A.
 Box 182
 Rankin Inlet, N.W.T.
 XOC OGO
 (819) 645-2800
 (819) 645-2500
 (Aivilik)

Gargan, Mr. Samuel, M.L.A.
 General Delivery
 Fort Providence, N.W.T.
 XOE OLO
 (403) 873-7999 (Office)
 (403) 699-3171 (Home)
 (Deh Cho)
 Deputy Speaker and Chairman,
 Committee of the Whole

Kakfwi, The Hon. Stephen, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 1320
 Yellowknife, N.W.T.
 X1A 2L9
 (403) 873-7139 (Office)
 (403) 873-8215 (Home)
 (Sahtu)
 Deputy Government Leader
 Minister of Education, Government
 Services and Housing

Kilabuk, Mr. Ipeelee, M.L.A.
 General Delivery
 Pangnirtung, N.W.T.
 XOA ORO
 (819) 437-8827 (Home)
 (Baffin Central)

Lewis, Mr. Brian, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 1320
 Yellowknife, N.W.T.
 X1A 2L9
 (403) 873-7999 (Office)
 (403) 873-5549 (Home)
 (Yellowknife Centre)

Marie-Jewell, The Hon. Jeannie, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 1051
 Fort Smith, N.W.T.
 XOE OPO
 (403) 873-7959 (Office)
 (403) 872-2940 (Home)
 (Slave River)
 Minister of Social Services and
 Personnel

McLaughlin, Mr. Bruce, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 2637
 Yellowknife, N.W.T.
 X1A 2P9
 (403) 393-2939 (Office)
 (403) 393-2226 (Home)
 (403) 920-3166 (Office)
 (403) 873-6220 (Home)
 (Pine Point)

Morin, Mr. Don, M.L.A.
 General Delivery
 Fort Resolution, N.W.T.
 XOE OMO
 (403) 394-3471
 (Tu Nede)

Nerysoo, Mr. Richard, M.L.A.
 Fort McPherson, N.W.T.
 XOE OJO
 (403) 979-2668 (Home) (Inuvik)
 (Mackenzie Delta)

Patterson, The Hon. Dennis, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 310
 Iqaluit, N.W.T.
 XOA OHO
 (403) 873-7112 (Office)
 (819) 979-5993 (Office)
 (403) 873-2802 (Home)
 (Iqaluit)
 Government Leader,
 Chairman of Executive Council,
 Minister of Executive

Pollard, Mr. John D., M.L.A.
 Box 1095
 Hay River, N.W.T.
 XOE ORO
 (403) 874-2345 (Office)
 (403) 874-2600 (Home)
 (Hay River)

Pudluk, Mr. Ludy, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 240
 Resolute Bay, N.W.T.
 XOA OVO
 (819) 252-3719 (Home)
 (High Arctic)

Sibbeston, Mr. Nick, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 560
 Fort Simpson, N.W.T.
 XOE ONO
 (403) 873-6215 (Home)
 (Nahendeh)

Whitford, Mr. Tony, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 2772
 Yellowknife, N.W.T.
 X1A 2R1
 (403) 920-8010 (Office)
 (403) 873-5328 (Home)
 (Yellowknife South)

Wray, The Hon. Gordon, M.L.A.
 Baker Lake, N.W.T.
 XOC OAO
 (403) 873-7962 (Office)
 (819) 793-2700 (Home)
 (Kivallivik)
 Minister of Municipal & Community
 Affairs and Economic Development
 & Tourism

Zoe, Mr. Henry, M.L.A.
 P.O. Box 1320
 Yellowknife, N.W.T.
 X1A 2L9
 (403) 873-7999 (Office)
 (403) 873-4136 (Home)
 (Rae - Lac la Martre)
 Deputy Chairman,
 Committee of the Whole

Officers

Clerk
 Mr. David Hamilton
 Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Clerk Assistant
 Mrs. Rhoda Perkison
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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1989

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Red Pedersen): Orders of the day for Thursday, February 23rd, 1989. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Government Leader.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Ministers' Statement 10-89(1): First Ministers' Meeting, February 27, 1989, Ottawa

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members are undoubtedly aware that Prime Minister Mulroney and the provincial Premiers will be meeting over lunch in Ottawa this Monday, February 27th, to discuss a number of constitutional and economic issues facing the nation. In particular, it can be expected that the First Ministers will be discussing the status of the Meech Lake Accord. A letter was recently sent from Prime Minister Mulroney to the Premiers, explaining his strong views on the current impasse facing the Meech Lake Accord.

In response to a statement by Senator Lowell Murray, Federal/Provincial Relations Minister, that the Yukon and Northwest Territories Government Leaders would not be invited to the First Ministers' meeting on Monday, Mr. Ballantyne and I wrote to our provincial and federal counterparts encouraging them to support territorial participation.

Mr. Speaker, while we have not been successful in getting an invitation to the February 27th meeting, our government continues to work through other channels to improve upon the guidelines for territorial participation at First Ministers' Conferences. Members will recall that Prime Minister Mulroney made a commitment on September 6th last in Yellowknife to seek an effective set of guidelines for territorial participation in First Ministers' Conferences. I met with the Prime Minister in Ottawa last week on February 16th to discuss this and other issues. At my request, the Prime Minister agreed to raise the question of guidelines with the Premiers next Monday with a view to placing territorial participation on the agenda of the next formal First Ministers' Conference.

At an appropriate time, I will table copies of the correspondence referenced in this statement. I will endeavour to keep the Legislature informed on progress which I hope we will be making to ensure meaningful and effective participation by territorial governments at future First Ministers' Conferences. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Lewis.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Interest Of Yellowknifers In Northern Economy

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all Members of the special committee on the northern economy for attending our meeting last night after a very, very busy day. Also I would like to express my appreciation for the numbers of very, very good submissions that we received last night. Mr. Speaker, I was particularly impressed by the fact that the submissions that we heard last night indicated that the people of Yellowknife are not self-serving, do not look at their own business interests, but express concerns in a general way about the future development of our economy especially in our more isolated places. It gives me great pleasure, Mr. Speaker, in indicating to this House that this city is very much interested in affairs beyond the boundaries of the municipality and will continue to press for an improvement in our economy in all parts of the Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lewis. Members' statements. Mr. Nerysoo.

Member's Statement On Apology To Mr. George Braden

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to firstly apologize to Mr. Braden who was in our presence yesterday, in particular in terms of the comments that may have been interpreted as challenging his ability as a deputy minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. That was not the case. I want to indicate to Mr. Braden that I have every confidence in his ability to do the job that he has been assigned to do. However, I think that what is clear, Mr. Speaker, is that when there is frustration on the part of Members of this House with regard to leadership of our government and with regard to government policy that is not clear nor in the interests of the people of the NWT and in particular people of aboriginal descent, then those statements have a tendency to arise. I just wanted to make it clear in particular to Mr. Braden, that I do not challenge nor do I question his integrity nor his ability to do the job that he has been directed to do by our government.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Members' statements. Mr. Whitford.

Member's Statement On Recognition Of JPs And Coroners

MR. WHITFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. No, not a garbage dump address today. I rise today to call attention, Mr. Speaker, to a group of men and women, about 125 strong, who serve in almost every community as justices of the peace and coroners. They serve in many ways. Routine ways, paperwork, weddings, remands, court work. They work very late and they work very hard for little remuneration and very little recognition. The JPs ask for little except adequate training and some contact from time to time. The sad part, Mr. Speaker, is that in the past three years they have received little of either. The exception of course is south of the lake where a dedicated judge has taken his responsibility and has given some personal contact to these noble individuals. Mr. Speaker, if this situation continues very long we will be losing some good and dedicated justices of the peace unless it is addressed soon.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Whitford. Members' statements. Mr. Ernerk.

Member's Statement On Clarification Of Previous Day's Statement Re Jobs Held By Native People

MR. ERNERK: Yesterday, during the debate regarding the Executive Council and Government Leader's office when I was talking about senior positions that need to be filled by native people in the NWT, I made a remark that I am somewhat concerned about. I said that our native people have so far learned that their parents in government offices were secretaries and interpreters. I did not mean to imply that these positions are lower level positions. As a matter of fact I know that an interpreter's job is very, very important and it is a way to communicate to other people if you do not speak the same language. What I wanted to say, and I stress it again Mr. Speaker, is that we need to start taking a look at this native hiring policy at length and start putting native

people into real positions of responsibility. If I sounded insulting I do apologize to our interpreters. I think you do a very, very good job. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ernerk. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Allooloo.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return To Question O158-89(1): Charges Regarding Fuel Spill At Peel River Crossing

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Nerysoo on February 22, 1989, regarding fuel spill at the Peel River crossing. Last fall, 179 litres of fuel were spilled at the Peel River crossing. Through a working agreement signed in October 1985 by the Department of Renewable Resources, the Department of Environment, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canada Oil and Gas Lands Administration, the lead agency for investigating spills which discharge directly into water is the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. They investigated the spill at the Peel River crossing. No charges were laid under the Inland Waters Act, but a letter of warning was issued to the operator instead. The final report on the incident has not been completed. My department has written a letter to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs requesting the reasons why no charges were laid. I will provide the Member with this information when I receive it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Returns to oral questions. Ms Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question O63-89(1): Request For Information On Cost Of Alcoholism

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I have a return to a question asked by Mr. Morin on February 14, 1989. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Morin has asked me to estimate what percentage of the Department of Health's budget is related to alcoholism and alcohol related health problems. This has been a particularly difficult task for us as the information contained in health records in the NWT and other provinces codes only a few diseases which are directly related to alcohol. Mr. Morin suggested that an estimate of costs to the Health department might be made from statistics on violent crime. The RCMP does not record the use of medical services. Records kept by Health personnel are objective and reflect the medical problem, not the causal agent. Subjective reflection on alcohol use or abuse would not be appropriate.

From our records we have gathered data on health costs during 1988 in the Northwest Territories which were directly attributable to alcohol. In the Territorial Hospital Insurance Services claims: total THIS claims, \$216,273; total travel claims, \$21,206; total medical claims, \$37,242.

A departmental survey of the provinces and the Yukon has revealed that other governments have similar difficulties in obtaining accurate estimates of the percentages of health budgets spent on alcohol related problems. Estimates range from 25 per cent to 45 per cent depending on the factors included and the population characteristics of each region. Thirty per cent has been selected by the NWT Department of Health to represent the estimated cost for alcohol related health problems.

Using this percentage, I can give this Assembly the following estimated figures: 30 per cent of operation and maintenance, including nursing stations, \$12,246,300; 30 per cent of medicare, \$3,212,400; 30 per cent of medivac, \$1.332 million. Thirty per cent may be high, but we have based this figure on the fact that presently the NWT has the second highest per capita alcohol consumption in the country. We have been above the national average for alcohol consumption since the 1960s. In 1983 there was a sharp rise in the rate of alcohol use with a corresponding increase in cost of services per person. Some investigators have concluded that alcohol is a

factor in up to 30 per cent of hospital admissions nationally and that drinkers are more than twice as likely to use medical services as non-drinkers.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to caution that these are estimated figures and we do not take into account lost hours of work when people are receiving medical treatment and have been hospitalized in relationship to their alcohol problems.

Mr. Morin's question has served to emphasize again the seriousness of alcohol abuse in the NWT. The Department of Social Services has the primary mandate for alcohol treatment and prevention services, although the Department of Health provides funding for the Yellowknife detoxification program and when necessary, covers treatment in an approved facility outside the NWT. As in the past, my department will continue to give full support to any initiatives developed to combat this problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. Returns to oral questions. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Sibbeston.

ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question O179-89(1): Replacement For Commissioner

MR. SIBBESTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Government Leader. During the past few days when the Government Leader had occasion to be with and meet with the Minister of Indian Affairs, did the Government Leader discuss the possibility of a replacement for Mr. Parker and if so, what has been the response?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Government Leader.

Return To Question O179-89(1): Replacement For Commissioner

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I did have an opportunity to discuss with the new Minister of Indian Affairs the process for appointing a new Commissioner when Mr. Parker's term is concluded. I pressed the Minister that recommendations would be forthcoming from the cabinet. I urged him to consider seriously our advice. He said he would do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Sibbeston.

Supplementary To Question O179-89(1): Replacement For Commissioner

MR. SIBBESTON: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister's response. Would the Government Leader be open to receiving recommendations in the selection of a Commissioner from the Legislative Assembly? Would the Government Leader be open to having the Assembly involved in a possible replacement for Mr. Parker?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Government Leader.

Further Return To Question O179-89(1): Replacement For Commissioner

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Supplementary? Mr. Lewis then.

Question O180-89(1): Discrepancies In Information Re Transfer

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On February 15, in our special committee on the northern economy, a witness for the aviation industry told our committee that there were plans to move Northwest Territorial Airways' administration to Edmonton. I tried to contact Mr. Engle and

obviously he was busy because Mr. Butters was doing the same thing. However when I asked that question on the 16th of February to the Minister, Mr. Butters indicated that he had phoned Mr. Engle and that in fact, there were no plans whatsoever to move anybody out of Yellowknife. All they were doing was to consolidate people in Edmonton.

The following day however, Mr. Butters phoned Air Canada, the parent company for NWT Air, and he was given another piece of information which said that in fact two people would be moved from Yellowknife to Edmonton. So my question to the Minister is, can he account for the difference in the information received from Air Canada and from NWT Air?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question O180-89(1): Discrepancies In Information Re Transfers

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, I do not recollect the elements involved in the inquiry to Air Canada. I did not make it. If the Member will recall, I had indicated that my staff would be talking with Air Canada. They may have talked with Air Canada. They may have talked with Mr. Engle. I do not know what the situation is. I will get back to him on that situation.

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

Question O181-89(1): Funding For Hostel, Fort Simpson

MR. SIBBESTON: (Translation) I am directing my question to Mr. Kakfwi, the Minister of Education. The government is no longer using the childrens' hostel in Fort Simpson. I wonder what kind of funding is going to be going to the hostel? What is the situation at present with the hostel in Fort Simpson?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: I will take the question as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The question is taken as notice. Mr. Whitford.

Question O182-89(1): Progress On Matter Concerning Expediting Firm, Yellowknife

MR. WHITFORD: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for Government Services. On February 9th, or thereabouts, I brought to his attention a matter concerning an expediting firm in Yellowknife that had submitted proposals to the NWT Housing Corporation for providing expediting services. They were not the successful tenders, of course, and they raised a few issues which I brought to Mr. Butters' attention. He said he would get back to me with what had happened in dealing with this particular proposal and contract. Two weeks have gone by and although Mr. Butters did indicate that it was in the hands of his officials, I think the time has gone by long enough and I would like to know what progress is being made, if any, on this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question O182-89(1): Progress On Matter Concerning Expediting Firm, Yellowknife

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, the Member will recall I did get back to him. I did show him a draft letter I had from the corporation which said that concerning the particular company he is referring to, that the prices they had put in were not acceptable because they were too high. I indicated to the Member that I would be getting back to the corporation. I would be getting a list of the bids on the proposal, and I would show him those bids. I do not have them yet. When I have them, he will see them.

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

Supplementary To Question O182-89(1): Progress On Matter Concerning Expediting Firm, Yellowknife

MR. WHITFORD: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister's reply. Yes, he did get back to me with the draft. However, the point here is that in any tender document it says the lowest tender is not necessarily accepted. There are other factors involved in this particular issue that have been brought to my attention. I have attempted to give to the Minister those facts in letters from this expediting company that may or may not substantiate this. He did not want them. It is simple to say they were too high but it is not quite enough. I wonder -- am I being cut off?

I am getting too emotional. It gets very emotional when you know your constituents write you letters and ask for information. I want to ask the Minister if he is looking into the allegations that are being made? Why did the expediting company not get the contract in spite of the fact that they may have been a few dollars ahead or higher?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question O182-89(1): Progress On Matter Concerning Expediting Firm, Yellowknife

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member did bring to my attention two letters from the company. The allegations were in the second letter which I did not want to see. I just got a copy of the first letter. I am looking into the matter, yes. But it was not a tender call, it was a proposal. When I have the information I will provide the Member with the information I receive.

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

Question O183-89(1): Contract Let To Southern Firm

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education, Mr. Kakfwi. Recently Arctic College let a contract for \$30,000 I believe, to a southern accounting firm, Price Waterhouse, a very distinguished company, well known all over this country. My question to the Minister is, does this mean that he has no faith in northern companies to be able to do this kind of work, or does it mean that he has no control whatsoever over the way he contracts in Education even though it is in a different part of Education to his other activities? Does it mean that he has no control over making sure that this government tries to keep its money in the NWT?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question O183-89(1): Contract Let To Southern Firm

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: It does not mean either of those two things.

---Laughter

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

Supplementary To Question O183-89(1): Contract Let To Southern Firm

MR. LEWIS: I would like to thank the Minister for his honesty.

---Laughter

Supplementary then. Since it means neither of those two things, what would be the Minister's interpretation of giving a large, very wealthy southern firm a big contract, at least big seen from the point of view of our NWT companies, instead of using a northern firm? There were several people in the NWT interested in doing that work.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if this is a point of order or not but when we get questions that are of a nature like this, that require an extensive review and are technical in nature, could not the Chair rule whether or not they are more in the nature of written questions than oral? People must be getting tired of me taking questions under notice so I just asked the question.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question O183-89(1): Contract Let To Southern Firm

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I am trying to establish a principle here. I do not think it is a huge technical question. The only technical part of it is \$30,000. That is the technical part. What I want to know is, does the Minister care whether it goes to the South or the North? That is the basic issue. That is what I would like to have a response to, whether in fact he supports the idea of southern institutions taking on work that could be done in the Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question O183-89(1): Contract Let To Southern Firm

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Well, Mr. Speaker, I do care about who gets work. I always believe that where possible and where we can afford it, where we can be assured that the job will get done and get done well, we should use our northern business community to provide those services to us. But it is not always possible. They are not always interested in doing the work either. That is why I asked for time because I do not know the situation that is background to this particular case. But if you are asking whether or not I care if people in the North get jobs, I do. I wish they could take all the jobs but it is not always the case.

MR. SPEAKER: Your final supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question O183-89(1): Contract Let To Southern Firm

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So my question to the Minister then, will he look into this particular case that I have just brought to his attention to see if in fact there are good grounds for having given this particular work to a southern company? All the expertise that was necessary to do it was available in the NWT.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question O183-89(1): Contract Let To Southern Firm

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. I will do that. I will look into it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Morin was next.

Question O184-89(1): Cupboards For HAP Units

MR. MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Housing. Mr. Minister, as you are aware, there is a company in Hay River that prefabs cabinets and cupboards for houses, and I am wondering if the Housing Corporation is going to be giving him any work or allowing him to bid on the HAP units to supply the cupboards only. Are you going to break up your HAP contract? For example, right now you let it out where they have to supply everything

for the house. Would you break that part of the contract out so that a company in the North can bid on it?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question O184-89(1): Cupboards For HAP Units

HON. TOM BUTTERS: I am aware of the product being made in Hay River, and that it is a good quality product. I think the Member knows that the president of the corporation met with Mr. Darryl Dobbs some weeks ago to discuss an approach along the lines suggested by the Member. I do believe a certain number of units have been identified that could be broken out -- not to be negotiated, but to be bid upon. I am not sure of that number. Last week some people from Hay River indicated to me that maybe the number was not sufficiently large for the manufacture of those cabinets. But I will find out just how many units have been identified for being bid on locally. I would agree that if we have a quality product here we should attempt to encourage it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Butters. Supplementary, Mr. Morin.

Supplementary To Question O184-89(1): Cupboards For HAP Units

MR. MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, will you also look at breaking out the supply of the windows to the HAP units, or any retrofits you are doing, and breaking out enough of it so that there could be some private entrepreneurs in the North that could make those windows and supply them? However, they have to have the numbers, they have to have at least maybe 1000 windows in order to go into business. This would be another opportunity for some businessman in the North. I know previously there was a person in Fort Smith that used to do that, but he could not get enough work from the government so he had to shut down.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Butters.

Further Return To Question O184-89(1): Cupboards For HAP Units

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Yes, we could look at that. When I visited Fort Smith with the special committee on the northern economy, it was my privilege to be involved in a discussion, I think, with Mr. Dennis Bevington, and it was indicated that he or his firm had the capability of producing windows in numbers, if he could find it profitable to be involved. I do believe the corporation is looking at that possibility. Yes, I will look at it further.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Butters. Oral questions. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Question O185-89(1): Further Information Re Penitentiary Inmate

MR. ARLOOKTOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Social Services. The prisoner in the penitentiary, I have not heard further as to how he is. I would like to get further information on his condition. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Return To Question O185-89(1): Further Information Re Penitentiary Inmate

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to advise the Member that the prisoner has decided to eat food as of the latter part of last week. Because of his taking fluids before, his condition is okay. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Supplementary To Question O185-89(1): Further Information Re Penitentiary Inmate

MR. ARLOOKTOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very happy to hear the news. I also would like to ask the Minister about the response she made on this particular inmate. I would like to get a better response from the Minister than the response she made to me a week ago on the question I raised. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Madam Minister.

Further Return To Question O185-89(1): Further Information Re Penitentiary Inmate

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did meet with the Member and indicated that the details of the inmate's sentencing are being looked at. As I had indicated in the House, it was a sexual assault on a young girl. However, the information indicated that the sexual assault was on an adult female. We are currently awaiting the transcripts from the Crown, which are held in Edmonton, for my further review. At that time, I did indicate to the Member that I would advise him at a later date. As soon as I am in receipt of those transcripts I will advise him further as to the situation of this inmate. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Ernerk was next.

Question O186-89(1): Commercial Hunting Of Kaminuriak Caribou Herd

MR. ERNERK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Renewable Resources. Are you in a good mood today? The Minister is in a good mood. Thank you. During the last session I had asked about commercializing the Kaminuriak caribou herd. The caribou management boards were going to make recommendations to the Minister in trying to stop the commercial hunting of this herd. I would like to get further information as to what kind of response he has made, whether he has approved it.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question O186-89(1): Commercial Hunting Of Kaminuriak Caribou Herd

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had asked the hunters and trappers in Keewatin to submit a report to the caribou management board. Up to now, they have not submitted their report. I will be able to respond to you tomorrow after I have received further information.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Ernerk.

Supplementary To Question O186-89(1): Commercial Hunting Of Kaminuriak Caribou Herd

MR. ERNERK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have heard that the Keewatin Wildlife Federation were asked to submit a report toward the end of March. I would like to know why they have not submitted a report.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question O186-89(1): Commercial Hunting Of Kaminuriak Caribou Herd

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: (Translation) Mr. Speaker, at the present time I am not aware of the reasons why they have not submitted their report. I will respond further tomorrow. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Further supplementary, Mr. Ernerk.

Question O187-89(1): Correction Of Spelling, Kaminuriak

MR. ERNERK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question is to the Minister of Renewable Resources. I wonder if the Minister could consider changing the Kaminuriak caribou herd name to the proper spelling?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question O187-89(1): Correction Of Spelling, Kaminuriak

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since I became the Minister for Renewable Resources I have looked into what Kaminuriak means and what language it came from. The president of the Keewatin Wildlife Federation informed me that the lake is named Kaminuriak. In Inuktitut it is called Qamanirjuaq. The caribou herd should be named in this way.

I am also responsible for changing the names of places through Culture and Communications. I have assigned my staff to change the name of this lake. After we change the name of this lake then the caribou herd name will be changed likewise.

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

Question O188-89(1): New DIAND Minister And Neptune Project

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, all Members of this Assembly have been impressed by the attempts of Neptune Resources to introduce a revolutionary idea into the mining industry. I would like to ask the Government Leader whether he has been able to impress upon the new Minister of DIAND that this is a revolution, and has he been able to explain it to him? Has he been able to get any kind of response from the new Minister?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patterson.

Return To Question O188-89(1): New DIAND Minister And Neptune Project

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, I certainly have discussed the Neptune project with the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs as has my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, who has the principal responsibility in that area. I impressed upon the Minister what an important issue it was for our government and in particular for the Dogrib communities in the vicinity of that project.

Mr. Speaker, the Member may have observed that the new Minister is being somewhat cautious about making decisions so early into his portfolio and I cannot report any commitments from him but I think he was impressed with the strength of our commitment to this project. I can report no breakthrough and I cannot even report that I have any optimism that the federal government will change its mind. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question O189-89(1): Nuclear Reactors As Source Of Power

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Government Leader. It is with regard to the Public Utilities Board. Presently, the cost of fuel in the communities is quite high. Diesel is quite high. I would like to ask the Government Leader whether or not the Executive has considered a new source of generating power. The concern I have is with Candu 3 nuclear reactors or the SLOWPOKE nuclear reactor which has been discussed during the 10th Assembly. I would like to ask the Government Leader whether or not there is any intention to start using nuclear reactors as a source of generating power.

MR. SPEAKER: Ms Cournoyea will be answering.

Return To Question O189-89(1): Nuclear Reactors As Source Of Power

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, Certainly in the generation of power, with the takeover of the power corporation there is long-term planning now beginning to take place on hydro power generation for expanded communities. There is an assessment done on the present oil generators that are being used in many of the small communities but at this point in time there has been no assessment of SLOWPOKE generation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. Oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

Supplementary To Question O189-89(1): Nuclear Reactors As Source Of Power

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, during the 10th Assembly a request was given to the Science Institute of the NWT to do a review of the SLOWPOKE nuclear reactor to generate power, as to whether it is economical or whether it is safe or unsafe or cheaper to use, or whatever. The Science Institute has had the opportunity, and I would like to ask the Minister whether or not the Science Institute has done that and whether or not it is going to be used as the basis this government is going to be taking with regard to the issue of power?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Government Leader.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: I would like to take that question as notice.

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

Question O190-89(1): Moving New Department Out Of Yellowknife

MR. MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Government Leader. Mr. Minister, the government has created three new departments: Transportation; Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources; and Safety. I know that the government is in support of decentralization. That is what they say, anyhow. My question to you is, when will you be making an announcement of moving one of these departments out of Yellowknife?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Government Leader.

Return To Question O190-89(1): Moving New Department Out Of Yellowknife

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member can appreciate that most of the resources which went to constitute those new departments, and I am speaking of O and M budget and person years, were already in existence within various departments of the government. Those new departments really represent a consolidation of resources which are already in place, by and large.

Mr. Speaker, certainly the Transportation department will have a presence in the regions. The Departments of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and Safety and Public Services, however, are primarily functions that presently exist in headquarters due to the nature of those responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the honourable Member that we are looking for every opportunity both with the creation of these departments and with other responsibilities that we take on to locate new responsibilities outside headquarters. However, as I have indicated, most of the resources for these departments are already in place and so there is not quite the same opportunity to move them.

I would like to assure the Member that I have made a commitment to table decentralization guidelines which we have developed and those guidelines will assist our cabinet in looking at every opportunity that we can to decentralize. I have no immediate expectation that those

particular functions, other than in the transportation area, are appropriate in considering the guidelines that we have developed for major decentralization issues. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

Question O191-89(1): Program To Assist Individuals With Unemployment Insurance

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Justice. The situation, Mr. Speaker, is that with regard to unemployment benefits, certain individuals, women, are entitled to maternity leave and also benefits after they have their child, if they intend to care for the child before going back to work.

The problem that is happening, Mr. Speaker, is that a lot of women in the communities are not aware of the Unemployment Insurance Act and cannot refer to it and do not have access to the act itself or respond to appeal decisions made here in Yellowknife, primarily due to the fact that they do not have lawyers; they do not have a law library or they do not have the act itself. Most of the time it is explained, I guess, from the unemployment insurance office as, "You are not entitled under this section." I could only refer to this one incident now which happened. The section which is being referred to by the unemployment insurance agency was repealed in 1977 but it is still being used and because the ordinary people do not have access to those acts or laws, they find it difficult to do anything about it.

I would like to ask the Minister whether or not there is a program within his department that might be able to assist individuals that have been turned down because of certain sections of the Unemployment Insurance Act.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Ballantyne.

Return To Question O191-89(1): Program To Assist Individuals With Unemployment Insurance

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member is aware, the Unemployment Insurance Act is federal legislation. I am prepared to look into it. I think that in any sort of an education role to do with legislation, whether it is ours or federal legislation, the public legal education people have a role to play so I am more than prepared to look into it. I will have my officials talk with people in public legal education and report back to the Member of any steps we might be able to take. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Pollard was next.

Question O192-89(1): Commitment To Decentralization

MR. POLLARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every time the Government Leader talks about decentralization, Mr. Speaker, it encourages me to stand up because decentralization, I think, means taking away from a centre and giving it to other places. The Government Leader makes the same answer every time somebody discusses this with him, "Well, most of the resources are already here in Yellowknife." Well, I would like to ask the Government Leader how he expects decentralization to take place when every time places like Inuvik or Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Rankin Inlet ask to get things moved to their communities, it is always the same answer, "I am sorry, the resources are already here in Yellowknife. We cannot move it out." When Arctic College was discussed, sending that back to Fort Smith, there was a big hue and cry, "We cannot do that." So is this government committed to decentralization and how are they going to go about it, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patterson.

Return To Question O192-89(1): Commitment To Decentralization

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, I have been pressed by the honourable Member for Hay River in this Legislature for things that this government has done to the community of Fort Smith in the name of decentralization. I think he has urged me to be cautious; not to work over communities and cause hardship to employees in other communities after the decentralization exercise in Fort Smith.

Mr. Speaker, my answer to his question would be, yes, we are committed to the principle of decentralization. In fact, I am going to be tabling, shortly, guidelines which indicate the criteria that will be used to ensure that every decision made in the interests of decentralization is made on the basis of criteria which take into account factors such as costs, the impact on the receiving community and the impact on the community from which decentralization occurs.

How will we proceed? We will proceed with caution and look at the specifics of each case. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that now is not the time to make wholesale and dramatic uprootings of departments and employees. I think what we have to do is proceed on an incremental basis and look for opportunities in which we can proceed in a responsible manner with decentralization. I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that with these guidelines, and with the commitment of cabinet to the principle of decentralization, over the years the record of this government will reveal that we have made significant progress.

The other point I want to make is that we are examining, throughout the whole government, opportunities for decentralization, and I do not want to rule out the possibility that some of the new functions that are being created with these new departments could be decentralized. That is something that will be revealed once the department is created and once its organization is finalized around April 1st. We are looking for every opportunity, Mr. Speaker, but we do not want to act precipitously, and we do not want to cause the sort of dislocation that the honourable Member has complained about at other times in this Legislature. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pollard, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question O192-89(1): Commitment To Decentralization

MR. POLLARD: Well, Mr. Speaker, I guess my answer was, it is business as usual. It will get into Yellowknife, and once it gets here, Yellowknife wraps its arms around it and says, "We are not letting this sucker go. We have it now." Arctic College came up here with one position, I think, Mr. Speaker. I beg your pardon, three, two, whatever -- less than 12, right -- it is now about 10, and Yellowknife is not prepared to let it go. My question is, can we not get some kind of an arrangement where Yellowknife has departments in trust, in trust for other communities that may require them at a later date? That way the employees would know that sooner or later they are going to have to move out of there. Is that told to new departments as they are setting up, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Government Leader.

Further Return To Question O192-89(1): Commitment To Decentralization

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it clear that, as I mentioned, particularly with reference to the Department of Transportation, we are looking at the extent to which we can decentralize certain functions of that department. The results of that review will be revealed when the department is created on April 1st of 1989. I would like to reiterate that we have made it clear to our senior managers that they are to look for opportunities for decentralization within their various functions. There are a number that are actively being considered at this very moment. Mr. Speaker, the direction has been given to our departments, and I am quite confident that we will have some concrete progress to report now that we have guidelines and a set of criteria for determining when it is appropriate to make that sort of a decision. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Whitford was next.

Question O193-89(1): Canadian Mental Health Association's Inability To Plan

MR. WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This topic is directed to the Minister of Social Services. I have been in contact with the Canadian Mental Health Association people and they are quite concerned about the amount of money that is in the budget for administration and continuation of their operations. My question for the Minister is, because they have to wait for this budget to be debated, because they have to wait until April 1st before any new moneys are provided, they are not able to do any planning. They just live from day to day, not knowing what they are going to be doing. Will the Minister direct her officials to meet with the Canadian Mental Health Association people and discuss how much money they are going to be getting so they can get on with their planning and their programs in anticipation of what they are going to be getting?

MR. SPEAKER: Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Return To Question O193-89(1): Canadian Mental Health Association's Inability To Plan

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Mr. Speaker, we are all aware, as Members, that our next year's budget is subject to approval in the Legislative Assembly. I sympathize with the uncertainty we allow groups to be in when it comes to the end of the year, but the Canadian Mental Health Association is in the same predicament as every other group in the Territories when they come in with new proposals for next year's budget. As for their planning, I am sure the parameters of their incentives and their desires can be discussed with officials, but funding, in particular, is subject to approval. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Lewis was next.

Question O194-89(1): Moving Of NWT Power Corporation To Yellowknife

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, on the same topic as was raised by Mr. Pollard, but directed this time to the Minister responsible for energy. Could she indicate to us what steps are being taken to privatize the NWT Power Commission so that it can represent, maybe, a broader interest than simply the narrow ones of this government and could invite all kinds of private money so we would have a board of governors or a board of directors that could perhaps make a decision to move the Power Corporation from Hay River to Yellowknife? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

AN HON. MEMBER: Boo!

MR. SPEAKER: Ms Cournoyea.

Return To Question O194-89(1): Moving Of NWT Power Corporation To Yellowknife

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: I do not know if that is a hypothetical question and desirous of a hypothetical answer. The one part that I will answer is that we are very close to bringing forward a paper on the movement toward privatization. We have not concluded that yet, mainly because of all the other things on the agenda of the corporation, but we fully intend to do that as soon as possible. We are still committed, as we were before. Certainly the corporation has moved quite quickly. It is on schedule in terms of moving, leasing the building in Edmonton, staffing, and moving to Hay River. There is absolutely no plan, or absolutely no indication that a change from Hay River to Yellowknife will take place. I can be very definitive about that. Certainly, in terms of the privatization, as soon as possible I will have that criteria on how we are going to privatize, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question O195-89(1): Lack Of Housing For Teachers, Baffin

MR. PUDLUK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My voice is not too good right now. My question is directed to the Minister of Personnel. The teachers in Baffin Island are lacking housing. Sometimes we cannot obtain a teacher due to lack of housing. Perhaps the Minister, in the near future, could try and find some sort of housing for the teachers in Baffin Island. My question is mostly due to the fact that in Arctic Bay there are two teachers who are living in the same house due to lack of housing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Return To Question O195-89(1): Lack Of Housing For Teachers, Baffin

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am fully aware of the acute shortage of housing, and the problem in the Baffin, specifically addressing the need to accommodate the teachers, etc. I can assure the Member that we are certainly trying to deal with this issue. I can also assure him that it will probably be identified when my budget comes up. I can assure him that we are trying to deal with this acute problem that they do have in the Baffin. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Gargan.

Question O196-89(1): Moneys Transferred For Mental Health Program

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health. On April 1st it will be one year since the transfer of health occurred. With the transfer, I believe, was the alcohol and drug program as well as the mental health program. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not there were with the transfer moneys identified specifically for the mental health program.

MR. SPEAKER: Ms Cournoyca.

Return To Question O196-89(1): Moneys Transferred For Mental Health Program

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, yes, there was money identified to the mental health program which consequently has been redirected to the Department of Social Services.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Gargan, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question O196-89(1): Moneys Transferred For Mental Health Program

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister whether or not she might be able to provide us with the figures.

MR. SPEAKER: Madam Minister.

Further Return To Question O196-89(1): Moneys Transferred For Mental Health Program

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I believe it is reflected in the estimates and I do not recall exactly, but I will draw that out of the information on the estimates for the Member tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Morin.

Question O197-89(1): No Decrease In Highway Maintenance

MR. MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for Transportation. Madam Minister, will you continue to keep the maintenance level on the highway between Hay River and Fort Resolution and not decrease it at all?

MR. SPEAKER: Ms Cournoyea.

Return To Question O197-89(1): No Decrease In Highway Maintenance

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I believe the indication on the allocation for upkeep of that section of the road is constant in this year's budget.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

Question O198-89(1): Amounts Of Moneys Transferred For Mental Health Program

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to again direct my question to the Minister of Health. I realize that the estimates under the mental health program are reflected in our territorial budget estimates, but what I would like to ask the Minister is whether or not she might be able to provide us with the amounts that were identified when the transfer of health occurred from the federal government to this government.

MR. SPEAKER: Ms Cournoyea.

Return To Question O198-89(1): Amounts Of Moneys Transferred For Mental Health Program

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Certainly, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

Question O199-89(1): Construction Of Office Complex, Fort Providence

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Speaker, this summer they will be constructing an office complex in Fort Providence. I also understand that there is an interest by certain organizations in the community to take on the construction of the complex. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he has made any decision with regard to that type of an arrangement, mainly due to the fact that this complex was to be built last year and was delayed to this year and I do not wish to see it delayed for another year.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Wray.

Return To Question O199-89(1): Construction Of Office Complex, Fort Providence

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member knows, as he said, there are certain interests in the community in working on this. We have met with the Fort Providence Metis, the NWT Metis Development Corporation, DPW and MACA and they have agreed to have a final proposal to us for evaluation by February 27th, which is next week. At that time, we will use our policies to evaluate the proposal and we will see what happens. Obviously, if the proposal is not acceptable or if there are major problems, then we will go ahead with the project as we normally would or we may go this other route. But we will be making a decision fairly soon.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Oral questions. With two minutes to go in time allocation, Mr. Gargan.

Question O200-89(1): Payments To Hay River Reserve Band

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question again to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. It is a totally different question. The Minister, I understood during his reply to a concern I had with regard to the Hay River Reserve Band and payments, has come up with sort of a satisfactory arrangement. For the time being that is satisfactory. But I would like to ask the Minister what type of long range plans he has with regard to the municipal services on the reserve and the long-term arrangements that they might be able to reach concerning the payments to the reserve, due to the fact that there are none under any type of act with regard to municipal and community affairs.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question O200-89(1): Payments To Hay River Reserve Band

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you. A long-term solution is rather difficult in this case because the problem primarily stems from the fact that the band has cash flow problems. In other words, it does not have enough cash and has to wait on payment for cash. We have set the arrangement up where we are going to give them a couple of advances. What we are hopeful of is that over some time that will allow them to build up a little bit of a cash reserve which will allow them to proceed in the normal way. At this point in time the accountable advance system is the only one that we have been able to work out to alleviate the problems, because the problems are primarily that of cash flow.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Time having now expired for question period, we will move to Item 6 on the orders of the day, written questions. Mr. Angottitauruq.

ITEM 6: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Question W14-89(1): School Playground For Spence Bay

MR. ANGOTTITAUURUQ: Mr. Speaker, a written question to the Minister of Education. The hamlet, local education council and the local residents of Spence Bay, are concerned with regard to the lack of an outside school playground facility. If the Minister was not aware or even if he was aware of this concern, what will his department do in the near future to satisfy the school children of Spence Bay in their need?

DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Gargan): Item 6, written questions. Mr. Nerysoo.

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have four written questions. Could I stand here and ask all four questions?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

Question W15-89(1): Role Of Department Of Economic Development And Tourism In Edmonton Office

MR. NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a question to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Would the Minister review and determine whether there may be a need or requirement for an increased presence of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in the Edmonton office and, in reviewing this role, would the Minister take into consideration a complementary role of such presence which recognizes the daily responsibility of the department in the NWT?

Question W16-89(1): Role Of Department Of Social Services In Edmonton Office

This question is to the Minister of Social Services. Would the Minister of Social Services review the department's role in the Edmonton office and determine whether or not there is a need for

increased presence which improves service delivery to the residents of the NWT in the Edmonton area or in southern or in western Canada?

Question W17-89(1): Services And Programs For NWT Students At The Edmonton Office

This question is directed to the Minister of Education. Would the Minister indicate the department's plan of action as it applies to the delivery of services and programs through the Edmonton office to students and residents of the NWT?

Question W18-89(1): GNWT Involvement In Development Of Position On Aboriginal Self-Government

A question to the Minister of Aboriginal Rights and Constitutional Development. Is it the position of the GNWT that government of the NWT officials be present and participate in community workshops and meetings when the Dene and Metis are developing a position on self-government? If so, would the Minister indicate why it is necessary that government officials attend such workshops or meetings?

Further, is it the GNWT's position and is the government insisting that the federal government develop agreements with the Dene and Metis that protect and recognize such participation and also allow for agreement to ensure that government officials are included in the process when the Dene/Metis are developing and embarking on the development of a position on aboriginal self-government?

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

Item 7, returns to written questions. Item 8, replies to Opening Address. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 8: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

Mr. Kakfwi's Reply

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: I wanted to make some comments today on what appears to be a disjointed number of items. I will try to keep it relatively short. One of the first things I wanted to comment on is the giving of recognition to the contribution that Mr. John Parker and his wife Helen have made to the North. I think in my constituency, the Sahtu, I could say that it is his -- and her, as well -- particular skill at bringing and bridging not only the cultural differences but helping heal the real political polarization that existed and developed during the Berger Inquiry and thereafter that I want to give recognition to.

Having come from the camp that felt itself surrounded by government forces, people that were insisting on building the pipeline, and having absolutely no use for the territorial Council at the time, or representatives of the government, I must say that over the years personally I have come to respect and enjoy the presence and the company of the Commissioner and his wife and on behalf of my constituents, and in particular the elders of the Sahtu region, I want to thank them for their contribution to the North and give recognition to the work that they have done over the years.

On a more personal note, I know one of the MLAs, amongst many, had comments over the years about custom adoption. I have also developed a sudden interest in it. Last month, on January 20th, my wife and I adopted a son named Thomas Keenan by way of custom adoption. I hope there are no problems with it, with anyone. Certainly it is an adoption that has taken place within my own immediate family. For your information the name Keenan I think, is Scottish or Irish or something like that but also in Dene it means K'i edeh, which is "without arrows". It could mean many things, but you would think it would mean mostly a man of peace or one who does not need weapons. I raise that just to personalize the comments I am making this afternoon and also because my constituents every year receive a Christmas card, friends and relatives, my family, just

to show them my family and my daughters and this year our son will not show up until December if we are all still together then. It is by way of information.

I should say, and I listened quite closely to the comments and the requests for home births coming from the Inuit communities. I should say as well that my first daughter -- we were living in Fort Good Hope at the time and we had to travel from Good Hope to Norman Wells and then to Yellowknife and stay with friends a month and a half until our first daughter was born. So I have a lot of sympathy and support for those people that want to find a way in which all our children can be born in the North. If not possible, as Holland did for the princess in the second World War, at least our children that are born in Manitoba and in Edmonton and places south should have a birth certificate that says they are born as citizens of the NWT and not have them issued by Alberta.

---Applause

On the issue of uranium mining in the Eastern Arctic, I have no comments but I want to say that there are elders in the Sahtu region, particularly in Fort Franklin that are getting on in years and I know at least a couple of them that are very disturbed with the fact that they feel in part responsible for the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima in the second World War, because the uranium that was used in the Manhattan project to develop the atomic bomb by the Americans came from Great Bear Lake and these people had a direct input into assisting the discovery of uranium.

Those are just the comments that I wanted to make and just for the record to say that I think all of us would agree that whatever can be done should be done to ease the conscience of those Dene elders in the Sahtu region from feeling guilty about the developments that occurred as a result of some of the work that they had helped with in earlier years.

Deepest Sympathy To Ipeelee Kilabuk

On behalf of my family and my constituents as well, I wish to express my deepest sympathy to Ipeelee Kilabuk, who lost a son last week. In my own family in Fort Good Hope, as well, a number of years ago we had also lost a young member of our family who was only a boy of about 17 who also committed suicide, and I want to express my deepest sympathy to Mr. Kilabuk and his family.

There is a growing concern about the environment, the land and the animals and the very air that we breathe here in the NWT and the Arctic and the water that keeps us alive. I want to join with all other Members as well in expressing my concern. It has been an expressed concern of native people here in the North, very strongly expressed in the 70s, about our absolute disregard by the economic industrial forces of the South or the way in which they were polluting, not so much then in the Arctic, but the way they were threatening to do then, and the fact that we knew even then that places such as the Great Lakes were already badly polluted and in many places in the South water has to be treated extensively in order to be drinkable. And even then, when most of us had just started to travel, back then, we used to get extremely sick every time we came to a new city simply because the water was so different.

I note with interest, as well, the plans and activities that are going to develop and unfold as a result of a man called Alexander Mackenzie and the river that was named after him. I spoke about it in 1976 in a presentation I made to the Berger Inquiry. I will not take the quote at this time but just suggest that I believe in celebrations and I believe in tourist promotions. I also believe that at some time or another we have to begin a concerted effort to begin renaming this land in a more proper context. The river should be one of the places that we start.

I have a lot of notes here. As you see, I am tossing some of them away. There are some things that I wanted to say about my constituency. I should start with Great Bear Lake because that is the place that the region is named after, Sahtu.

Fort Franklin, Strong Traditional Community

Fort Franklin is a community of about 600. It is the strongest traditional community by way of language in my region. Even the little kids, little babies all speak Dene fluently. They teach it in the schools. At one time most of the staff in the school there were people that were trained and educated and born in the community. The community has recently started to get into economic development. They have had a co-op for a great many years competing with the Hudson's Bay. They have a small aircraft company called Sahtu Air which flies almost daily between Yellowknife and Fort Franklin. The band is interested in trying to centralize the community leadership and community administrative functions. They have started to work closer together over the last couple of years.

The community, as you know, suffered a tremendous loss about three or four years ago when a Twin Otter crashed in low visibility and crashed virtually in the middle of the community. The airstrip is a very short airstrip. It is felt and believed and advocated by everyone that the federal government should pay heed to the need of the community as well as, I know, Paulatuk. These are the two communities with the highest priority for getting new airports. The airport is built so close to town and it is inadequate even for medivacs, at this time.

Just for interest again, a couple of summers ago one of the elders of the community, who I am not sure is alive any more, had helped relocate the Sir John Franklin's wintering house a little way from the present community of Fort Franklin, the elder having a vision about it. The community has since worked with the Prince of Wales museum to excavate the site and it is quite a discovery.

Fort Norman, Strong Leadership Qualities

The community of Fort Norman is one of our smaller communities, about 300 people, along the Mackenzie and where the Bear River flows into the Mackenzie. We have a lot of activity there. I think a growing recognition by the community that there is really a core of young leaders, workers that are making a concerted effort to help in further developing the community in areas like economic development and social programs, education, drug and alcohol programs. More and more the older and more traditional leaders are embracing the interests and the involvement of the younger people in this community that is made up of Metis, very strong Metis families, traditional mountain Dene and what we call Willow Lake people, people from the mainland.

In my view in the last couple of years there has been a real pulling together of the community and there is an attempt now by the community to get their leadership and services together so that the band and the Metis local and the hamlet will begin working toward becoming one political administrative structure.

I should mention as well, for interest's sake, a well known pilot that lives in Fort Norman by the name of Martin Hartwell, who has been accepted and taken into the community as a very accepted member of the community. His wife, Susan Haley, who is a Doctor of Philosophy from a Maritime university, has been acknowledged recently as a writer. She has published a couple of books. In fact, one of her books was used and adapted for a television show last year. There are some good resources in our communities that are not just Dene but nevertheless welcomed and accepted as part of the community.

Norman Wells Improving Image

Norman Wells, which is traditionally seen as an eyesore by many communities in the region because of its ill-kept image, looking very oily, greasy and dusty and having transient people, over the last four or five years has begun to develop a very healthy image and atmosphere in the community. There are more families, more houses and services and a more stable population that has moved in. As well, I think there is a more open and healthy attitude toward the surrounding communities. It is with great pride, you might say, that I say to you today that more and more our little region called the Sahtu is pulling together, and even though Norman Wells is predominantly a non-native community -- it is a community built on an oil field -- very many positive statements

are coming out of the other communities as well as Norman Wells about how they continue to feel better about being together.

Fort Good Hope Development

My home town of Fort Good Hope, as you know, was for years very strongly against development and has more recently negotiated a joint venture with Chevron to do joint exploration work near the community. There is an extensive amount of work and job opportunities made available as a result of this initiative. The community is presently enjoying the involvement it has, the responsibility it has, and the role it has in carrying out this work with an oil company on its own lands, Good Hope lands, that is. They are involved in issuing contracts and monitoring the work done by the oil company with the ability to shut down operations if they feel it jeopardizes the environment.

The community as well is more recently tackling the question of prohibition again. While prohibition may have worked 10 years ago when it was first called for, most of the residents of the community now feel that we have to phase out prohibition and face up to the fact that, more and more, people have to accept responsibility for their own actions and we cannot take away the individual privileges and rights of people totally without the request of the collective. I know that I have always respected the laws of prohibition but I also feel that it is time to move out of that era and look at gradually phasing in the full rights and privileges to everyone in the community.

Colville Lake, Independent People

I want to say that the community of Colville Lake, which is about 88 air miles northeast of Good Hope, was and still is the only community of that size that has about 80 or 90 people that have absolutely no government services in the community. Colville Lake has no roads except those that are made by foot, dog teams and skidoos. There is no electricity there except for the generators. As of last fall we opened a school there. We used the community hall as a school. We put one teacher in there. We had estimated we would have seven to 10 students in that school. We now have 16 students going to the school. It is almost perfect attendance. It is the centre of a lot of interest and excitement in the community. I am told by one resident that the teacher is always the one that is late in the morning because everyone else is so anxious to get there.

Again, the community is interested in getting such services as electricity, roads and other services that other communities are accustomed to, so over the next few years this may begin happening. There are a lot of characters living in Colville Lake. Very independent people. Also, we have a very well-known artist that lives there by the name of Bernard Brown that many of you may know.

I want to say again that I am extremely happy with the fact that the Sahu communities are increasingly trying to take over more and more things for themselves and work closer together in order to get more benefit from the government services that have been extended to them from Yellowknife and Inuvik over the years. I feel very positive things will happen as a result of the very positive relationship that has developed among the communities in my region over the last while.

Survival Miracle

I want to end very quickly, before everyone disappears, on another very happy note. November 26, 1987, in about 30 below weather, quite late at night and about 10 miles up river from Good Hope, there were two people travelling on a skidoo. One of them was Michel Lafferty, the son of Albert Lafferty, a Metis originally from Fort Nelson and Fort Providence who settled in Good Hope when he was a young man, and the woman was Lucy Yakeleya, one of the translators here with the government. They drove into open water. A piece of ice had literally broken off and slipped under the main ice and, thinking they were just driving into overflow, they in fact did not slow down; the man opened up the skidoo full blast and drove into open water. What happened was the man, Michel Lafferty got himself out of the water and Lucy as well. In very, very cold

temperatures, the water current there is very strong as well, they walked almost all the way back to town. They got very severely frost-bitten feet and they just about did not make it but again another relative of theirs, knowing that they had not shown up at the camp further up the river, went out looking for them and found them close to town.

I wanted to say that, since I did not get a chance last year; session was over before I mentioned that. Anyway, Lucy was pregnant at the time, which was the other additional joy to all this, and I should say that Bob Overvold and Lucy are now the proud and grateful parents of a daughter born on July 14 named Joneen Krista Samantha Love. On behalf of the friends and relatives and people of Good Hope and friends throughout the Territories, I want to state here publicly our immense gratitude for this miracle and express my own personal joy in having all of them still with us today. Thank you, very much.

---Applause

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 8, replies to Opening Address. Item 9, replies to Budget Address. Item 10, petitions. Mr. Arlooktoo.

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

MR. ARLOOKTOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This petition is Petition 3-89(1), concerning proposed rental scale increases. The residents are opposing this increase and it is signed by 42 residents of Lake Harbour. They have pictures of the bad condition of the houses. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Item 10, petitions. Mr. Arlooktoo.

MR. ARLOOKTOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is Petition 4-89(1) from Lake Harbour. It is concerning the utilities within the community. They want to move the generator out of the community. It has been signed by 48 residents. Also included in this petition is a motion or resolution that was made by Baffin Regional Council, Motion 23/33 on December 8, 1988, when they held the session in Iqaluit concerning the generator within Lake Harbour. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Item 10, petitions.

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

ITEM 12: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

MR. ANGOTTITAUURUQ: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Tabled Document 40-89(1), a letter from the Kitikmeot Regional Council written on February 6, 1989, to the honourable Stephen Kakfwi, relocation of Arctic College. For your information, the executive committee of the Kitikmeot Regional Council passed a resolution opposing the relocation of the administration office of Arctic College from Yellowknife to Fort Smith.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Angottitauruq. That is for Stephen Kakfwi. Item 12, tabling of documents. Mr. Morin.

MR. MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table Tabled Document 41-89(1), An Outline for a Traditional Skills Camp Proposed by the Fort Resolution Settlement Council. Thank you.

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

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table Tabled Document 42-89(1), a set of correspondence pertaining to the February 27, 1989, First Ministers' meeting. Thank you.

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

MR. ARLOOKTOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two documents to table concerning Lake Harbour. Tabled Document 43-89(1), during the BRC session in Iqaluit there was a motion made that the reservoir in Lake Harbour has to have some improvements done on it. Also, Tabled Document 44-89(1), a motion that was made by BRC concerning the airstrip in Lake Harbour, which has to have some major improvements. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. Tabling of documents. Item 13, notices of motion. Mr. Morin.

ITEM 13: NOTICES OF MOTION

Notice Of Motion 6-89(1): Witnesses On Environmental Contaminants To Appear Before Committee Of The Whole

MR. MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, February 27, 1989, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, Ms Cournoyea, that this Legislative Assembly invites scientific and medical experts, as well as representatives of aboriginal organizations, to appear as witnesses in the committee of the whole on Friday, March 10, 1989, on the matter of environmental contaminants. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Morin. Notices of motion. Mr. Angottitauruq.

Notice Of Motion 7-89(1): Broadcasting Station For Kitikmeot Region

MR. ANGOTTITAUURUQ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, February 27, 1989, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Aivilik, that this Legislative Assembly requests the Executive Council to pressure the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to establish a broadcasting station in the Kitikmeot Region.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Angottitauruq. Notices of motion. Mr. Ernerk.

Notice Of Motion 8-89(1): Northern Hiring Policy, Keewatin Region

MR. ERNERK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, February 27, 1989, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Richard Nerysoo, that this Legislative Assembly requests the government, and especially the Keewatin regional administration, to make every effort to increase the number of northerners, in particular Inuit residents of the Keewatin Region, in middle and senior management positions, which are presently occupied by southern hires; and further, that the government consider allocating sufficient funding for on-the-job training so that when a government position is filled by a southerner, it be only a term position, and that a northern trainee be hired to train for the position until the end of the term. Thank you.

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

Item 14, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 15, motions. Mr. Morin.

MR. MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Morin has requested unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? Proceed Mr. Morin.

ITEM 15: MOTIONS

Motion 6-89(1): Witnesses On Environmental Contaminants To Appear Before Committee Of The Whole, Carried

MR. MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is very concerned about contaminants being found in the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the matter of environmental contaminants is a complex issue;

AND WHEREAS the Members of the Legislative Assembly and the people of the Northwest Territories should be fully informed on environmental contamination;

NOW THEREFORE, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, Ms Cournoyea, that this Legislative Assembly invite scientific and medical experts as well as representatives of the aboriginal organizations, to appear as witnesses in committee of the whole on Friday, March 10, 1989, on the matter of environmental contaminants.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Morin. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

MR. MORIN: I will not speak to the motion. It explains itself. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would the seconder like to speak to the motion?

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms Cournoyea. Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions. This motion is carried.

---Carried

Thank you. 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: Bill 1-89(1), CR 1-89(1), with Mr. Angottitauruq in the chair.

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

PROCEEDINGS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO CONSIDER COMMITTEE REPORT 1-89(1), REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE 1989-90 MAIN ESTIMATES; BILL 1-89(1), APPROPRIATION ACT, 1989-90

Department Of Executive

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Hello. The committee will now come to order. We are dealing with the Executive. We will take a recess for coffee.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): The committee will now come back to order. We are dealing with the Executive. Mr. Minister, would you like to proceed and bring in your witnesses if the committee agrees? Does the committee agree that the Minister brings in his witnesses? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): For the record, Mr. Minister, would you introduce your witnesses?

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Louise Vertes, deputy minister of the Executive Council, and Janet-Marie Fizer, director of finance and administration for the Executive. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Minister. We are on general comments on the Department of Executive. General comments. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will continue from where we left off yesterday, Mr. Chairman. The point I was trying to make yesterday, Mr. Chairman, was that the bureaucracy is flourishing again. I believe since last year there are four new departments added to the list that we now have, so it is growing and it is getting more confusing for the Members and people in the communities as well as here. If you are not a bureaucrat it is pretty difficult to find out where to address your issues or your problems.

The other thing, Mr. Chairman, is that there is in Ottawa a restraint on the moneys being spent and this has been addressed by a number of Members telling us that we have to start tightening up our belts, buckling up...

---Laughter

...so that we can I guess, as Mr. Wray put it, bite the bullet. This is what the communities are expected to do but I still do not see that happening within this government.

Constitutional Development Is High Priority

There was a big issue with regard to constitutional development where very much attention was being paid to this topic during the 10th Assembly and also to aboriginal self-government and aboriginal rights, etc. But that has, in my opinion, been put on the back burner. It is not a high priority, although for the people that are going to be affected by the outcome of land claims and political development, it is probably a high priority on their list, and should be a high priority on the list.

So there is a situation in which if this government does not act now, does not look seriously at constitutional development and make it a high priority as it relates to aboriginal claims, we might end up with the aboriginal people negotiating with Ottawa which I am sure the federal government would love to see happen. It might mean a step backward as far as constitutional development goes because that is exactly the way it started out. Mr. Chairman, this is one concern I have. Certainly it is a concern in the communities and the government has already indicated that they are taking certain measures with regard to devolving responsibility to the communities but Mr. Patterson did allude to Tabled Document 56-88(2), with regard to political and constitutional development in the North. I guess I was referring to the sections in which the government has established a position or taken a position, and this position is that the GNWT continues to retain its authority and responsibility for the delivery of public programs and services to all territorial residents. Just one portion of that. Naturally if you tell that to the communities there is that feeling that perhaps the government has already established a position. I do not see what is the sense of having constitutional development if the government takes those kinds of positions. So then there is only one other option that the communities could look at and that is aboriginal self-

government to be defined by the communities. The position that the Yukon government has taken is that they are supporting aboriginal self-government and that it would be on the terms of aboriginal people that are negotiating claims. That is one concern, Mr. Chairman.

Support For Travel Outside Constituency

The other concern that I have, Mr. Chairman, and the Minister is aware of it -- I have talked with the Government Leader -- is that there has got to be a program within the Executive with regard to what maybe an ordinary Member like myself would consider as special assignments, either within the office of the Speaker or the office of the Government Leader; it should be both. The problems I ran into last year or last summer was that the Government Leader could not support me because there were no programs to assist Members going on certain trips over and above what you could consider the normal duties as a Member.

I am referring to the international congress on uranium mining which occurred in Saskatoon. I must thank the Minister of Health, Ms Cournoyea, for assisting me there at that time, which made it possible for me to go. But I am sure there were Eastern Members too, who wanted to go and who are directly affected by uranium mining or proposed uranium mining. Those are areas in which you do have what is identified as constituency travel and constituency expenses but you do not have any moneys for. I think there is another one coming up in Vancouver. I think it is called Prospect North. There is a circumpolar conference, and there are other different types of conferences where you have to travel outside your own constituency, or outside your own jurisdiction in order to attend. This is where perhaps there is some difficulty. At the time I wanted to go to this conference, Mr. Chairman, I was turned down by both the Government Leader and the Speaker because they do not have that kind of money in place, nor did they get the mandate from the Members here to act in such a manner. In order to make things more convenient, which is not realistic, you have to arrange your meetings or your travels at the convenience of this Assembly, which is not possible. There are meetings occurring and you do not find out about them unless you dig around for them, and once you do, it is difficult to get support from the Executive, simply because the Assembly is not in session. I would like to ask the Government Leader whether or not he might be able to look into that problem. I am sure I am not only speaking for myself concerning this particular matter.

Mr. Speaker, that is about all I have right now. Again, maybe to just reiterate, I do have a concern about political development. I wish to see it happen, but it has to happen not on the sixth floor of the Laing Building; it has to happen at the local and community level. That is where political development should be taking place. As long as it does not happen, you could have a plebiscite and you would probably lose. So it has to happen on the people's terms, not on the Executive Council's terms, or even this Assembly's terms. I give fair warning with regard to that because it is long overdue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, maybe the last point first. I would like to assure the Member that our government, I would like to think, is open to working with MLAs on what he calls special assignments, where appropriate. I would like to say that we are very open to suggestions that Members might make, and I would like to disagree with him that I could not support him on his proposal to attend that particular conference. I would like to assure him that I urged the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources -- I think it was from that budget that she was able to fund his trip -- to take advantage of that opportunity for our government to be represented through Mr. Gargan at that conference. I think we will be open to other opportunities, as we have in the past. We have sent MLAs on anti-trapping initiatives at First Ministers' Conferences. We have sponsored MLAs to attend the Inuit Circumpolar Conference. I expect that we would sponsor them again to the forthcoming meeting in Greenland. I want to make it clear that although there is no policy as such, depending on the subject of the conference, I think that all Ministers are open to taking advantage, if MLAs are willing, of their ability to represent us at important events. We will continue to be open to those possibilities.

Settlement Of Dene/Metis Claim Important

Secondly, Mr. Chairman, on the major subject of aboriginal self-government, and the Dene/Metis claim, first of all I want to make it very clear that the settlement of this claim is a very high priority with our government. We have worked hard to see it reach the agreement in principle stage. I like to think we have been helpful in overcoming some problems such as the treaty issue that could have threatened the agreement in principle. We know full well that the issue of aboriginal self-government, if there is not some progress made before the final agreement, could jeopardize the claim.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to make it very clear that we are in support of the devolution of powers to community governments. I am not sure exactly what the Member was quoting when he implied that our government was committed to hanging on to programs and delivering programs. I think we should continue to take responsibility for the delivery of programs we are delivering in the NWT, but that certainly does not mean that we cannot hand over, through delegation or contract or devolution, or whatever you want to call it, those powers to the community level. That is what the charter communities legislation permits, that is what the prime public authority concept is all about. There are many references in Tabled Document 56-88(2), on page five and on page nine, in particular, to our commitment to devolving responsibilities to the prime authority at the community level.

Mr. Chairman, I am aware that the federal government is proposing to have sponsored discussions at the community level in the next short while on the question of self-government. I believe that there are hardly any topics that people in our communities are going to be interested in getting more control of, that do not fall within the current responsibilities of the Government of the Northwest Territories. I expect, and it remains to be seen, but I expect that people at the community level are going to say, "We would like to give out social assistance; we would like to take over; we would like to have more power in delivering housing programs; we would like to have more power in the education system; we would like to have more power in the health area, at the community level; we would like to have more responsibility for municipal services, roads, sewage, water." Mr. Chairman, if those are the subjects that come forward as topics for greater self-government at the community level, then our government is going to have to be involved, because we are delivering those programs. I want to make it clear that we stand ready and willing to work out arrangements, on a community-by-community basis, for assigning those responsibilities to the communities. The Charter Communities Act is the vehicle, and our government is totally committed to making it work.

Devolution Of Powers To Community Level

I agree with the Member's concern that if we do not do a good job, and if we are not serious about those discussions, in fact it could be that some communities will look to the federal government for those increased powers and responsibilities that they want. The federal government has been reducing its presence in the North, and I think most people believe that that is the way it should be; that it is the people elected in the NWT that should have responsibility for delivering those vital programs. I would agree with the Member that it would be unfortunate if the call for aboriginal self-government meant that the federal government reasserts its presence in the North whether it be through a reserve system or by, perish the thought, taking back some of the responsibilities that have been delegated to the NWT and this Legislature. So I agree with the Member that we have to be vigorous and we have to be open and we have to be involved in responding to these requests that come forward from the community level. I think we can meet the expectations for greater control where communities are ready and willing to take on those powers.

I would like to be very clear to the honourable Member that I know exactly what he is getting at. This is going to be a very critical period and I can assure you that, beginning with myself, but as well the entire cabinet and almost every Minister could be involved in negotiations at the community level. It could include Renewable Resource issues. It could include issues relating to Government Services, to DPW. There is hardly a department that could not be the subject of

the devolution of powers at the community level. We are ready and willing and open to responding to those requests at the community level.

Just going back to the Member's comments yesterday, Mr. Chairman, there are going to be some limits. For example, if we delegate the authority for delivering welfare to a community we are going to have to respect the rules in the Canada Assistance Plan by which we get our money. So unfortunately it cannot be a totally open-ended transfer in every case because there are legislative rules that cannot be ignored completely. But within those kinds of limits I can assure the Member and this House, we are committed as a priority to responding as much as possible in areas that are under our jurisdiction, to community calls for greater local powers, because we do not want to see the reserve system set up in the Territories and we do not want to see the federal presence reasserted.

We think this Legislature should be the accountable body for the delivery of programs and I am quite sure this Legislature is willing to delegate its authority to the community level where they want it. I hope this statement is as clear as I can be to the Member. I understand the challenge and I think we are ready to rise to it. Thank you.

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

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Chairman, just with regard to the Government Leader's first response. I was not aware that he did support the trip that I went on to Saskatoon but the room and board portion of that trip was covered by Ms Cournoyea, at least by her credit card. I do not know how she claimed it back but that was the arrangement that we came up with. The actual plane ticket itself was covered by Nuclear Free North. I just wanted to mention that.

No Evidence Of Power Devolving To Communities

With regard to your statement, Mr. Government Leader, that the government is reducing, I do not quite get what you meant by that. Mainly because there is no evidence that it is reducing or very little evidence of it even devolving to the communities. Now the thing I keep hearing the government saying is that as long as you hold the purse strings, devolution or control would happen on our terms. That is what I am hearing; because you deliver the programs you have to have some kind of control. But there also is the same situation as was applied to this government when Ottawa was in control. The same scenario is being applied here. That is, that as long as you are good little boys or something, you will have control of programs and the dollars to control those programs; or some control, not absolute control.

At the same time, the Government Leader has already made a commitment indicating that is the direction this government wants to go and intends to go. But as a good classic example of what I mean when communities are pressured, I could only refer to the reserve. In this case, they are not being treated the same as communities that are under the Charter Communities Act or the Hamlets Act or the Settlements Act or the Cities, Towns and Villages Act so they are being treated differently. It is difficult for them to function unless maybe they go under the arms of this government whether they want to become a charter community or a settlement community or a hamlet. So that is a good example of what kind of difficulties a community may experience as well if they do not go under the auspices of this government. Although I am hearing the Minister with all his good intentions, I have not seen it happen and I see difficulties when it is not to the satisfaction of this government. So that is a great concern I have to express. I have been told time and time again of what the roles of Members are and I hope that I am acting on the basis of what my communities wish and desire to have. That is it. I am not doing this because this government wants my community to be that way but I think my community wants to be the way it is, in control of things.

Again using an example -- I must compliment the translations that are being done here -- really there is no program at the local level which says that we are in control of our own language. We have a language bureau here in Yellowknife. When the task force went into the communities the region of Deh Cho did come up with the position that they wanted to control things at the regional

level; develop things at the regional level; provide service at the regional level; and this never happened. Once again, you have to look at the negative effects that have been happening, even with regard to our own culture, and then question the government on these good intentions and whether they are sincere about it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, it is just not correct to say that when we talk about devolution of powers to the community level we are saying that we will retain control. I was not suggesting that at all. What I was suggesting is that if we devolve authority in housing, where we have to live with the rules that the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation applies to us in accepting those funds, then we cannot hand over that program without those same limitations being in place. We are responsible for welfare, as the government in the NWT, but half of the money comes from the federal government through the Canada Assistance Plan under certain rules. If we hand over welfare responsibility to a community, then that program has to be handed over with the rules that are in place. Where it is not a shared program with the federal government, we can and we will be much more flexible. I just wanted to inform the Member that where we are delivering programs jointly with, or entirely for, the federal government, we cannot avoid the conditions that go with accepting that money. We have to pass them on and live with them, whether we like it or not, but it is no desire to dominate or attach conditions or red tape.

Treatment Of Hay River Reserve

Mr. Chairman, the Member raises the question of the Hay River Reserve and the fact that it is treated differently. I certainly would agree that the reserve is treated differently, but it was their decision to become a reserve under federal legislation. I would like to think that our government has responded very well, notwithstanding that we could easily say, "Do not come to us for housing, do not come to us for education, do not come to us for social programs, do not come to us for economic development assistance; you are a reserve, you are the responsibility of the federal government." Of course, we have never taken that position, and it would be absurd if we had.

There was never any hesitation, when I was Minister of Education, about building a school on that reserve, even though it is not on land that our government owns. It was never an issue. Not only did we build the school there, but we built a school that met the requirements of that community, and it added a million dollars to the budget over what we might have proposed for another community elsewhere in the Territories of that size. I think we have contributed, as a government, quite generously to that reserve, and I think we have complemented what the federal government might have offered in areas like economic development. In many ways, the residents of the Hay River Reserve have enjoyed the benefits of both worlds; benefits from reserve status, such as they are, and as well, supplemented by benefits from the NWT government. I do not think that we have discriminated against that reserve. I think that we have not passed the buck to the federal government, although we might have done that. I reject the suggestion that we have not been attempting to respond to the requests that have come out of the Hay River Reserve.

Mr. Chairman, we are for local control, as much as possible, and if a community wants to be involved in the language or culture area, then I am sure that our government will be open to doing what we can. I think any local government should be encouraged to develop policies on language which will enhance and preserve the first languages of that community. Our government certainly would not stand in the way if that was a priority for community self-government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Government Leader. General comments. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN: I agree with the Government Leader that aboriginal languages under the control of aboriginal people should be a priority. Just to clarify a bit, on the Hay River Reserve, other than what other communities are getting, the reserve does not get any kind of federal assistance.

They get the same kind of treatment as band councils. In other words, the band councils do get certain amounts of money based on the per capita grant, and that is exactly what they get, just like the rest of the communities. Over and above that, there is not any kind of assistance that they get from the federal government. The reason why it became a reserve in the first place was because of pressures from the town of Hay River with regard to expanding its boundaries beyond the Hay River. That was the only reason. Even though they did get reserve status, and they got absolute control over certain square miles of land, that did not make any difference to whether they had absolute control of programs or not. That is exactly the direction that land claims are going, too; and that is, that even though you do have control over certain lands, you do not have control over your lives or the types of programs that are going to be delivered in those areas.

The Government Leader maybe has touched on something that is going to be happening once land claims are settled. I do appreciate that this government is giving them programs, but that does not make it any different than any other community, except that maybe they had under an earlier claim. That does not change the delivery of programs at all. It is still controlled here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Mr. Government Leader.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, I think there are a lot more things we could do to transfer powers held at the territorial level to the communities. There is a long way to go. I want to make it very clear that any community that wants to discuss the transfer of powers to the community, at the community level, will find us ready and willing to negotiate new arrangements. We are waiting to hear in what areas the communities might be interested. I am quite sure that community governments may well be able to do a better job, in many areas, than our government is presently doing. I know that we are open to saying, "Okay, you take the responsibility for social assistance in your community." We will make an arrangement, as was done in Iqaluit and was done for a while in Fort Liard. We will make the arrangements and you take over the program. We are open to that and I cannot be any clearer than that.

Meaning Of Self-Government At The Community Level

I hope that we are ready to respond to those requests in any community that is part of the Dene/Metis claim. I am looking forward to finding out what it is that self-government actually means at the community level. We hear a lot about the term "aboriginal self-government". What does it really mean in concrete terms in your community? If it means control over municipal services, then let us negotiate. We have handed over responsibility for delivering water and sewer services to many communities in the Eastern Arctic. Undoubtedly it has been a great success. We are ready to deal with communities in the Mackenzie Valley now, in that area and in many other areas.

Mr. Chairman, I think that it should be understood that the Dene/Metis claim is basically premised, as I understand it, on the fact that there will be laws of general application and there will be a public government in place in the claim area. The Dene/Metis have extensive powers in management institutions, such as wildlife and land and water management, over the whole claim area, the whole settlement area. But there will be a public government remaining in the claim area and it is to that government, which is our government, that Dene/Metis should look for greater self-government in areas within our control, such as housing, education, health, local government, social services. We are ready to respond and I expect that within the coming year we should be able to develop agreements with a number of communities that will demonstrate how this can work and we will demonstrate our good faith. I look forward to responding. It is a priority, we are committed to it and now we have to get on with the work. I think these forthcoming community consultations, which Mr. Nerysoo referred to earlier today in a written question he asked, will be an opportunity for us to find out what the communities want. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Government Leader. General comments. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN: I would hope that when the Government Leader says that if the communities want control of this program or that program that that is the case. It is up to the local education authority to identify if they want control because even they have limitations with regard to their own authorities which is governed by this legislation. So the Government Leader is saying that if the community wants these certain programs and to have control over them, I would hope that they would not refer to certain authorities as the authority that is going to decide on the outcome of this political development process that is happening.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Mr. Government Leader.

Clear Definition Of Requirements Is Necessary

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, I take the Member's point that on occasion we are dealing with legislation and local community bodies that may not be appropriate to the traditions and the style of decision-making in a particular community. I think that if you were to question the Minister of Education on this issue you would find that he was open to looking at new approaches. What we need and what we are lacking in this debate now is a clear definition of what is precisely required. I am looking forward to hearing how the present system can be improved. Maybe local education authorities are not successful in some of our communities. Maybe there has to be a new model developed that will be more appropriate and integrate more appropriately with whatever local government and traditional form of decision-making is in place in a particular community. I think we are open to responding.

Going back to the beginning of these remarks, we know that the issue of self-government was an important concern expressed at the Hay River assembly, which expressed doubts about accepting the agreement in principle because the federal claims policy does not allow political institutions to be incorporated into the claim. So we have to work at that alongside the process of implementing the claim. The Yukon is put forward as a model of something wonderful. All I understand is that the Yukon land claims agreement in principle is a commitment to a process for discussing self-government. We can do that without writing it into the agreement in principle. The willingness is here now, present in our government. We are even further ahead than the Yukon because we have a mechanism in place right now, it is called the Charter Communities Act, and we want to make it work. Maybe it needs some fine tuning to work appropriately in communities, but that legislation was developed as a result of initiatives from Fort Good Hope and Fort Resolution, among other communities, who said, "We would like to find a way in which band governments can get involved", similar to the way hamlets have taken control in the Eastern Arctic. So after many years this model has developed as a response to requests from primarily Dene communities. So it is in place. Let us make it work. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Government Leader. General comments. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. After reviewing the Government Leader's comments in his opening presentation on the Department of Executive, I have some concerns that I would like to raise at this time. First of all, in his opening address in regard to the transfer of the public affairs function from the Department of Culture and Communications to the Department of Executive. Mr. Chairman, after reading the Minister's comments, my interpretation of the comments is that it implies that the function that is moving over to Executive was not doing its job when it was in Culture and Communications. Now how does the Minister feel that its information service, or the co-ordination of the various elements of the information service, is going to improve by moving it up to Executive? I cannot recall having any great difficulty when it was in Culture and Communications because that is where it should be, not under the Department of Executive.

Concern About Propaganda

I am concerned that once it goes to the Department of Executive it might be used more as a propaganda thing to produce more propaganda for our government and not particularly fulfil its public affairs role in terms of providing information to the residents of the Territories.

Mr. Chairman, maybe I am reading the Minister's comments in the negative but when I read it that is how I interpret it. It appears that this particular function, public affairs function, was not doing its job when it was under Culture and Communications and that is why they are moving it up to the Department of Executive. Could I get the Minister to clarify that for me, if I am reading this correctly?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Government Leader.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, I think Mr. Gargan referred to the fact that government is getting more and more complicated and it is getting harder and harder for people in the communities to understand what is going on. I agree with that. I think the government has taken on a lot of new responsibilities and we are now starting to deal with issues such as militarization in the North, such as the pressing environmental issues which did not exist to the same extent some years ago.

I think, therefore, it is incumbent upon us to develop better approaches to communicating with the public. I would like to make it clear that no one has said that the public affairs officers who worked in Culture and Communications were not doing a good job. The statement I made was that with this move I think we will be in a better position to co-ordinate our information service and concentrate on improving communication. I say this quite simply because, Mr. Chairman, the cabinet is where decisions are taken and new programs and policies are developed. This move, which sees the public affairs officers reporting basically through my office, is designed to put that function closer in touch with the locus of decision-making in the government.

Development Of Public Affairs Policy

I would like to make it clear that the people who work in those jobs are still actually located in Culture and Communications for operational purposes. They still have access to some of the services such as printing and press releases and the like that are within the Department of Culture and Communications. We have given them, I would suggest, better access to decision-making and the origin of the policies and programs that people want to find out about, by putting them in my office. I have asked my press secretary, who was deliberately chosen because he has extensive experience within our government and was himself a deputy minister, to work with deputy ministers and with the senior management committee and with the cabinet and, of course, with the public affairs officers to develop an improved public affairs policy.

The Member used the word "propaganda". I suppose that we are interested, frankly, in trying to point out the positive aspects of things that we are doing as a government and as a Legislature but I see it much more as providing information and improving the communication flow. I would like to stress that the people who work with the Government Leader's press secretary are public servants. This is not a political office and political arm of the government. They are public servants and they have not moved physically. They just have access to my office and therefore better access to where the decisions are being taken. I hope that we will improve our ability to communicate with the public. Not that we have not been doing a good job. I would like to think we would be able to do a better job.

It is a new function. The new approach to public affairs is still being developed but I hope that perhaps by this time next year you will see some concrete results and you will say, "Yes, you are doing a better job in getting the information out." People can do with that information what they will but the object is to get the information out so that people know what is going on. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Government Leader. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, once again with this move that the Government Leader is proposing, it appears to me that there was something wrong when it was under Culture and Communications. But my understanding was that we have not heard of any problems in that particular function of Culture and Communications. If it is not broken, why fix it? Right now they are fixing it by moving it to the Executive. To me, Mr. Chairman, it appears that

the Executive wants to have a handle on the public affairs function for their own good; not only to promote their own propaganda but to monitor as to what goes out to the public. I cannot see why they would even consider moving it to the Executive. If they wanted to improve that particular function, why could they not improve it while it was under Culture and Communications. Why move it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Government Leader.

Mandate Clarified

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, I think that what we have done with this move is to clarify the mandate of the Ministry of Culture and Communications so that it can concentrate on its role as a department of culture, which is a high priority with our government, and concentrate on its role as a department of communications. That means developing communications policy, dealing with issues like broadcasting and television policy in the NWT. Being a department of communications does not mean that you are the press arm or public affairs arm of the government. In fact, I would dare say that there is no department of communications in the country, including the federal Department of Communications, that actually also is the government's public affairs arm. That is usually dealt with in the Prime Minister's office. That is simply what we are doing here, and I think it is in keeping with practices in other jurisdictions.

If you could look at it this way, Mr. Chairman, I believe that the new system, which permits the press secretary to have direct access to myself and cabinet, is an improvement on the old system, and I would say that the press secretary has better access to cabinet than the deputy minister of Culture and Communications did in the past when those public affairs officers reported to that position. Public affairs officers are still assigned to government departments, as before; they work with other civil servants. I would like to state again that they have not even physically moved; they are still housed in the Department of Culture and Communications. All we have done is realigned the reporting relationships, and we do not intend to move them, incidentally. That is not necessary. It is merely a change of reporting relationships in the interests of giving them better access to the place where decisions are made.

I am not sure what the concerns are, Mr. Chairman, and why there is some suggestion that there are some sinister motives here. We are simply fine tuning what has been a good public affairs approach and giving them more visibility and more access to where decisions are being taken. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Government Leader. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will not continue to harp on that, but I just wanted to let the Government Leader be aware that, hopefully this particular function is not used for propaganda, or whatever you want to call it.

Moving on, Mr. Chairman, to the intergovernmental affairs activity. I would like to commend the Executive on establishing the profile that we have in Ottawa. In the Minister's comments he indicated that this office has been taking on a more active role in the territorial, national and even international affairs. I would just like to indicate that while a couple of my colleagues were in Ottawa we utilized this particular office to benefit our needs. Having this particular office was very helpful to me as a Member here. They have been very helpful, especially Mr. Braden and his staff there. I know they have only a three man staff, but once the trainee comes on stream, hopefully they will continue to support the Members when they are travelling in eastern Canada.

Edmonton Office Should Be Enhanced

However, on the other hand, the comments that my colleague from Mackenzie Delta made -- I agree with him to a certain extent. Our Edmonton office, too, should be enhanced as our Ottawa office has been. Mr. Chairman, I feel that if the role of our Edmonton office was as active as our

Ottawa office, surely we can accomplish more in terms of being ambassadors for the Territories, especially for the Pacific Rim, as Mr. Nerysoo indicated.

Moving along, Mr. Chairman, to the departmental mandate, or goals and objectives. In the area of devolution, I feel that the Executive have been dragging their feet in some areas of devolution, specifically in the area of trying to devolve the arctic airports program to the Territories. I recall the 10th Assembly dealing with this. Now the 11th Assembly is dealing with the same issue. It is dragging on and on. If the feds are not going to devolve this program, then why do we not just forget about trying to pursue it? They are not going to devolve that particular program. It appears that they do not want to devolve that. We should change our strategy and put more political pressure on them so that they improve the program that they are supposed to be administering, instead of trying to devolve it to our government. It has been, I would say, a good eight to 10 years, and our government here is dragging their feet in the area of devolution. I realize that they are also trying to devolve the mineral program and, hopefully, they will be more successful than the arctic airports program. Just a comment on those two particular areas, Mr. Chairman.

Moving along to another area, Mr. Chairman, under the Commissioner's Office. Members know that over the last number of years the Commissioner's role has drastically been diminished to more of a lieutenant-governor's role, more of a ceremonial role. I notice in the budget, too, that his budget is also coming down. Hopefully, Mr. Chairman, with the Commissioner's Opening Address to the House indicating that he is going to resign by July, the Executive would pursue the federal government to ensure that we do have someone appointed, hopefully from the North, a northerner, a born and raised northerner.

Mr. Chairman, in the area of the Ministers' Offices, I realize that a number of Ministers are encouraged to travel in all regional areas that we have. I was fortunate to see a number of Ministers travelling in my area. Mr. Butters has already travelled in my region, and Mr. Alloo has travelled to one event in my region. Mr. Patterson travelled to my region, to Lac la Martre, for a day visit there when he accompanied British Columbia's Minister for advanced education. Mr. Kakfwi has also visited one community in my region, Rae Lakes, and also Rae-Edzo. The majority of the Executive Council have visited my region, not the whole region but most of the communities. I appreciate the Ministers taking the time to visit the communities that request their presence.

Mr. Chairman, in terms of the Government Leader's Office, I notice that a lot of Members have requested that he should be doing more travelling as the Government Leader. Obviously he has been tied down to headquarters because of all the work the Executive has been undertaking. But I would solidly encourage him to try to get away from headquarters so that he can see, as the other Ministers have been doing, the reality of what is out there. He might lose touch if he stays too long in headquarters.

The Executive branch has for the last couple of years undertaken some major undertaking in, for instance, the Northern Accord, the transfer of health and forestry, and I know that they are going to continue to try to devolve more and more so that they can be seen by the federal government and the provinces to be more self-sufficient.

Executive Must Pressure Federal Government

Another area I wanted to touch on is that the Executive has to be more aggressive in terms of, not only lobbying, but putting more pressure on the federal government. Not only in the area of devolving programs but also on supporting various industries here in the Territories. It could be oil and gas or the mining -- hopefully more mining -- because I think it has to take more political will to convince the federal government to hear what our concerns are.

In the area of the audit bureau, I made a number of comments last year. I do not want to comment at this time but hopefully the concerns I raised last year are resolved in this year's

budget. Once we get into the details of the budget I am going to comment on the regional operations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Government Leader.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think most of the Member's comments were advice, which I will certainly try to heed, including travelling more. As I said yesterday, I am not wedded to Yellowknife, I can assure the honourable Member, and some of my constituents are also agreed that I spend too much time here. So I will accept all that advice and, now that some of these major issues are over, try to travel more in the regions and in the smaller communities.

Mr. Chairman, I agree totally with the Member that we should ensure a northern person, preferably an aboriginal person, is appointed to the Commissioner's position. I think this would be a great first, if this were to happen. To the extent that I have some influence and the cabinet has some influence in this process, I am quite confident that we can recommend one or more capable people who meet those expectations.

I will take note of the Member's advice on the lobbying. I do not think Mr. Wray quite agrees that we have been dragging our feet and that issue has already been addressed in this Legislature. But the airports is a major issue; I could not agree with the Member more. It has dragged on too long. There are lives and safety at stake. If it were up to us it would have been transferred long ago. In fact, I thought we had settled it after Mr. Wray and I flew all night to Iqaluit to meet John Crosbie. We made him an offer that seemed to be acceptable. We said, "We can build these new B and C airports for a lot less money than you, the federal government, have budgeted, because we have a savings we can realize by using our existing resources and forces." I thought the deal was sewed up, but it faltered once our meeting concluded. I can assure the Member that it is a big concern and I really hope we can make some progress. We have made that very clear to the new Minister of Indian Affairs and we have also discussed the issue with the Prime Minister and will continue to do so. So I want the Member to know it is not for lack of trying on our part that we have not made progress.

Minerals is also an area where I think we can probably do a better job than the federal government can. So I thank the Member for those comments and I agree. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): General comments. Mr. Zoe.

Decentralizing Regions

MR. ZOE: Mr. Chairman, I forgot the most important issue I should have mentioned. It is the issue of decentralization, decentralizing the regions. I was going to get into it once we get into regional operations, but I will comment on it now. This whole issue of decentralizing from either the regional headquarters or from headquarters, it appears to me that the Executive is not quite sure as to how to handle it, because we are also talking about what we are going to do with regional and tribal councils and the prime public body concept. So it all ties in together and it is a little confusing. I know the Minister is undertaking another look, specifically for the Fort Smith Region. That has not been resolved yet and hopefully it will be in a short while. I am not too sure how the other regions are taking this whole issue of decentralizing. I am not too sure if they are happy with it or not. But in my region we are not too happy with the way the government is decentralizing the region. It has been brought to the attention of the Government Leader, so he is reviewing the whole area, specifically for the Fort Smith Region.

Now I do not want to harp too much on it. He is undertaking some study now but I guess I will be commenting further in the House once they put in place what they call decentralizing to the smaller communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Government Leader.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, I guess I have been part of a government that has undertaken some significant decentralization initiatives. There was the Fort Smith decentralization. There was decentralization from regional centers in Keewatin, Kitikmeot and Baffin. I think that the location of the NWT Power Corporation could also be cited as an example of a decentralization approach. We are being pressed to consider more initiatives and also to fine tune what has happened in the Fort Smith Region. I will be consulting with all MLAs affected, including the honourable Member for Rae-Lac la Martre, before deciding what to recommend to cabinet. I do hope that will be concluded soon and that we can aim for resolving the issue by the new fiscal year. It is a sensitive issue and there are different views depending on which MLA one consults, but we will try to do our best to make sure that the economic and employment benefits of government activity are equitably spread throughout the Territories and not just concentrated in the capital. I believe in that, and I think that even MLAs who represent Yellowknife would acknowledge that there is some need for equity.

So I think with a careful and a sensitive approach we can do more in that area, provided issues like costs and effectiveness of service are properly addressed. I will be tabling a policy, an amended policy, on government organization which outlines in more detail how we will guide ourselves in making these decisions. In the next few days that policy will be tabled. And hopefully it will clarify some of the concerns some Members have that we are not committed to decentralization. I think we are, but in a reasonable and a carefully considered approach. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): General comments on the Executive. Mr. Zoe.

Assignment Of New Department Portfolios

MR. ZOE: Thank you. Once again, Mr. Chairman, the Executive has created three new departments. Now there is no indication as to who is going to get what departments and it is basically three or two of them carrying each department. The new department, right now when we are debating, say Transportation, it is partially Mr. Butters, and so forth. When is the Executive going to appoint who is going to be responsible for the three new departments?

For instance, Transportation is more looked after by Ms Cournoyea and Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources again falls under Ms Cournoyea and the other one, I am not too sure who that falls under but with these three new departments, I assume that the Executive is going to say, "Okay, it is so-and-so's total responsibility." When would that decision come down and when are they going to get the senior positions filled for the three new departments, the DM for each one of them, and when is the Government Leader considering seeking from the House a ninth position for the Executive, because there are a number of Ministers that have a number of responsibilities under their belt at the moment? Is the Executive even considering it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Government Leader.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I probably do not need to remind the honourable Member that right now, today, those departments do not exist. They are proposed and they are subject to the approval of this Legislature before they can exist. So there have been no cabinet assignments, I guess out of respect for the Legislature and its final authority on the budget. As the Member points out, I have asked Ms Cournoyea to speak for, to address the Department of Transportation when it is presented because it is now presented as a new and separate budget item but that is mainly because as Minister of DPW she has the Highways function and has the responsibility for the bulk of the new activities in the new department.

Mr. Chairman, once the budgets are approved and before April 1st, it will be my responsibility to assign the responsibilities to Ministers within the cabinet. That is a responsibility that was given to me by the Legislature and it will require some adjustments in portfolios within the cabinet.

No Ninth Cabinet Seat At This Time

Mr. Chairman, the Member asked about a ninth seat. Cabinet has carefully considered the issue of creating a ninth ministerial position. The conclusion that we reached is, number one, we work hard but we are not overworked right now. In other words, cabinet felt that with eight Ministers and the present responsibilities we have, we can handle the workload. It was cabinet's view that should we take on other major responsibilities, and I might cite mining as an example and I might cite the administration of oil and gas as an example, then we should seriously consider the possibility of a ninth seat on the cabinet. I think our feeling was, looking at other legislatures in the country, that having approximately one third of the Legislature in the cabinet is a fair balance and that we can handle the present workload until it is at a point where it becomes greatly enlarged. So the answer to that question, Mr. Chairman, is that we would not recommend the establishment of a ninth cabinet seat at this particular point in time. I hope I have answered the Member's questions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Government Leader. General comments. Mr. Ernerk.

MR. ERNERK: Mr. Chairman, I will try to behave well tonight and try to make one or two questions as understandable as possible. Referring back to the issue of self-government, Mr. Chairman, I can recall the Government Leader, when he was Minister responsible for aboriginal affairs, when he sat with the 10 Premiers and the Prime Minister of Canada not too long ago. I was sitting right behind him when he said, "The Northwest Territories government fully supports aboriginal self-government." Now he seems to be wondering what aboriginal self-government is all about. What did he mean then when he made that statement to all Canadians during the First Ministers' Conference a few years ago? What did he support?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Ernerk. Mr. Government Leader.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, the Government of the Northwest Territories has always supported the entrenching of the right to self-government in the Constitution of Canada as a primary definition of aboriginal rights within the Constitution of this country. It was the principle of entrenching the right to self-government that we have supported and continue to support. What we were saying to the provinces at the time is, "You need not be afraid of aboriginal self-government. We are an example of a jurisdiction that in many ways has elements of aboriginal self-government. We have an aboriginal majority; we have aboriginal people serving the Legislature as Ministers, and things did not fall apart. It is not a concept that you need to be afraid of. We are well on the road in the NWT to having aboriginal self-government, and we support the concept and we can offer you our experience as an example of the fact that placing responsibility in the hands of aboriginal people can work, and can work very well."

That was the principle I was addressing, Mr. Chairman. There were some who were saying, "We cannot put this right in the Constitution until it is defined." What we were saying was, the right can be put in the Constitution, and the definition can be worked out, as appropriate, in each jurisdiction in various parts of the country. It can mean different things in different places.

I have spoken earlier today on what I think it means in the NWT, and I believe that we have to build aboriginal self-government on the firm base that has already been established of public government in the NWT. I do not think aboriginal self-government has to mean that we add ethnic institutions to parallel institutions that are already in place through public government. I think that would be costly and it would be duplicative, and therefore wasteful, and it would also be quite confusing to the communities who, by and large, work well together in receiving and recommending on vital public services.

Commitment To Aboriginal Self-Government Unchanged

Mr. Chairman, our commitment has not changed and we are strongly pressing for a revival of the First Ministers' Conferences on Aboriginal Rights. I spoke to the Prime Minister about this very

issue last week. We want to see this unfinished business completed. We worked hard and, I think, took a leading role as a government, aided by Members of this Legislature and leaders of the aboriginal organizations of the NWT. The business was not finished, and it must be finished. We are committed to that process continuing to a just resolution. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Government Leader. Mr. Ernerk.

MR. ERNERK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a little while ago he seemed to wonder what self-government is all about at the community level. I want to be able to recommend to him, or tell him, that my idea of self-government in the communities is where more native people are taking part in the system, to help to improve the system. I could give him one or two suggestions. One is the establishment of Inuit justice councils at the community level, where they take part in the justice system, where they contribute certain amounts of traditional aspects of Inuit culture -- the good parts of the Inuit culture -- and the other things like renewable resource management according to our hunting seasons in the regions, especially in Nunavut. Things like migratory birds, hunting to take place when the birds are here and not when they are gone. These are the kinds of things that I see in terms of community regional self-government being established in Nunavut, in particular. Just a suggestion.

The other question I would like to ask the Minister is if this government is committed totally to the establishment of aboriginal languages becoming official languages of the NWT.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Ernerk. Mr. Government Leader.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, if I could just clarify, I think what I was wondering about was what Dene/Metis leaders mean when they talk about aboriginal self-government. That is what I am curious about getting some clarification on. I think our own government's position has been clear and remains clear.

Aboriginal Languages As Official Languages

Mr. Chairman, the question of aboriginal languages and official languages is the responsibility of the Minister of Culture and Communications, and I think he has committed himself in the Legislature to bringing forward legislation this fall for consideration by this House which would strengthen the meaning given to aboriginal languages as official languages in the NWT. In my view, we should be totally committed to recognizing aboriginal languages as official languages and as working languages in the NWT.

Having said that, I think that because there are some limits on what we can do, when we look at the legislation we are going to have to make some decisions about how we can best spend the money that we are willing to commit to this very worthwhile goal. I, for one, must say that if we have to make choices, I would not consider it worthwhile having interpreters closeted away in windowless rooms somewhere, translating regulations, for example, that very few people read, into the aboriginal languages. I think that if big "O" official languages means that we have to translate every publication of the government, including regulations that very few people read anyway unless they are lawyers, then we may have to recognize that we do not have enough funds to carry out all those functions. I think that, as a government, when we look at implementing the improved legislation we are going to have to make some of those choices. I think that if it is not a public function that is important to the public, we may agree that our resources are better spent on doing things that are visible and real and meaningful at the community level, in our schools, in our government offices, in our local government offices, on our street signs, in our public communications with the people. But I think that if we are scrupulous about insisting that every word that is dealt with in the government is translated, we may be committing ourselves to a tremendous expenditure of resources that really are not going to have any significant public impact.

So I think that when one governs and is responsible for implementing these policies, there are sometimes priorities that have to be set and decisions that have to be made about where we

spend our money. But the principle, we are firmly committed to; and I know the Minister is committed to bringing forward strengthened legislation. I like to think that if we can do this effectively then we can help a goal of the TFN in their land claim, which is to enhance, to create Inuktitut as an official language. I think that if our government can do something and set some kind of an example by improving our recognition of Inuktitut, then we can help the claim and help encourage the federal government to provide corresponding support. So I think that by this fall we should be able to show precisely how we recommend this important object be realized, through enhancements to our legislation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Angottitauruq): Thank you, Mr. Government Leader. Mr. Ernerk.

MR. ERNERK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Initially I know that TFN, and they still do, wanted to see that the Inuktitut language be recognized as an official language of Canada, and I think it should be. I have always been proud to be a Canadian but I have always had to look from the outside inward and that becomes a little difficult when you, as an original Canadian, have been denied your rights to participate fully in a Canadian society.

Inuktitut Would Be Requirement For Getting A Job

The point I would like to make is if, for example, the Inuktitut language becomes the official language in Nunavut and thus a requirement for getting a job in the public service, then the GNWT will become more committed to training Inuit for jobs at every level. I will give you an example. It will become easier to provide job training to Inuit than to provide language training to southerners, for instance. So I think that is the ultimate objective that we have to be able to keep in mind.

When I was talking about training yesterday, I touched upon this very issue because on Monday I will move a motion to see if we could get the GNWT to agree on the issue of term positions. It is important that when southern Canadians come to the communities in the Eastern Arctic, to train native people to take on their positions, that that experience is left behind. It is a compliment to a southern Canadian who has trained a native person. So I feel quite strongly about this particular issue as it is tied in very much with the issue of the official language.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: I am in general agreement with what the Member says and as I mentioned earlier, I would rather see our money being spent on useful things like bilingual bonuses, language training for public servants and other programs of that kind, than on translating a bunch of documents that the average person might not read. So I think our government should be very open to those kinds of suggestions and I think we are. I welcome those comments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Mr. Ernerk.

MR. ERNERK: I wanted to ask the Government Leader about the Women's Secretariat. I am reading the departmental overview where it says, "Women are able to play an equal role in the economic, social and political life in the NWT." This system of southern Canada was not introduced to us, in terms of elections and in terms of choosing leaders by way of ballots, until very recently. And yet we adopted it, we got used to it and running for an office is often an exciting thing in Nunavut because sometimes you get a lot of people running for one position and voter turnout is normally very high in the East. One of the things I would like to say to the Government Leader is that I think the Executive Council could learn a lot from our own communities, especially Nunavut, when it comes to including women in elected positions. In the last municipal election we had three women running for mayor's office in Rankin Inlet and of course we now have a woman mayor. In Repulse Bay we have at least four or five women councillors, out of eight councillors. The former president of ITC was a woman and the present president of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference is a woman, Mary Simon, as the Minister knows. I am wondering what he means here because I think we could show him our system in the Eastern Arctic and apply it here to the Executive Council.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Mr. Government Leader.

Explanation Of Women's Secretariat Mandate

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Chairman, this Women's Secretariat function rests within the Department of Executive but really is the responsibility of another Minister and reports to another Minister. But since I am responsible overall for the development of the mandates of the departments, I would comment on the Member's particular question about what the statement means that women are able to play an equal role in the economic, social and political life in the NWT. I think it simply means, Mr. Chairman, that women comprise approximately half of the population and that therefore they should have an equal role along with men in all aspects of life in the NWT. Right now, notwithstanding the notable successes that the Member has referred to in his constituency and within Inuit organizations -- you know, I do not have to look far myself to find examples of women who are playing important roles in our government, beginning with the deputy minister here on my left and my finance officer on my right, not to mention the women in our cabinet; but compared to their proportion in the territorial population, women are still not represented in the business world and in government.

So the object of the Women's Secretariat is to try and improve that balance in everything they do. Their reason for existence is to try and improve the status of women. That is why we have a Women's Secretariat. I suppose when the day comes and women do have an equal voice and role in all aspects of life in the NWT then we can disband the secretariat and say, "Thank you, you have done a great job. It is no longer necessary." And when they get ahead of us, then we will have a men's secretariat which will try and balance things the other way, once women have taken over. That is my analysis of the mandate, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Mr. Ernerk.

MR. ERNERK: I understand what the Government Leader is saying. Then I see that particular program to be tied in with Social Services, very much, child care services. I agree that we need to introduce more child care services in the communities in the Eastern Arctic. I should say, in the NWT because I am aware of the fact that there are many women in the communities who want to work, who want to get into the business world, who want to be trained to do things in life, who want to contribute to society's well-being; but they are tied down because often there is no space for child care services. Yes, I am just agreeing with the Government Leader with regard to what he explained to me with this issue of business, as well as in government.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Any comments, Mr. Minister? If not, general comments. Mr. Butters.

Excellent Service From Ottawa Office And Edmonton Office

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I almost forgot what I was going to say. I wish to use the opportunity to thank the staff of the Ottawa office and the Edmonton office for the excellent service they have always provided to me when I have had occasion to visit those centres. I expect to be visiting Ottawa on March 7th and I know I will be well looked after on that occasion so I wish to use this opportunity to extend my thanks to the staff of those two offices.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Mr. Minister, any comments?

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Well, I would like to thank Members who provided some good words about Mr. Braden and his staff. There have been some critical words said yesterday which I think probably were more properly directed at me than at a public servant who really does not have a chance to defend himself. But I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, that I appreciate those comments because I know that Mr. Braden is well qualified to do the job. He is a person who grew up in the North and was educated here and I can tell you that he is working hard for the people of the NWT in that office. So I appreciate those comments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Mr. Ernerk.

MR. ERNERK: I move that you report progress, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Motion is in order. I have a motion on the floor. It is not debatable. Mr. Clerk, could you ring the bells? I do not have a quorum. The committee would like to thank the witnesses for appearing before us. I have a motion on the floor to report progress. All those in favour? Those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress. I would like to thank the witnesses for appearing before us. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Mr. Zoe.

ITEM 19: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF COMMITTEE REPORT 1-89(1), REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE 1989-90 MAIN ESTIMATES; BILL 1-89(1), APPROPRIATION ACT, 1989-90

MR. ZOE: Merci beaucoup, Mr. President. Your committee has been considering Bill 1-89(1) and CR 1-89(1), and wishes to report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Zoe. The House has heard the report of the chairman of committee of the whole. Are you agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

MR. SPEAKER: Item 20, third reading of bills. Item 21, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Announcements, Mr. Speaker. There will be a meeting of the ajauqtit at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

ITEM 21: ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of the day for Friday, February 24th.

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: CR 1-89(1); CR 2-89(1); Bill 1-89(1); Bill 8-89(1); Tabled Documents 23-89(1), 24-89(1), 25-89(1), 26-89(1)
19. Report of Committee of the Whole
20. Third Reading of Bills
21. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Friday, February 24th, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

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