



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

**8th Session**

**11th Assembly**

**HANSARD**

Official Report  
**DAY 2**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1991**

**Pages 6 - 32**

Speaker: The Hon. Richard Nerysoo, M.L.A.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

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## YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1991

## MEMBERS PRESENT

Hon. Titus Allooloo, Mr. Arlooktoo, Hon. Michael Ballantyne, Hon. Tom Butters, Hon. Nellie Cournoyey, Mr. Crow, Mr. Ernerk, Mr. Gargan, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Kilabuk, Mr. Lewis, Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell, Mr. McLaughlin, Mr. Morin, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Mr. Ningark, Hon. Dennis Patterson, Mr. Pedersen, Mr. Pollard, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Sibbeston, Mr. Whitford, Hon. Gordon Wray, Mr. Zoe

## ITEM 1: PRAYER

**SPEAKER (Hon. Richard Nerysoo):** Thank you. Orders of the day for Thursday, February 14, 1991. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife North.

## ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

**Ministers' Statement 1-91(1): Contribution Arrangements**

**HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is the Government of the Northwest Territories' policy that major contribution payments shall not be made in advance of the recipient's needs. This policy simply reflects responsible cash management by the government and reflects the concerns over the years of the Auditor General. Since the policy was adopted, payment schedules for new contribution arrangements have been based on the expenditure needs of recipients. The government has also been changing payment schedules for existing contribution arrangements to comply with the policy.

Changes to existing contribution payment schedules can have a financial impact on the recipients. Last year the Financial Management Board approved a one year delay in changes to the payment schedule to education boards until an assessment of the financial impact on these boards was completed. This assessment included an evaluation of the appropriateness of the current funding formula. This financial assessment has been progressing over the past year but has not yet been completed. As a result, neither the Financial Management Board nor the education boards have had the opportunity to review the results. Until the work is completed it would be inappropriate to implement changes to the contribution payment schedules.

I wish to advise Members of the Legislative Assembly that the Financial Management Board has postponed implementation of payment schedule changes to education boards until April 1, 1992. This will allow time to complete the assessment and perform adequate consultation with the affected parties prior to implementation. Thank you.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Ministers' statements. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot.

## ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

**Member's Statement On Visit To Natilikmiot By Government Officials**

**MR. NINGARK:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had some visitors over in the Natilikmiot region, including the Government Leader, Mr. Patterson, during the month of January. The Hon. Tom Butters was also there, as well as Commissioner Norris and the federal Minister of Housing in Ottawa, Alan Redway. I would like to express my gratitude on

behalf of my constituents in Natilikmiot. They also visited Spence Bay and while they were there we officially opened the arena. I want to add my gratitude and extend my thanks for the official opening of the arena to the then Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs for having included this as his priority when he was then Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, my friend the Hon. Gordon Wray. On behalf of the people of Talurjuak, Spence Bay, I extend my thank you to you.

When these Ministers come for a visit to our constituencies it is our culture and it is our way to get a better understanding of one another and on behalf of my people, Mr. Speaker, I thank those people who visited my constituency.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho.

**Member's Statement On Compensation For Injured Grader Operator**

**MR. GARGAN:** Mr. Speaker, one of my constituents, Mr. John Bonnetrouge, was operating a grader on December 27, 1984, when the grader went through the ice on the Mackenzie ice crossing. Mr. Bonnetrouge was forced to move fast and jump off the grader and as a result he injured his back.

Mr. Bonnetrouge has been seeking compensation since that time without success. In 1988, I started working on Mr. Bonnetrouge's case by appealing on Mr. Bonnetrouge's behalf to the then Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board. On December 19, 1990, Mr. Bonnetrouge appeared before the Workers' Compensation Review Board to appeal his case. A decision was made for compensation on December 28, 1990, and Mr. Bonnetrouge received his first cheque from the Workers' Compensation Board in January of this year.

I would like to thank the Workers' Compensation Review Board for their careful consideration in resolving this issue and a special thank you to Ms. Kathe Pagonis who is the WCB adviser for appeals. Ms. Pagonis has done an excellent job in assisting Mr. Bonnetrouge on this issue. Further, I would like to thank the Minister responsible, Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell, and her department.

Happy Valentine's Day, Madam Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nede.

**Member's Statement On Fort Resolution Rejection Of Proposed Separate Metis Claim**

**MR. MORIN:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my support for the decision made by my constituents last night in Fort Resolution to reject the proposal for a separate Metis claim. It is totally irresponsible for the Metis Association of the NWT to advocate such a move. Seeking a separate Metis claim

leaves our communities with two choices: 1) They could choose to totally alienate their Dene brothers and sisters and to create chaos and disunity in the communities; or 2) They can disengage themselves from the organization creating these divisions. The people of Fort Resolution have chosen to maintain unity within their community and to pull out of the organization advocating community splits.

On January 29th I wrote to the Government Leader objecting to the unequal treatment of the Dene/Metis leaders on the basis that it reflected a bias in favour of seeking separate claims against those who wished to maintain unity on their aboriginal rights. The decision to provide support through secondment arrangements with the Metis Association of the NWT while refusing to provide support for chiefs' salaries is evidence of this bias. This government has refused to provide financial support to those chiefs in communities that need it the most. These are the communities that have rejected the extinguishment of aboriginal rights and have therefore lost the resources necessary for them to resolve outstanding rights.

Mr. Speaker, it appears that this government believes it has the right to dictate the terms for aboriginal rights settlements through favouritism and through using public funds to achieve these objectives. The only responsible action this government can take is to extend support to the Dene Nation, the chiefs, the regions and the Metis locals who have rejected absolute extinguishment of all aboriginal rights. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Baffin South.

#### **Member's Statement Of Appreciation For Lake Harbour Arena**

**MR. ARLOOKTOO:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My comments will be brief. I would like to express the thanks of the people of Lake Harbour. I have been their MLA for 11 years now. While that is the case, we still do not have very good representation on the government's part. Be that as it may, I would like to express my thanks to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, who wrote a letter to me dated January 17th. In it were contribution agreements out of the priority planning which included the arenas for the 1992 fiscal year. We would like to express our joy at having received this kind of news and we encourage it to go ahead and become a reality by the 1992-93 fiscal year. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre.

#### **Member's Statement On Division Of The NWT**

**MR. LEWIS:** Mr. Speaker, I have had a chance to read the unedited transcript of Hansard from yesterday and I would like to indicate on the very first working day of this session that the Commissioner's Opening Address to us, in my opinion, will set a flavour for this House which could have very, very far-reaching ramifications for the next several months of this Assembly. As everybody knows, this country is right now in the throes of a constitutional debate and as a result of that we are being, in a sense, shielded and protected, and maybe diverted, from the real problems that we face in terms of our social problems, in terms of our economy, and in terms of the way we are going to develop as a people over the next several generations.

Twenty-five years ago a decision was made to keep this territory together despite the fact that the people in the East and the West wanted to have their own separate places. A decision was made then against the wishes of the people that

we should stay together so that the East would have a chance to build up some infrastructure, some chance to develop an economy, to do all kinds of things that would be to the advantage of a place that, if it were not done properly, could become a backwater.

Right now the West faces the same problems that the East had 25 years ago. We have fragmented. We are in a position where we are very unclear about our future as a western territory and yet the government chooses at this last minute to decide that they have all they want and "Now the rest of you can go and do what you want. We do not worry about you any more." We have helped, I think, develop this territory over the last 25 years and I think it was ill-advised of this government to suddenly raise this as an issue that we are going to resolve in the last few months of this Assembly.

I raise this issue today, Mr. Speaker, because you have heard some very nice, glowing comments which we have allowed to proceed without saying too much, but I think we are on a wrong course if we are going to suddenly further fragment the Territories by the kind of sentiments that were expressed in the Commissioner's Opening Address yesterday. I am sure that there will be more of it over the next several weeks.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South.

#### **Member's Statement On Persian Gulf War**

**MR. WHITFORD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when the House adjourned in November last year, the western world was still at peace. Unfortunately, that is not the case today. Mr. Speaker, few people can look at the events in the Middle East and be proud. Because negotiations have failed, because sanctions have proven to be too slow and their outcome too uncertain, the world has reverted to the age-old conflict resolution strategy, that of war. It has been said, Mr. Speaker, that last year was too good to be true. Not only did the 1990s bring an end to the cold war between the superpowers, but it was the first time in many, many years that no hot war had ever been started. For a while even the old adversaries in the Middle East were beginning to speak friendly to each other and we were well on the road to peace. That ended on January 16th and then we were off and moving toward a full blown hot war; only this time, all the superpowers were together for a change.

I read that in the past 46 years since the end of the Second World War, there have been over 127 wars fought somewhere on earth for one reason or another. Ironically, all but two or three have been fought in the Third World, the place that can least afford wars without massive help from industrial nations.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, much of the aid to these Third World countries that are fighting, involves the supply of arms, rather than grain and butter to feed the people. One can hardly comprehend the cost in dollars of the Persian Gulf war -- some people put it at an estimate between \$500 million and a billion dollars a day. I can hardly imagine what these would do to help alleviate some of the world problems, such as poverty, disease and under-education.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud this government's efforts for trying to make the world know that we, too, love peace and would like to see our troops safely home as soon as possible and that this conflict be resolved. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh.

### Member's Statement On Speech From The Throne

**MR. SIBBESTON:** Mr. Speaker, I think I can summarize what the government said in its Throne Speech yesterday. It said that constitutional and political development is its number one priority, obviously because it paid most attention to that subject yesterday; that the government is committed to a comprehensive approach, whatever that means; and massive support for Nunavut; however, no support for Denendeh. That is how I interpret what the government said yesterday. And motherhood statements like "comprehensive land claims be settled" and "creation of new territories" and "aboriginal self-government". Also, the government said that this government and our Assembly must show leadership in all of these constitutional issues.

What concerns me is that the constitutional and political development, land claims, and so forth, if they are so important on the government's agenda, why is the government wanting to deal with it so late in its mandate? Also, why do they propose to deal with it so late in this session? Because the government talks of providing a position paper later on in the session. Also, the statement yesterday states, "Action must be initiated immediately with a view to achieving significant progress in the remaining life of this Assembly." How can we achieve significant progress in the very few months that we have remaining? With the emphasis on such phrases as "aboriginal self-government", how can a government take part in such a massive setback for the Dene and Metis by not referring and not recognizing Denendeh as a government, the type of government that is wanted to be formed by the majority of native people here in the West?

I ask these questions wondering just what the government is up to in its last few days. I will venture to say, Mr. Speaker, that if it is not Denendeh that is to be created in the West that there is no hope of the initiative ever succeeding. Dene and Metis will not take part in any constitutional development initiative if their goal is not Denendeh.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members' statements. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Aivilik.

### Member's Statement On Ministerial Visits To Aivilik

**MR. ERNERK:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my thanks, or take the opportunity to acknowledge my appreciation, to the two honourable cabinet Ministers of this government for taking the time out to visit my constituency in the last three weeks. They include the Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell, the Minister responsible for Social Services, and the Hon. Tom Butters, the Minister of MACA.

The Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell visited my home town of Repulse Bay, Naujaat, on January 29, 1991, and met with the hamlet council along with the other social organizations. In Coral Harbour she and her officials met with the hamlet council the same day. On January 30, the Minister met with the hamlet council of Chesterfield Inlet. As well, she had an opportunity to meet with the hamlet council of Rankin Inlet as well as with other social organizations in Rankin Inlet. All of these meetings were informative and productive.

Mr. Butters also had an opportunity to meet with the hamlet council of Rankin Inlet on February 8, as well as with the members of the local housing association. Not only did the Hon. Tom Butters visit and meet with the people of Rankin Inlet, but he also stayed the whole weekend because he was stranded due to a raging blizzard.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents I thank both

Ministers for coming to Aivilik. Your time to visit Repulse Bay, Mr. Wray. How about it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Members' statements. The honourable Member for High Arctic.

### Member's Statement On Lack Of Cultural Institutes In Baffin Region

**MR. PUDLUK:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to bring up some concerns from the Baffin Region. The Inuit Cultural Institute in Arviat started in the early 1970s, but the Baffin Region people are concerned about their lack of cultural institutes in the Baffin Region. They are probably representing the people very well in the Keewatin Region, but this is not being shown in the Baffin Region at all. The concern is that before they just lose everything that was related to our cultural issues, and before the elders pass away, I think we should try and activate something that can help the younger people, to encourage them not to forget about the traditions and cultures that they have had in the past, perhaps more so in the Baffin Region. I know we are all concerned about this in every region, but it is a main concern in Baffin Island, and this is the concern that I wanted to bring up in this session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members' statements.

Item 4, returns to oral questions. Returns to oral questions.

Prior to proceeding to Item 5, I would just like to draw the attention of honourable Members to Chief Pat Martel of Hay River, and the president of the Yellowknife Metis Local, Clem Paul.

---Applause

Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nede.

### ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Question O3-91(1): Funding For Metis Association Of The NWT

**MR. MORIN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be for the Government Leader. Mr. Government Leader, in the past in this House, the past budgets, some of the Executive funding to the NWT Metis Association -- due to the present conditions and with some regions and some communities pulling out of the NWT Metis Association -- any community that disaffiliates itself with the NWT Metis Association, the funding from that organization is dropped. Will this government look at putting that funding on hold until the whole concern that is being expressed by my communities is rectified and we see exactly who does represent the Metis in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

#### Return To Question O3-91(1): Funding For Metis Association Of The NWT

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased the honourable Member has acknowledged the important contribution of this government over the years to the Metis of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, as to his question, like other honourable Members, I have heard reports on the news this morning and earlier about community meetings that have taken place on the issue of communities' views about the Metis Association of the NWT, but I have to say that is all I have heard. Our government has received no requests from Metis locals or from the Metis Association of the

NWT with respect to funding; nor have we received any formal notification of decisions that have been taken. Until we receive formal requests about what locals or the Metis Association of the NWT want us to do with respect to funding, it would be very premature, I am sure the honourable Member can appreciate, for me to make commitments here today about what we will or will not do. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nede, supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question O3-91(1): Funding For Metis Association Of The NWT**

**MR. MORIN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary, Mr. Government Leader. With the confusion that is in the air today with the situation of the NWT Metis Association, will you at least make a commitment that you will hold funding until it is straightened out and we do know who represents the Metis in the southern region? You are talking approximate...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Further Return To Question O3-91(1): Funding For Metis Association Of The NWT**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Mr. Speaker, the contributions to the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories are given on an annual basis and this late in the fiscal year, I do not believe there are any moneys that are still outstanding as far as our contributions are concerned. Mr. Speaker, I can only tell the Member that we view these developments seriously. We are concerned to respond to these developments and to consider an appropriate course of action once we have had a chance to assess what has happened and once cabinet has had a chance to consider the matter. I have to say, again, Mr. Speaker, in light of the confusion in the air right now, as the Member puts it, I think it would be irresponsible for me to say what we are going to do, here on the floor of this Assembly, but obviously cabinet will consider the matter. We understand that it is urgent. We know that there are strong feelings on this matter currently and we will be paying close attention to it in the next number of days. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**Question O4-91(1): Changes To Government Priorities**

**MR. LEWIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Government Leader. In light of the fact that over the past four or five years the concerns of this House have been expressed almost entirely in terms of our economy, social problems we have, the housing problems we have, and in light of the fact that by the admission in the Commissioner's Opening Address that this country is now in the grip of fatigue, a high level of constitutional fatigue in the country, why has he decided in the last few months of the mandate of this Assembly that suddenly this is where all of our energy has to go? Because that is what I am getting from the Commissioner's Opening Address.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Return To Question O4-91(1): Changes To Government Priorities**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Mr. Speaker, I would certainly respectfully differ with the Member's view that we have paid no attention to constitutional and political development issues, aboriginal rights issues, in the life of this Assembly. We have

been preoccupied with national constitutional problems over the Meech Lake Accord. The very first statement of this government about its direction for the 1990s, the Direction for the 1990s document, which was tabled at the first opportunity following the opening of this Legislature, addressed, yes, economic issues, social policy, housing issues, but also noted that the underpinning for economic progress is political and constitutional stability. We have also tabled no less than two previous papers on political and constitutional development. There have been committees of this Legislature and Members of this Legislature very active on those issues. So, Mr. Speaker, I would respectfully say that it is not a last minute business at all. It is simply continuing a priority that has been extant in this Legislature from the beginning, along with the important economic and social issues that the Member has addressed, and what we are doing now is saying, "Since the last session there have been some major developments. We are preparing another big picture analysis of where we are going and we know Members will want to deal with this once they have begun the work of passing the budget and receiving the Budget Address," which, of course, Mr. Speaker, in a few days will address the social, the economic, the housing issues that all Members in this government are so concerned about. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question O4-91(1): Changes To Government Priorities**

**MR. LEWIS:** Mr. Speaker, I would concur that the government has presented all kinds of papers, but they have never really advanced them. We have never really had any great discussions or debates. The government has not seen fit over the last three years to really propose this as a major priority for this government. In fact, it has been quite the opposite. They have just been...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. Would the honourable Member pose the question please? Order! The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MR. LEWIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question then, Mr. Speaker, is why is it that those two other papers have not been debated whereas now there has been a proposal that we have another paper, a third one, which we are going to debate? Why did we not debate the other two?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Further Return To Question O4-91(1): Changes To Government Priorities**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Mr. Speaker, it is not up to the government alone to debate papers that we table. We cannot discuss them with ourselves, Mr. Speaker. We depend on responses from the Members of this Legislature to have a good debate in the discussion and I would ask the honourable Member, especially the chairman of the ajuqtit committee, to ask himself and his committee why there might not have been the fullest kind of discussion about those papers which the government tabled and put into committee of the whole and hoped would stimulate good discussion.

If there has not been a full debate, Mr. Speaker, perhaps it is because the papers tabled by the government were comprehensive and were adequate and did properly reflect the views of Members on the way we should be going. If the current statements of the Government of the Northwest Territories require advice from the honourable Members, then we look forward to hearing it. We look forward to hearing



their views on the appropriate name for the new western territory and even more important, the powers that new government should have. We are eagerly awaiting your input, as we have several other times in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question O4-91(1): Changes To Government Priorities**

**MR. LEWIS:** Mr. Speaker, the Government Leader again, by his own admission in the Opening Address of the Commissioner, stated that when you do not resolve all of these constitutional issues then the economy stagnates and nothing will happen. I would like to ask the Government Leader then, in light of the fact that all of these constitutional issues have not been discussed over the last three years, does that mean that our economy is stagnated because this Assembly did not deal with it? Is that what he is saying?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Further Return To Question O4-91(1): Changes To Government Priorities**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Mr. Speaker, I think that this government, in addition to the social issues that have been thrust upon us, in addition to the great attention that has been paid by committees of this Legislature, as well as our government, on an economic and transportation strategy, this government has been active and visible nationally and in the Northwest Territories in dealing with political, constitutional, land claims and aboriginal rights issues. It is the responsibility of the government between sessions of the Legislature to deal with these issues. We have done so with vigour, Mr. Speaker, and we will continue to do so. We feel it is our responsibility to show the way, to lead public debate and discussion on these very important issues which do reflect on the economic stability of the Northwest Territories and I believe it is the responsibility of each Member who has a mandate to their constituents to represent the views of their constituents in considering those important issues.

If there is no debate, Mr. Speaker, then the government has a plan which we are not afraid to present and which we will continue to pursue over the next number of months. We are seeking stability, and sometimes there are developments which tend to cause uncertainty; but the object of our paper, Mr. Speaker, and previous papers, is to try and show there is a path ahead. We do have a vision; we do see ways of resolving these problems for the good of all citizens of the Northwest Territories and for economic and social progress. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. Final supplementary, the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**Supplementary To Question O4-91(1): Changes To Government Priorities**

**MR. LEWIS:** The Government Leader did not really answer my question, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask him, has this Legislative Assembly been irresponsible to allow our economy to stagnate because we have failed to deal with the constitutional issues?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Further Return To Question O4-91(1): Changes To Government Priorities**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Mr. Speaker, I think we have made major efforts as a Legislature and as a government to deal with the political and constitutional development issues, the uncertainties, in the Northwest Territories. We made the settlement of land claims a priority. We have signed two agreements in principle and a final agreement. We have signed an enabling agreement for a Northern Energy Accord. We have transferred provincial responsibility in Health. We have taken over a power commission. We have advanced in many other areas, Mr. Speaker. So we have attempted to tackle all of those issues but not with complete success in every area. We are aware there have been some setbacks, especially in the last year, but we have pursued them with vigour. I do not think we have been neglecting those issues, and I think to the extent that the economy has been within our control we have done our best to lay forward a plan for economic progress. We have not been able to control interest rates or the price of base metals or other factors beyond our jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker, but within the powers that we have, I think anyone who steps back would say that this Legislature has tackled economic issues as a priority and if the economy has stagnated it is not our fault. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho.

**Question O5-91(1): Transmittal Of Employment Opportunities After Closing Date**

**MR. GARGAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have with me several bulletins on employment opportunities that were sent to the communities. Some of the employment opportunities that were sent were sent on the date that the government mailed them. For example, an employment opportunity was sent the same day to the communities, which was received four days later in Fort Providence when, in fact, the closing date had already passed, but the government still mailed it. A member of my constituency complained about that to the Department of Culture and Communications, and they said there was nothing they could do about it. I would like to ask the Minister responsible, the Hon. Titus Alloo, whether or not it is a waste of time for the department to be mailing letters that have already exceeded their date.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Sahtu.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, I will take it as notice.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh.

**Question O6-91(1): Concentration On Constitutional And Political Matters**

**MR. SIBBESTON:** Mr. Speaker, I must say to the Government Leader that I was totally surprised at the initiative with the concentration on constitutional and political matters that was outlined in the Throne Speech yesterday, and I am just wondering where the government is coming from. In its last few remaining months it suddenly wants to take new constitutional initiatives, and so forth. I do not see, in this great land of ours, people very concerned about this, and certainly in my own constituency I do not hear anybody talking about constitutional development. Instead of this, I wonder if the Government Leader would consider this government doing all it can to get the Dene/Metis land claims

back on the road. I think that would be about the best thing the government could do.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Return To Question O6-91(1): Concentration On Constitutional And Political Matters**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Mr. Speaker, I am not entirely sure what the question was but I want to say that I understand that in the Member's constituency there are strong concerns about aboriginal rights and the settlement of the Dene/Metis claim.

Mr. Speaker, if the Member would look carefully, may I suggest, at the Throne Speech, he will see that what the Throne Speech lays out is that in order to have successful implementation of land claims, including the Dene/Metis claim, we have to address the issue of constitutional development, aboriginal self-government at the territorial level, and community self-government at the community level. Those were major obstacles, Mr. Speaker, which prevented the comprehensive claim from being ratified last July. What our government is saying is if we are going to make progress on claims we have to address those very issues; we have to recognize that those political, constitutional issues are directly related to the settlement of land claims and the recognition of aboriginal rights. They are integrated. They are all part of the same picture and only by looking at putting all those elements together can we make progress on claims, on the economy, on political development.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed, as we said in the "Directions" document early in the life of this government, to the successful implementation of land claims and all of these elements have to come together in order to achieve that goal. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, supplementary.

**Question O7-91(1): Government Decision To Hold Fall Election**

**MR. SIBBESTON:** Mr. Speaker, it will be interesting to see what the government's new position is, because according to Mr. Patterson this should be the solution to all of us and this government will ride happily into the sunset in the months to come. But I wanted to ask the Government Leader -- he mentioned yesterday that there was going to be a fall election and I wonder if the government is being a bit presumptuous -- has the government made a decision without the Assembly that there is to be a fall election?

**MR. SPEAKER:** New question. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Return To Question O7-91(1): Government Decision To Hold Fall Election**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know there is a reference in the Throne Speech to a fall election. Mr. Speaker, let me draw the honourable Member's attention to section 4, I believe it is, of the Northwest Territories Act, which is as close to our constitution as there is a constitution, which simply says that there must be an election four years from the date of the last election unless, Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge, unless the Governor in Council, the federal Cabinet, is petitioned and deems otherwise.

Mr. Speaker, I guess the government is assuming that unless this Legislature for some extraordinary reason petitions the Government of Canada to change that provision of the Northwest Territories Act, then in the ordinary course of events

there would be an election four years from the date of the last one, which has happened generally over the last two or three terms of this Legislature. We do acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, that in extraordinary circumstances the federal Cabinet could change and make an exception to the ordinary rule but we presumed, perhaps irrationally, that there are no special circumstances that we know of that would allow that to happen. But it is possible, Mr. Speaker, and I acknowledge that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question O7-91(1): Government Decision To Hold Fall Election**

**MR. SIBBESTON:** I am aware of the NWT Act and the provisions that there are elections every four years but I am also aware of the latitude that is permitted in terms of the election date not being precisely four years. It can be the summer, it can be this winter, or next spring sometime. There can be some latitude and so I am wondering if the government was a bit presumptuous and would ask the Assembly's pardon, as it were, for making that presumption and really leave the question of an election up to the Assembly as a whole.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Further Return To Question O7-91(1): Government Decision To Hold Fall Election**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Mr. Speaker, certainly we would not presume to interfere with the ability of the Legislature to make recommendations on the precise time. It is no secret that the matter has already been discussed in caucus and will be reviewed. Perhaps it was inappropriate to state the season and we will of course be governed by the wishes of the ordinary Members, the majority of Members in this respect.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. The honourable Member for Aivilik.

**Question O8-91(1): Economic Issues Not Addressed In Throne Speech**

**MR. ERNERK:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Government Leader. Yesterday during the Commissioner's speech I had a question and I think it is of an urgent nature. It is concerning the fact that we are off to a very bad start for 1991, both for the Northwest Territories as well as Canada. I wonder why, Mr. Speaker, the Commissioner's speech on constitutional and political development was the major focus. Which priorities face our people? None of the economic problems were addressed in the speech yesterday and I would like to find out why. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Return To Question O8-91(1): Economic Issues Not Addressed In Throne Speech**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Mr. Speaker, the economic issues facing the people of the Northwest Territories will be addressed by the budget of the Government of the Northwest Territories in a few short sitting days, Mr. Speaker, by the Minister of Finance, namely, this coming Monday. That is when economic and fiscal issues will be addressed and it is our view that it is not appropriate, nor is it in keeping with the practice of other governments, to put the details of the

government's budget and fiscal strategy in the Throne Speech. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot.

**Question O9-91(1): Arts And Crafts Marketing Strategy**

**MR. NINGARK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for Economic Development. You are no doubt aware, Mr. Minister, of the declining sales and market for the Inuit carvings throughout the Territories. Mr. Minister, do you have any plans to develop a strategy to fight this unacceptable trend? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Kivallivik.

**Return To Question O9-91(1): Arts And Crafts Marketing Strategy**

**HON. GORDON WRAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I do. The Member is correct that since the beginning of the recession last fall there appears to be about a forty per cent reduction in the arts and crafts sales, which seems to be a trend within the industry as a whole right across southern Canada. What it does show is that over the years we have not developed a sufficiently wide base of markets to withstand that kind of recession. It says to me that our market is too narrow a base and that we are not reaching enough people. So over the coming months, as my budget will come into the Legislature and as the Members will see in the EDA briefing, I am proposing, among other things, to put substantial amounts of money into a marketing strategy to market our arts and crafts on a much wider basis, not only in Canada and the United States but expanding into Asia and into Europe. As well, Mr. Speaker, we are presently working with the Arctic Co-op Federation, based in Winnipeg, to look at the development of a joint marketing company for northern arts and crafts. So there are a number of initiatives under way, but the recession is one reason. I also think that the other major reason is that the base of where we sell our arts and crafts is far too small. That has not been done well enough and we have to expand their markets. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Baffin South.

**Question O10-91(1): Fencing To Prevent Caribou Eating Garbage At Dumps**

**MR. ARLOOKTOO:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources concerning caribou. In my riding there are a lot of caribou presently and you are all aware, because you were over there, there are a lot more caribou in that area right now and they are sighted in the dump areas. I wonder if we can get some help concerning the caribou in those areas. They are eating a lot of this garbage at the dump and it is difficult to tell which one of the herds is consuming this garbage. I wonder if there is some way you can assist us. There is no fencing around the dump area and because of that, they have access. That is the case right now. So we would like some assistance to alleviate that problem, but we have no funding in our community to implement some sort of program. The caribou can get diseases from consuming this garbage. I am asking you if you would be able to help us, immediately if possible, to ensure the safety of the caribou or maybe to slaughter those herds that are in those areas. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Amittuq.

**Return To Question O10-91(1): Fencing To Prevent Caribou Eating Garbage At Dumps**

**HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I was in Lake Harbour, I did see signs of caribou in the dump area and I could see where caribou had been grazing around those areas. Since then I asked the Department of Renewable Resources of the Baffin Region if we could do something to keep caribou away. As we all know, it is quite difficult to put fencing around the dump. This winter, the Renewable Resources officer of Lake Harbour is working with the local hunters and trappers association to find an interim solution to the problem but I do not know what solution they have come up with. However, I will keep you informed as to the development of the situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Baffin South.

**MR. ARLOOKTOO:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that is correct. I was there recently myself and I checked out the areas that I was talking about every morning and our wildlife officer is doing a good job, but sometimes he has to sleep too and he cannot work 24 hours a day. He needs some sleep and because of that, the problem is slowly growing. So we need help immediately to help the caribou and I would urge you to work on this as soon as possible because there is not much being done right now. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** That was a good statement on behalf of the Member. I would just like to remind Members with regard to oral questions that your preamble should be short in terms of the original question and should be even shorter during supplementary questions, so you take as much advantage of the question period as possible. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South.

**Question O11-91(1): Report On Incident At Yellowknife Correctional Centre**

**MR. WHITFORD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question will be short. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Social Services under whose department corrections falls. In January there was a bit of a disturbance at Yellowknife Correctional Centre, YCC, and her department has put together a committee to investigate what took place there. The question I have for the Minister is, when will this report be completed? The second part of it is, will it be tabled in this House during the session?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Slave River.

**Return To Question O11-91(1): Report On Incident At Yellowknife Correctional Centre**

**HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have recently received the draft copy of the investigation report that I had requested be done as a result of the riot. I have yet to determine whether or not the report will be public. First of all I would like to bring the report to the attention of my cabinet colleagues. When I have done that, I will then further review and determine how I should follow up as a result of the recommendations of the report. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question O11-91(1): Report On Incident At Yellowknife Correctional Centre**

**MR. WHITFORD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had not

intended to ask a supplementary, but one comment disturbs me in that this is a public matter and it disturbs me that there is consideration that it not be made public, even the thought that it not be made public. I would like to know why this thought is there that this report should not be made public?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Slave River.

**Further Return To Question O11-91(1): Report On Incident At Yellowknife Correctional Centre**

**HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL:** Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Social Services, I believe this is about the fourth time that I have requested an investigation in respect to events surrounding YCC and I have yet to make any of them public, mainly for one particular reason that I have been very sensitive to, which is the fact that in the reports when they do the investigations they do speak, particularly, not only of inmates, but also staff members and at times I believe that it would not be in the public's interest to release some of the comments that staff members make, particularly as to how the facility is run. Taking into consideration some of the personnel issues, I have been using my discretion as to whether or not these reports should be made public. I will review the draft report, and once I get the final report brought to me in its formal content, then I will determine the latter. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Rae-Lac la Martre.

**Question O12-91(1): Government Of The NWT Participation At Expo '92**

**MR. ZOE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last year the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism reported to the House that it was not worth going to Expo '92 in Seville, Spain, for the Northwest Territories to be represented there. My question to the Minister, is it still the position of the Minister?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Kivallivik.

**Return To Question O12-91(1): Government Of The NWT Participation At Expo '92**

**HON. GORDON WRAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a bill coming forward in this Legislature and that question will have plenty of opportunity for debate. I do not know if the Member was at the briefing that I gave to all Members of the standing committee on finance on this issue. The comment that I made was that we were not going to participate in Seville in the same manner as we did in Vancouver, and yes, that decision still stands; we are not going to participate in Seville in the same manner as we participated in Vancouver.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Rae-Lac la Martre, supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question O12-91(1): Government Of The NWT Participation At Expo '92**

**MR. ZOE:** Mr. Speaker, my understanding of the Minister's response is that we are going to be participating at Seville, so he is contradicting what he reported the last time he spoke to the House. If we are going to participate, are there any financial implications that our government has to encounter?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Kivallivik.

**Further Return To Question O12-91(1): Government Of The NWT Participation At Expo '92**

**HON. GORDON WRAY:** Thank you. I wish the Member had attended the standing committee on finance briefing. It would have been a lot clearer to him. However, the fact is that we are not participating, and I say clearly, we are not participating in the same manner as we participated in Vancouver. We are going to participate, perhaps, in a form, but it will be up to this Legislature to decide whether we do or not. I will be bringing forward a bill -- there are financial implications for this government -- and the Member will have full opportunity to participate in that debate.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Prior to proceeding, I would just like to remind Members that a matter that is before a committee that has not been reported to this House is not a matter that can be discussed or questioned until that matter has been reported. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Rae-Lac la Martre.

**Supplementary To Question O12-91(1): Government Of The NWT Participation At Expo '92**

**MR. ZOE:** Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The Minister indicated that we do have financial implications. I would like to ask the Minister what type of financial implication has been committed by our government.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Kivallivik.

**Further Return To Question O12-91(1): Government Of The NWT Participation At Expo '92**

**HON. GORDON WRAY:** Thank you. I am going to the standing committee next week with the bill. The bill is coming into the House. There are no financial implications until the bill is passed by the House.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Aivilik.

**Question O13-91(1): Increase In Social Assistance Rates**

**MR. ERNERK:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Social Services. I have to say again that in our Territories the cost of living is very high, and it has been compounded by the Goods and Services Tax in the Territories and everywhere else. My question to the Minister is this: Will the social assistance rates for the present and coming year be increased? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Slave River.

**Return To Question O13-91(1): Increase In Social Assistance Rates**

**HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL:** Mr. Speaker, I intend to deal with that issue when we bring forth our department's budget to this House, so I request the Member to bear with me until we deal with the budget item. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh.

**Question O14-91(1): Removal Of Fort Smith Regional Director Position**

**MR. SIBBESTON:** Mr. Speaker, a question to the Government Leader. The Government Leader knows that I have advocated for a number years that the regional director in Fort Smith be removed, or his position moved to Yellowknife. I am aware that Mr. Ellis, the present regional director, is living in Yellowknife now -- he has been seconded to do some work here in Yellowknife -- and I just want to ask the Government Leader whether this is the first step of eventually removing the regional director from Fort Smith, since political developments have really made the position redundant.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Return To Question O14-91(1): Removal Of Fort Smith Regional Director Position**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Mr. Speaker, it is true that the present regional director has taken a temporary assignment in Yellowknife, but it is not true that this is the beginning of the elimination of the position of regional director. That is a decision that has not yet been taken, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question O14-91(1): Removal Of Fort Smith Regional Director Position**

**MR. SIBBESTON:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Government Leader could make a number of us happy by doing so, because with the elimination of the regional director's position it would mean that the area of Fort Simpson and Rae and Fort Smith itself could mature and reach its own autonomy. I wonder if the Government Leader, in his last few months when he is considering political and constitutional development, would deal with a very real life and practical issue and aid us all in this matter.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**Further Return To Question O14-91(1): Removal Of Fort Smith Regional Director Position**

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Mr. Speaker, that was not exactly the type of significant progress on constitutional development that the Throne Speech refers to. Mr. Speaker, I thought that I had made the honourable Member happy by creating area director positions in the area in his constituency, appointing capable people and giving the Simpson area virtual autonomy to deal with government matters pertaining to that area without having to deal significantly with headquarters or the regional headquarters in Fort Smith.

Mr. Speaker, the moves that we have implemented in establishing those area offices and staffing them have only been quite recent. People are just getting settled in. My feeling was that the assistance of the present regional director from Fort Smith, who really helped design the new arrangements and had helped implement them, would be crucial in making sure that they are up and running successfully before we consider further change. I would like to give it a little more time to make sure the system is running smoothly, and frankly, I am not contemplating any more changes in a region that has undergone significant administrative changes, for the better I believe, over the last number of years. I am not contemplating more changes

before the end of the life of this government.

I am always open to representations from the honourable Member, but I would point out to him with respect, that there are other Members that would be affected by such a decision and I could not act without seeking their input as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot.

**Question O15-91(1): Interpreting Services At Medical Facilities**

**MR. NINGARK:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do you have your hearing sets on? My question is directed to the Minister of Health. The people that come to Yellowknife for medical reasons speak Natilikmiot Inuktitut and some people speak the Coppermine dialect which is slightly different. Some of the patients also come in from the Keewatin Region for medical purposes. Some of the people requiring interpreters do not understand the dialects that the interpreters use and they have an equal right to medicare, and I think they should have proper interpreting services made available to them. I wonder if, particularly in medical facilities, whether there are plans to hire interpreters with different dialects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Nunakput.

**Return To Question O15-91(1): Interpreting Services At Medical Facilities**

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:** Mr. Speaker, I am very much aware of the situation and the requirement for the various dialects to be able to be translated or interpreted for patients coming from various regions. We have been working very effectively, I think, with the Kitikmeot Regional Health Board, and the chairman of the board has had several meetings with the department to see if we can provide a better service to take into consideration not only the different dialects of the Kitikmeot area but also, in the last while, of the Keewatin area because we have had the additional requirement with some patients coming over from the Keewatin because of the strikes of the nurses in Manitoba. So we have been challenged and will attempt to continue to try to address that problem with the health board.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question O15-91(1): Interpreting Services At Medical Facilities**

**MR. NINGARK:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We were also informed that some of the patients come to Yellowknife by charter or by schedule flights. Many of these people are unilingual and some of them are allowed to be escorted by interpreters. I heard recently that they will not allow this to continue any longer and I wonder if this has been started in the Department of Health. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Nunakput.

**Further Return To Question O15-91(1): Interpreting Services At Medical Facilities**

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to know of the specific times that has occurred because there has been no change in the policy. When patients are travelling and they cannot speak English, upon request they are generally provided with someone that they can travel with

and they feel comfortable with and can look after their needs, particularly with the unilingual problems that they may have. I would have to know of particular cases so that we can try to find out why that happened at that particular time, because the policy is still the same as it used to be; there has been no change.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nede.

**Question O16-91(1): Extending Health Care Benefits To Metis People**

**MR. MORIN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be for the Minister of Health. Madam Minister, in the past in this Assembly no less than three times Members have passed motions to extend health care benefits to Metis people in the Northwest Territories. I am just wondering at this point where your department is in extending health care benefits to Metis people.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Nunakput.

**Return To Question O16-91(1): Extending Health Care Benefits To Metis People**

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:** Mr. Speaker, the stage we are at presently is working with the Metis Association to establish who are the Metis in order to cost out the total cost so that it can be presented for the financial requirements. We have certainly been working actively to try to present the costing of that but one of the issues is, who are we going to be covering as a Metis?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nede, supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question O16-91(1): Extending Health Care Benefits To Metis People**

**MR. MORIN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, due to the confusion and the concerns that were expressed by my constituents in my riding, I am just wondering if you will extend the same offer to the locals that are not affiliated with the NWT Metis Association, to the locals who can do that work on their own. The NWT Metis Association no longer represents the people in my constituency.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Nunakput.

**Further Return To Question O16-91(1): Extending Health Care Benefits To Metis People**

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:** Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the list that was prepared according to the claim is being updated to reflect what has been agreed on generally as a Northwest Territories Metis, and what would have related to the Dene/Metis claim. That is being updated. What I would be happy to do once the list and criteria have been completed is to share it with other locals to see if that takes into consideration what they feel is a Northwest Territories Metis person that should be covered by extended benefits.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nede, supplementary.

**MR. MORIN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, as you know, the Members of this Assembly are concerned about this issue and there is a time frame that I would like to see this implemented. One way of giving money to an

organization to do work would be a service contract, so if you have entered into an agreement with the NWT Metis Association...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order! I would ask the honourable Member to pose a question.

**Supplementary To Question O16-91(1): Extending Health Care Benefits To Metis People**

**MR. MORIN:** Are there any time limits on the agreement you made with the NWT Metis Association? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Nunakput.

**Further Return To Question O16-91(1): Extending Health Care Benefits To Metis People**

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:** Mr. Speaker, it was my understanding in talking and dealing with the executive of the Metis Association that because much of the work had already been done, the time frame would not have to be too long. We did not write up a contract saying a specific time frame, but I will find out whether that was done; that is a detail I am not sure about.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nede, final supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question O16-91(1): Extending Health Care Benefits To Metis People**

**MR. MORIN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, in your opinion do you think we will be able to deal with that in this session? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Nunakput.

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to take that as notice and give a reply probably on Monday to see where we are and at what stage the list is, and what is required to get it before the House. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. The honourable Member for Aivilik.

**Question O17-91(1): Department Of Municipal And Community Affairs Plans To Clean Up Tailings Pond**

**MR. ERNERK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of MACA. I refer the Minister to his meeting with the hamlet council of Rankin Inlet on February 8, 1991. Mr. Speaker, my question is, what are the very latest plans of this department to clean up the contaminated tailings pond?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Inuvik.

**Return To Question O17-91(1): Department Of Municipal And Community Affairs Plans To Clean Up Tailings Pond**

**HON. TOM BUTTERS:** Mr. Speaker, the Member probably knows better than I the process that has been going on in his constituency over the last six to nine months. I do believe the consultants' reports are concluded. I do believe that the hamlet has sat in with the consultant and members of the community and they have examined the two options that were put forward. One was to cover the tailings pond with water and the second one was to bury it with fill and allow the permafrost to enter into the fill cover and freeze the nickel concentrates into the permafrost.

Those options are currently under discussion by my department. I am intending to raise the matter with Mr. Siddon when he comes to Yellowknife next week. In fact, when I was meeting with the hamlet I indicated to the Member that possibly he and I could attempt to see Mr. Siddon together and both of us indicate our concern with regard to that untreated tailings pond and suggest to the federal government that as the responsibility for mining has not yet been transferred to the Territories, that the federal government bears a fiscal and moral responsibility to address this problem along with the GNWT.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Baffin South.

**Question O18-91(1): Replacement Of Cape Dorset Representative To Baffin Regional Health Board**

**MR. ARLOOKTOO:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Health. The Baffin Regional Health Board removed one of their representatives from Cape Dorset. Presently they have no representation from that community on the health board. My question is, will we be allowed to find a replacement for the member from Cape Dorset? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Nunakput.

**Return To Question O18-91(1): Replacement Of Cape Dorset Representative To Baffin Regional Health Board**

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:** Mr. Speaker, yes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho.

**Question O19-91(1): Response To Letter Re Legal Advisers In Advance Of Court Party**

**MR. GARGAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Justice. In November of last year the friendship centre in Fort Providence, including a support letter from the hamlet, requested that the Minister consider that when the court circuits travel to the community the legal advisers for the circuit be in the community one day ahead of schedule so that they have the necessary time to meet with their clients. Since November the Minister has had three months to respond, and I would like to ask the Minister if he has responded to the community regarding their request.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Yellowknife North.

**Return To Question O19-91(1): Response To Letter Re Legal Advisers In Advance Of Court Party**

**HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will look and see if that specific letter has been responded to. I cannot recall offhand. I will say that the whole idea of trying to get defence counsel into communities earlier than the court party is one that we have been trying across the Northwest Territories, but we are running into a problem which you, as the Legislative Assembly, have had to deal with over the last couple of years of spiralling costs in legal aid. What we are finding is that because the crime rate is going up in the Northwest Territories, the costs of providing lawyers and having lawyers going into communities for longer periods of time is becoming increasingly a concern.

It is an area that I am in the process now of meetings with territorial court judges, Judge Halifax, the Crown, the RCMP and the Legal Services Board. We had a meeting three weeks ago and we are going to have another meeting in

another couple of weeks from now. We will be meeting on a regular basis. We have to look at how we can deal with this problem that we are facing in the justice system across the Territories.

I will check for your specific question to see exactly how I have responded or if I have responded to the community. If I have not, I will respond very quickly. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The time period for oral questions has expired. Item 6, written questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**ITEM 6: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**Question W1-91(1): Costs Involved In NWT Participation In Expo '86**

**MR. LEWIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Would the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism provide the Legislative Assembly with the total actual cost of its participation in Expo, Vancouver, in 1986? Would he also provide the Assembly with the original estimated cost?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Written questions. The honourable Member for Aivilik.

**MR. ERNERK:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By way of background first, around the summer of 1958 in Repulse Bay a hunter by the name of Louie Oksokittok was about to go to sleep after a full day of hunting when he heard shouts of distress. Apparently a group of children, including Yvo Airut, were swimming in a nearby lake. Yvo had become unable to return to shore as the water was too deep for him. Mr. Oksokittok immediately ran to the lake and...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Just to remind the honourable Members that written questions should not have a preamble. They should be the question to be asked of a Minister. The honourable Member for Aivilik, written questions. Written questions.

Item 7, returns to written questions.

Item 8, replies to Opening Address.

Item 9, petitions. Petitions. Item 10, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Pine Point.

**ITEM 10: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**CR 1-91(1), Fifth Report Of The Standing Committee On Rules, Procedures And Privileges**

**MR. McLAUGHLIN:** Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the standing committee on rules, procedures and privileges, under the authority given to it by this House, continues to review the Rules of the Legislative Assembly on matters brought to its attention by Members, the Speaker and the office of the Clerk, and to recommend changes where appropriate.

In its four previous reports the committee reviewed and proposed recommendations on such issues as the length of question period, sitting hours, Members' and Ministers' statements, witnesses in committee of the whole and other matters, to improve the procedural efficiency of the House. In this report the committee examine the current conflict of interest provisions as contained in sections 16 to 22 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. The committee is mandated to examine these provisions under section 2(b) of its terms of reference.

The committee wishes to acknowledge and thank all Members for their valuable insights and input, the Speaker and the Clerk for their procedural advice, and individuals in other jurisdictions who contributed both oral and written material to the committee. Finally, we wish to thank the staff of the committee, and in particular the contribution of the Law Clerk, Ms. Sheila MacPherson, who reviewed conflict of interest legislation from other jurisdictions in Canada for the committee.

Mr. Speaker, the committee has been examining this issue for 18 months. Although there have been no complaints of conflict of interest against any Member of this Assembly, circumstances and events in other jurisdictions have brought this issue to the forefront of public interest. The committee has held comprehensive and detailed discussions on this issue. A discussion paper examining the conflict of interest guidelines from other jurisdictions...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please. Order. The honourable Member for Pine Point.

**MR. McLAUGHLIN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A discussion paper examining the conflict of interest guidelines from other jurisdictions, including new initiatives in British Columbia, Ontario and the House of Commons, was prepared and distributed to all Members. A full caucus briefing was held during the last session to bring Members up to date on our activities and to answer Members' questions on this issue. Subsequently, a questionnaire was circulated to all Members to get their input and comments. The report is based largely on the results of that questionnaire.

The committee's initial examination of this issue revealed that our current legislation has not been substantially amended since its enactment in 1974. The roles and responsibilities of Members have been greatly changed since that time. However, legislation has not kept pace with these changes. As noted in the 10th Assembly's Special Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges, our legislation is confusing at best. It recommended that these provisions be provided in lay persons' language so that Members can better understand their duties and responsibilities to avoid any perception of conflict of interest.

Throughout this process, the committee was mindful that conflict of interest legislation should be based on two principles: first and foremost, to foster and maintain public confidence in the integrity of the Legislature; and secondly, to set fair and effective guidelines for Members to organize their personal affairs to eliminate any potential conflict of interest. It was with these principles in mind that we proceeded with this task.

#### Recommendations

Mr. Speaker, during our discussions with Members it was unanimously agreed that the current legislation is inadequate and needs substantive revision. The committee concurs with this opinion and feels that the legislation should be brought to the House prior to dissolution. The committee suggests that this legislation be jointly developed by the Management and Services Board and the Executive Council. Therefore the committee recommends that new conflict of interest legislation be drafted and brought to the House for consideration prior to dissolution of the 11th Assembly.

The committee is of the view that some form of disclosure of personal interest is necessary for several reasons. It ensures openness in government and it helps to maintain public confidence in the political system. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association has also noted that disclosure protects Members from any cynicism of their activities if the

extent of their interest or lack of it is known. However, the disclosure should be balanced against a Member's right to privacy. The requirement to disclose assets should, in some very well defined circumstances, also include spouses of Members. The trend in other jurisdictions is for full disclosure to be kept confidential with a summary of personal assets made public.

Members are subject to certain prohibitions as a result of their position. It is the committee's opinion that these prohibitions should be clearly stated in legislation. In particular, the list should include any prohibitions against appointments to government boards and agencies, holding of municipal or federal office, use of confidential information for personal gain and contracts awarded by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Executive policy imposes certain restrictions and obligations on Executive Members. Some of these restrictions and obligations might be better found in legislation. However, the committee would emphasize that this does not prohibit future Government Leaders from posing further restrictions on Executive Members as they see fit. Our legislation is quite cumbersome in that no effective mechanism is in place to enforce the provisions of the act. At present, the only recourse for an individual with a complaint against a Member is through the courts. This can often be a costly and time consuming exercise. The establishment of an "integrity body" could effectively screen out unsubstantiated complaints and inquire further into those that may have merit.

Mr. Speaker, with these reasons in mind, the committee proposes further recommendations. It is the committee's opinion that these elements form the minimum requirements for fair and effective conflict of interest legislation. The committee recommends that the following elements be considered for inclusion in the new legislation: 1) that Members, and to a lesser degree their spouses, be required to disclose their personal holdings to a registrar; 2) that a complete list of prohibited activities and appointments be included; 3) that the conflict of interest provisions for Executive Members currently contained in the Executive policy be included in the new legislation where appropriate; 4) that an independent "integrity body" be established to investigate initial complaints of conflict of interest against Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, with this, the Fifth Report of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges, the committee has concluded all matters referred to it.

#### Motion To Move To Committee Of The Whole CR 1-91(1), Fifth Report Of The Standing Committee On Rules, Procedures And Privileges, Carried

Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence, I would like to move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin Central, Mr. Kilabuk, that the Fifth Report of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges be received and moved into committee of the whole for discussion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Committee Report 1-91(1) will be referred to committee of the



whole for today.

Reports of standing and special committees. Item 11, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Hay River.

#### ITEM 11: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

**MR. POLLARD:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Tabled Document 1-91(1), entitled Speech from the Throne, February 13, 1991, Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table Tabled Document 2-91(1), Government of the Northwest Territories 1990 Annual Report. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. GARGAN:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the following documents: Tabled Document 3-91(1), Response of the Government to the Report of the Special Committee on Indian Self-Government; Tabled Document 4-91(1), the response by the Assembly of First Nations concerning Indian Self-Government in Canada; Tabled Document 5-91(1), report of the House of Commons Special Committee on Indian Self-Government in Canada. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Tabling of documents. Tabling of documents. Item 12, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Hay River.

#### ITEM 12: NOTICES OF MOTION

**Notice Of Motion 2-91(1): Tabled Document 1-91(1) To Committee Of The Whole**

**MR. POLLARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, February 18, I will move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kitikmeot West, that Tabled Document 1-91(1), Speech from the Throne, be moved into committee of the whole for consideration. I will be seeking unanimous consent at the appropriate time to move that motion today, sir. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Notices of motion. Item 13, notices of motion for first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Yellowknife North.

#### ITEM 13: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

**Notice Of Motion For First Reading Of Bill 7: Appropriation Act, 1991-92**

**HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, February 18, 1991, I shall move that Bill 7, Appropriation Act, 1991-92, be read for the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 14, motions. The honourable Member for Hay River.

#### ITEM 14: MOTIONS

**MR. POLLARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would seek at this time unanimous consent of the House to proceed with the motion that I gave notice of.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Hay River is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with the motion he

gave notice of today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed.

**Motion 2-91(1): Tabled Document 1-91(1) To Committee Of The Whole, Carried**

**MR. POLLARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker:

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Kitikmeot West, that Tabled Document 1-91(1), Speech from the Throne, be moved into committee of the whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Hay River.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** To the motion. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot West.

**MR. PEDERSEN:** Question, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Motions.

Item 15, first reading of bills.

Item 16, second reading of bills. Item 17, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: CR 1-91(1), Tabled Document 1-91(1), with Mr. Zoe in the chair.

#### ITEM 17: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** The committee will come to order. The committee has two items for consideration: The Fifth Report of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges; and the Speech from the Throne document. Could the Chair get direction as to which one to deal with? Mr. McLaughlin.

**MR. McLAUGHLIN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move that the committee report on conflict of interest be dealt with first as I think Members had notice of that and are prepared to deal with it. I will withdraw the motion and just make that suggestion.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Thank you. Are there any further suggestions? Mr. Lewis, the Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MR. LEWIS:** I think, Mr. Chairman, that the will of the House has already been expressed to deal with this motion of Mr. Pollard's on an emergency basis. We have brought it up today for Monday and I think for that reason we should proceed with it prior to dealing with the conflict of interest.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Is it the desire of the committee to deal with Tabled Document 1-91(1), Speech from the Throne, first? Is that agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

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

**MR. McLAUGHLIN:** Point of order.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Mr. McLaughlin, your point of order.

**MR. McLAUGHLIN:** Would this preclude Members from responding to the Throne Speech otherwise? Under the normal rules we are allowed to reply to the Throne Speech at any time.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Mr. McLaughlin, I think the replies to the Opening Address will still be on the agenda so you would have an opportunity to respond to the Throne Speech. We are just discussing the tabled document which is the Throne Speech. So you have two opportunities. Mr. McLaughlin.

**MR. McLAUGHLIN:** I am concerned that some motion in committee of the whole regarding the Throne Speech would preclude us from being able to address this under the normal rules, that is all I am concerned about. I would hate to see the debate that occurs here today preclude us -- maybe something to waive the normal rules or something.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Mr. McLaughlin, the replies to the Opening Address could be talked on any matters. It does not have to pertain particularly to the Throne Speech so you could respond to the Throne Speech in that manner if you like and you can also touch on other issues that you feel should be addressed. It does not preclude anything at this point in time so you have an opportunity to deal with the tabled document. It is hypothetical right now to say, what if the motion does come up or not. I am not too sure if you understand what I am trying to say, Mr. McLaughlin. While we are dealing with Tabled Document 1-91(1), Speech from the Throne, comments have to be related only to the tabled document. With that we will take a coffee break until 3:30.

---SHORT RECESS

#### **Tabled Document 1-91(1), Speech From The Throne**

The committee will come back to order. We are dealing with Tabled Document 1-91(1), Speech from the Throne. Mr. Pedersen.

**MR. PEDERSEN:** Mr. Chairman, I recognize a lack of a quorum.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Mr. Clerk, ring the bell. We are dealing with Tabled Document 1-91(1), Speech from the Throne. General comments. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MR. LEWIS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ordinary Members have listened very carefully to what the Commissioner said in his Opening Address and any discussion that we have today is in no sense, I suppose, the response that Members always want to have the opportunity to give when they want to deal with all kinds of things of general interest to their constituents when they reply to the Commissioner's Opening Address.

This particular document, though, that we have in front of us surprised many of us because the issue of constitutional and political development has been a live one for as long as I can remember. It is not something that is suddenly a new issue. What surprised us, I suppose, more was the fact that the government admitted that we already had a committee that was looking at constitutional matters, a committee of this House, that had a mandate to deal with it; but what surprised us most, Mr. Chairman, was the fact that somehow I was made to feel as an individual that I have wasted the last three years of my life because what this document says is that the alternative to dealing with this issue is stagnation and the loss of opportunities for improvement in the political, social and economic status of Northerners, that nothing can really happen until we get this whole thing resolved.

As far as I am concerned, then, nothing can have happened over the last 25 years because constitutional discussions are ongoing things, they never change, there is always something in the wind as it relates to the development of constitutions and political development. Canada has gone through it now at a greater speed, I suppose, ever since 1967, and we are still at it. So I do not see this as something which by next Friday we have to resolve, or by 1992 we have to resolve, or by 1997 we have to resolve; because if you begin to put dates by which something is going to happen, and the will of the people is not with you, then you have problems. We have already learned that in watching the way our Canadian government operates. You put in a deadline and suddenly you try to wrangle things and manoeuvre and manipulate people so that you get things done by that date, and what happens? People get very upset.

#### **Dealing With Everyday Issues In Representing People**

What I find disturbing about this is that we have identified so many issues that we would like to deal with as Members as they relate to the ordinary, everyday issues that are of interest to people in the Northwest Territories. I am beginning to think that perhaps when you become a Member of the Executive Council you lose touch with the kinds of things that people are talking about on the street or in the communities. Lawyers, especially, get really turned on by this constitutional business. That is the thing that is really their bread and butter for many of them, and they get really excited about it.

If you represent people, and most of your working life is dealing with ordinary, everyday issues -- I have never had one single person come into my office and say, "You have to get on to this constitutional business; I worry all night about this constitutional stuff." I do not have people coming to me with those kinds of problems. They come to me with everyday problems relating to employment, problems with their employer or, more often, the fact that they cannot get employment. They deal with things like housing, social problems; they often ask your opinion on family problems, legal problems, all kinds of stuff like that. As far as I am concerned, these everyday things -- we keep on having special committees to look at housing, we maybe deal with a few of them and then they are forgotten about. Then you get onto the economy and you deal with that and, okay, you look as if you have done something about that, but then suddenly you want to highlight something which has been in the works and will continue to be in the works for years to come, and we think that by the time we break this session it will be all sorted out. Then we will go to our people to talk about it, and when we come back after the break on April 9th we have a clear picture of where we are going to go and we have a big platform to go into the next election with. That is naive, absolutely naive.

The kind of stuff that takes you into the next election is the stuff that people are going to bring to you. I will probably find this time a little bit different than last time. We will no longer have at the top of the list the same kinds of issues that I found were brought to my attention three or four years ago. At that time it was a different list. This time I expect I am going to have the economy, environment and probably peace. These are the three issues that are likely going to come up before the next election. I do not think you are going to have people coming up to say, "You really have to get this resolved. This is what we want you to fight for."

#### **Gloomy Economic Stagnation**

I think it is probably a little bit misplaced to suddenly, after having these three years when we could have pushed this issue and when we could have disregarded everything else -- because according to the speech nothing can happen: The

Japanese are not going to come here to see the aurora, nobody is going to buy arts and crafts, the tourists are not going to come, because we have not solved our constitutional development problems. Everybody is going to stay away, people are not going to be interested in the Northwest Territories because until we actually get our constitution organized nothing can happen here. If you look at this document, it says that the alternative is stagnation and the loss of opportunities for improvements in the political, social and economic status of Northerners.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** That is what it says.

**MR. LEWIS:** We have had economic development to some degree, and I do not see that it has happened because we solved all our constitutional problems. That debate has been going on for as long as I can remember, and it will continue to go on. When the people are good and ready and ripe, then you will find that that is something that will be resolved, just like that. It is probably something that you will not plan; it will be something that will just happen because the people will want it and they will push you to do it. I have not had that experience. What I have had, quite to the contrary, is pretty well a lack of real interest in what you call hard political issues.

Perhaps you may find some sectors of the economy that claim that nothing can happen because we have not resolved all our constitutional arrangements. I do not think that is what is keeping the people out of the Beaufort Sea, that is not stopping people from searching for oil. What is at issue there is the supply, whether it is a good commercial grade, whether the price is right. It has nothing to do with politics, that has to do with whether it makes sense for the corporate plan of a company to go in and take it out.

#### **Recession Related To Economic Matters**

As far as minerals are concerned, it is the economic scene that we are in right now right across the country, which Mr. Mulroney, by the way, blames on the same argument -- we have all kinds of constitutional problems and this is why things are not happening the way they should be happening. The fact is that we have a recession which is part of a North American problem related strictly to economic matters, and we cannot begin blaming all kind of things on the fact that we are not together as a country. They will not invest here because who knows what kinds of country you are investing in? That is not happening. The real issue is that we have economic problems here, that is why we have a lack of investment, which is the lifeblood of any economy. Any economist will tell you that, that what you need is investment. Once you have your infrastructure in place and you have a trained work force then all kinds of things can happen.

I was rather disappointed, Mr. Chairman, in having the Government Leader, at the very last gasp, if you like, or possibly the last gasp, of our Assembly suddenly wanting to put this on the front burner. I wish we had done it right at the beginning -- forgotten all about economic stuff and all the other stuff, the language stuff, and got into this if that was going to be the thing that would make or break us, that was going to make all the difference. That is what we should have done right off at the beginning of this Assembly, but the real problem is that this government did not have a mandate to do anything. You work it out as you go along, and if the intention of the Government Leader is to say, "This is the platform for the 12th Assembly, the platform is going to be this, and we are going to make constitutional development the big issue which people will pursue into the 12th Assembly", maybe that is what he is trying to do.

As far as I am concerned, as ordinary individual people in a

consensus form of government, you listen to people to see what they are interested in; that is what you do. Unfortunately, what he is trying to do is to develop a platform which in our kind of government we cannot seem to do. It is very difficult. I am a little bit concerned that we have no process, if you like, acceptable in this kind of Assembly for deciding that for the next 10 years, or whatever, we are going to be bound by the decision of the Government Leader, that this is what we are going to do next. Because while this Assembly is going on, he is really bound by the wishes of the majority here and it is very, very difficult suddenly to pull out of the hat this big constitutional plan that is going to solve everything for all of us.

I have lots to say on this subject, Mr. Chairman, as you can tell, but maybe I should just leave it at that and save the rest for later. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Thank you. General comments. Are there any further general comments? Mr. Wray.

**HON. GORDON WRAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very short comments and very quick comments, to a certain extent in defence of my colleagues. Mr. Lewis is perfectly correct that the lifeblood of any economy is investment, but I can tell you as the man responsible for trying to flog the Northwest Territories for the last three years, our products and our climate for investment, in order to attract investment and develop your economy you need political stability and political certainty. I can tell you in the last year with the talk of division and with the Dene/Metis claim falling apart, even this morning on the radio listening to the problems of the Metis Association, the one thing we do not have in the North is political certainty or political stability, and without it we are going to have a very tough time selling ourselves, our products or our economy. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Thank you. General comments. Are there any further general comments? Member for Nahendeh.

**MR. SIBBESTON:** I guess it would not be right to not say anything since I made a statement today. To me, when I heard what was contained in the Throne Speech it was just as if the government two or three days ago said, "What are we going to do, there is an Assembly coming up, let us put something together, let us get our bureaucrats to put something together for us", and they did and this is what they came up with.

I just feel that it is so out of touch with reality. People in the North at this stage are really not that concerned about constitutional development. They are concerned with more day-to-day type things, and also I know that the Dene/Metis in my area, the majority of people that I represent, are more concerned about their future with respect to land claims.

Things have broken down on a general basis. There are no more comprehensive land claims negotiations going on, and it is beginning to affect people in the communities. People in my area are saddened and the future does not loom that great in terms of their future because of the breakdown. You must remember that land claims have been seen as a Mecca, something good, something positive is going to happen to people as a result of land claims. People did not understand in great detail what was going to happen, but in people's minds there was going to be some land for the people, some money for the people, some government closer to the people, some power from government, and so forth; but with the breakdown in land claims now this is not going to happen. I know the people are a bit discouraged about that and wondering, "What is our next move?"

People in the Delta area are under way in terms of their land

claims, but in our area, the Deh Cho area, people are still very much against the land claims provisions as it is kind of dictated and offered by the federal government; there being an extinguishment clause that our people do not really like.

#### Concerns Of Constituents

I have had the chance since January 1st, since the start of the new year, to be in my constituency, actually all of the communities in my constituency, and I must say that the issues that people are concerned about are very much day-to-day. In Jean Marie River they are wondering when they are going to get some money to open their fair-weather road. In Fort Simpson, Ms. Cournoyea knows, they are concerned about the hospital and other local matters. In Wrigley they are concerned about the state of the roads. In Trout Lake they are concerned about better housing. In Fort Liard they are concerned that the arena did not get opened up this winter because of technical difficulties, and they are hoping that their big project up the hill will get going. These are really the day-to-day concerns that the people have and so I had thought that, with this session perhaps being the last one, the emphasis would be on the budget, emphasis would be on the wonderful and good things that the various government Ministers and departments were going to be doing for people. I thought it was going to be very much a bread-and-butter type of session, and that is what we would be concentrating on.

I am a bit confounded by the fact that at this late date in the government's mandate -- they talk of having an election this fall -- there is really not that much time. Summer being what it is, and an election coming up, who in the world is going to be concentrating on constitutional and political development? Seriously, I ask, who of the Ministers is going to be wanting to go around talking of constitutional development when they are going to be more likely worried and concerned about getting re-elected? I think that is the way the summer will go, that general emphasis will be on being back in your constituency and trying to get re-elected. So for the government to suggest that they have some new constitutional initiative and that substantial progress can be made, I think, is really lying. I think it is really an attempt to deceive the people of the North, trying to justify itself, trying to make it look like the government is doing something and yet there is something magical that the government can pull off in the next few remaining months.

#### "New Western Arctic Territory" Statement Not Acceptable

I really do think that the government was at a loss. They did not have any new ideas; they did not have anything substantial to present to us; so they came up with this constitutional jargon and in the process alienated and set back the Dene/Metis years by not recognizing Denendeh. They insulted the Dene and Metis people by calling our area a "new Western Arctic territory". It is terrible to call our area a "new Western Arctic territory". How bland, how meaningless, can constitutional development become?

In the East you are lucky, people that are in the East, to have the government recognize and say publicly that they talk of the creation of Nunavut. I think the Inuit people, the people that live in the Arctic, are fortunate to have the government talk of their future government in terms of Nunavut and all the things that emanate from Nunavut or is brought out to people -- hope, aspiration, changes, and all these things. But in the West we get "new Western Arctic territory".

Can anybody in the West get excited about "new Western Arctic territory". I do not think even the white people, the non-native people in the West, can get excited. We have been given this platter, this plate, of "new Western Arctic territory"

for the West, that somehow we from the West are to get excited about and work hard in the ensuing months. I would say that it is really an insult, and insensitive on the part of government, the Ministers that were involved in this, to place that on our platter. I just think that the government in trying to do good, trying to justify itself in the last few months, has really without realizing it set back the majority of aboriginal people in the West here by not recognizing Denendeh.

We have been working at this since the 1970s, ever since I became involved in politics in the early 1970s. Then the Dene Nation came forth with its paper on Denendeh in the mid-1970s. Ever since that time the Dene/Metis in particular have been working on getting Denendeh, a new government, the hope that some day we can have a government in the West that is reflective of the aspirations and the culture of the Dene and Metis. That is what Denendeh is. Just as Nunavut is important to the Inuit people, Denendeh is important to the aboriginal peoples in the West.

I was just frankly shocked and alarmed; it just jumped at me from the pages, that we are now to be involved in the creation of a "new Western Arctic territory". I could not help but think how exciting, how wonderful, it is going to be and I can just imagine everybody getting excited and working real hard in the ensuing months to have that happen.

#### No Interest In Constitutional Development Mandate

In the process, I just feel that the Commissioner's speech, the Throne Speech, was really an attempt to fill some gap, fill some space, fill some time, and I think in doing so the government has failed, has insulted and set back the Dene/Metis in the West 15 years for not recognizing Denendeh. I honestly, in all sincerity, do not know whether the government can come up in the next few weeks with something that is going to so excite the people, so excite everyone that we are going to take our minds off of the election and work ardently and hard to accomplish what the government thinks is so relevant.

I think on this one I have to say to Mr. Patterson and his colleagues that they really have blundered, they have made a mistake and that people are not concerned at this stage with constitutional development. People are more concerned about the bread-and-butter issues. People are concerned about land claims. In the West among the Dene and Metis the major initiative of the people for the last 15 years is in jeopardy and that is what the government should be concentrating on. That is what the government should say, if we can be of any help, if this government can in any way support the Dene and Metis claims, to get that resolved for the West, then they will be helping the people, both the native and non-native people a lot.

Instead there is this constitutional gobbledygook, or whatever way they say that, that does not amount to anything or does not mean anything and is not going to go anywhere. MLAs at this stage in their mandate are not interested in constitutional development. That is something more for the start of a new term where there are new initiatives and lots of time to deal with it. But at this late stage I would say let us just get the budget dealt with, let us pass legislation that is absolutely necessary and let us get out to the people and have an election and get new mandates. That is what we should be concentrating on.

So I just think that the so-called Throne Speech is totally inappropriate to this Assembly at this stage. I am not interested in any constitutional development stuff. I am more concerned that the "Denendeh" word is not recognized by government in its official pronouncements and that is what I want to deal with. That is the best that I can do today, just to

say that it is a major blunder and the government should reconsider and see if in the next few days and weeks when they see the concerns that Members are showing that they rewrite another one and have Mr. Norris come back to that...

--Laughter

...and try again. Let us give them the weekend and see what they can come up with Monday. This constitutional gloobidyglook stuff...

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Gobbledyglook.

**MR. SIBBESTON:** ...is absolutely nonsensical and is not relative to the political reality of the North today. It would not be shameful to admit you are wrong and say that it was a blunder and come back in the next few days and weeks ahead with something that is more relevant and more meaningful to us at this stage in the life of our Assembly. Mahsi.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Mahsi cho. Are there any further comments on Tabled Document 1-91(1)? The honourable Member for Pine Point.

**MR. McLAUGHLIN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to differ with two of the Members who were speaking previously. First of all, during the last general election when I was in my constituency campaigning on a platform which was actually to move everybody out of my constituency so that people would not be there any more, I only noticed one significant campaign thing that I saw while walking around in Yellowknife and that was the Member for Yellowknife Centre walking up and down in front of the post office carrying a great big sandwich board which said, "Brian Lewis thinks Meech Lake stinks." Well, that had something to do with the Constitution and the Northwest Territories' ability to run itself and become a province and all those things that lead to the type of mature government that is needed.

I concur with Mr. Wray's comments that if you do not have that type of certainty -- people want to know, for example, what type of control this government is going to have in relation to the federal government over the different lands up here.

The people in Paulatuk were recently concerned that the environmental assessment hearings are holding up oil exploration and development and causing unemployment in the community and that might be partly because COGLA is a federal organization. Maybe if we had our own organization -- if Ms. Cournoyea is able to move along further with the Arctic accord to transfer control in that area more to our jurisdiction maybe things will move ahead there. Maybe we can have a better relationship with the people in the communities and the oil companies to get some of these things going.

The former Member for Yellowknife South -- our Assembly sent him to Ontario to speak on the Meech Lake issue. They sent myself and Mr. Allooloo to New Brunswick to speak on the Meech Lake issue. So these constitutional issues -- how the federal Constitution can affect our constitution, our opportunities to develop as a territory -- have been going on since we were first elected.

#### **Federal Constitutional Crisis**

It was only several months ago when the Member, Mr. Sibbeston, was outraged and threw a little political fit in the House because the striking committee did not put him on a special committee on the Constitution. And that was only a few months ago. How he all of a sudden does not think it is

important any more is beyond me. The one thing that our government has concerned itself with on the national scene is that the federal constitutional crisis is so grave that probably all three political parties are turning their attention to that matter so much that our constitutional development up here will not be noticed if we do not have something to put on the plate -- if we do not fit it into what is going on nationally. If we do not get this constitutional development going, do not get the certainty we need, we are not going to have economic development.

#### **Land Claims Uncertainties Hinder Investments**

For Mr. Sibbeston's constituency -- I was riding in a plane with one of his constituents who owns a charter airline operating out of Fort Simpson and he said that business is almost non-existent down the Valley compared to normal years and that is because what oil company, what mining company is going to want to go and do development and provide jobs and invest money, researching out and discovering a mineral deposit, for example, that might be on land that might get claimed and then they will have invested their money for nothing?

In Yellowknife there are probably hundreds, maybe even a thousand jobs, marginally at stake directly or indirectly with mineral exploration. If there is no certainty because of land claims falling apart and if our government does not step in and at least put something in place that these companies can have certainty with between now and when the land claims are settled, what company is going to do exploration here if they do not know who is going to own the land, what category of land it is going to be, what types of rules will apply to it? In the Inuvialuit settlement there are several different categories of land that different rules apply to. So an oil company or mineral company -- and I still speak to a lot of those people because they tend to move around from Cominco to other companies and a lot of them are now working here in Yellowknife in management at Giant or Nerco, and they are all telling me that there is no certainty in the Northwest Territories for people to do exploration in that area because they do not know what is going to happen to the land they explore.

I personally would like Members to pay attention to what Mr. Wray said that through constitutional development and some certainty in those areas, if we can put something in place, then it is going to give people confidence to invest up here and make some long-term commitments to exploration, which is going to give us revenue through the employment of people and payment of taxes and eventually, down the road, sharing the royalties if Ms. Cournoyea is able to advance some of the things on her agenda which will enhance the constitutional authority of this government in certain areas dealing with mineral and oil exploration.

I think it is just ludicrous for Members, especially those two, who have been concerned about constitutional issues since the campaign leading into this Assembly and during it, to say that the Constitution issues are not important. I personally commend the government and think it is about time we came up with some certain positions that we want to have for ourselves, for our development, and what role we should have with the northern affairs side of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and our government. Can they turn some of those programs over to us? Can we take charge in some areas?

I commend the government for putting it in the Throne Speech and hopefully putting something in place that we can deal with. I think a lot of times people come to you with what you might want to call bread-and-butter issues but a lot of times the problem is caused by, in this case, as Mr. Wray said,

some constitutional authorities and some constitutional development that is possible up here. If no one knows it is going to happen, then people are not going to invest up here and without investment there are no jobs. I think they do go hand in hand. Certainly the people who come to your office off the street or stop you in the post office or coffee shop, they are usually concerned with a particular issue but a lot of times you can trace that issue back to the fact that the federal government, Indian and Northern Affairs, has authority over things in our jurisdiction instead of us.

I would just like to say that I am amazed that Mr. Lewis and Mr. Sibbeston would say all of a sudden that they are not interested in the Constitution or that it is not important when they have talked about it during the last three years.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Mahsi cho. The Member for Yellowknife South.

**MR. WHITFORD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will add a few of my comments to the debate dealing with the sentiments that have been expressed over the Speech from the Throne.

Yesterday I expressed my -- I think I could only put it into the word "shock" that all of a sudden this issue has moved to the front of the political agenda of this government. I find it hard to believe that it is suddenly so important that it occupies almost entirely the Speech from the Throne.

#### **Division And Constitutional Development Should Not Take Priority**

I listened with interest and amazement hoping that this was only the preamble and they would talk about other things. That they would talk about the state of the economy and the state of the social problems that we are facing now and the housing problems that we are facing. There are a number of other issues, and I realize that we have talked about them before, but I thought that they would be part of that as well; that this was part of the government's agenda that we would maybe move toward looking at the division of the Territories eventually. But to suddenly find that it is at the top of their list, that this is the most important item to be discussed at this session, amazed me. I spoke to the Government Leader afterwards expressing that concern only to say that we will deal with the finance later on. In my opinion, and again I will use, as my colleagues have and Mr. McLaughlin has, the sentiments of my constituents in dealing with this. This is not a top priority item. During one of the public meetings that we held during my election campaign, very well attended I must say, the people applauded when I said no division of the Territories in the foreseeable future because we had other things to worry about at that time. And we still do. I see precious little about child care in this document and if this is not going to be an issue of the government, then it certainly will be an issue that I will raise. Energy, housing, all those things have not gone away.

To say suddenly that this is really important and it is going to be on the minds of everybody -- it is certainly not going to be on the minds of everybody. Not that I am saying that it should not eventually. I was born and raised in the Territories and I would be naive to think that the Territories would remain one forever; eventually we will see the division. Nunavut is well on its way; the western part of the Territories is well on its way and these things should evolve rather than all of a sudden be force-fed. It is like the government is trying to wake up a sleeping giant. I think it is an issue, if it is allowed to continue which will dominate these proceedings and take away from the important things that we should be dealing with in this Legislature.

We have to deal with our budget and I think that is going to

occupy, and it should occupy, all of our time that is going to be here in the next month and a half, and dealing with these pieces of legislation that are being tabled and put forward. We should be dealing with those things and should not preoccupy ourselves with the constitutional involvement of the Territories at this point in time to the degree that this government seems to emphasize.

One of the things that I remember well of the last Assembly was the frenzy that was taking place over division and constitutional reform and constitutional issues. It dominated for quite some time by some Members. That is all you heard. Do you want to go through that in these last few months of this Assembly? I think not. I think we have to focus our attention on the problems that are domestic, the problems that are on people's minds, so that we can make some resolve and make the whole Territories a nice place to live. Then I think we can do them each in their order, and certainly the carving up of the Territories and making two Territories out of it is not the big issue. It should not have been the big issue for this session.

We should be looking at -- I will be dealing with some of those later on -- creative ways to look at the problems that the working mothers have. Illiteracy has still not gone away simply because the year is over and we can shelve that. We need to deal with those things and discuss those things if we have any energies. That is where we should be concentrating. We should be helping our Minister of Education to look at new and better ways or improve the ways that we are dealing now with our students and our programs that will get off the treadmill of social problems.

I for one am not too enthusiastic about continuing on -- I will not go so far as to say, as my colleague did, that the government should retire for the next 48 hours and rewrite this and come back with a totally new Throne Speech and just scrap what we have had in the last few days but they should refocus their attentions to the problems at hand and give sufficient attention to that idea, that concept that they are proposing, but not devote its entire time toward it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Mahsi cho. The honourable Member for Tu Nede.

**MR. MORIN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It kind of bothers me when -- this is my own personal feeling but the Member for Pine Point was criticizing my other fellow Members and a lot of times I wonder if he really thinks anyone takes him seriously because he does not represent anyone; he has no people to represent. I just wanted to get that off my chest to start with.

#### **Uncertainty Of Political And Constitutional Development**

I guess the things I would like to talk about on the Speech from the Throne are basically the same, and it is the things that are not in it, and it is a concern in my riding. Very few people have talked to me about it when I go visit their homes, but the chiefs have talked to me about it, some of the leaders have talked to me about it, and one of the concerns they bring up is, where are they going to get finances or how are they going to work toward political and constitutional development?

The government has taken the road, I guess, to support the North and to second positions to the Delta and to second to the Metis Association positions that are all in support of land claims, but if you do not support the comprehensive land claims policy where you extinguish your aboriginal rights, this territorial government will not support you. They do not second any positions to the South; I do not see them

seconding any positions to the Dene Nation to work on land claims; I do not see them paying the chiefs' salaries.

These are requests that have been made by the southern groups and they are valid requests. How do you think that people can seriously look at it without the finances available to them to carry out the work? No one can live and support their families and work on the political and constitutional development at the local level unless there is money available to them. That is where it has to come from; it has to come from the bottom up, not from the top down. It is not up to Mr. Patterson or whoever else to dictate to the community level.

I also realize that in Fort Resolution there has been made available a minimum amount of funding for self-government development. As much as it is appreciated, it is not much money, and the communities are starting to work on it. What would be better and more concrete and a lot more meaningful to the communities I represent is for this government to devolve things to the community in a quicker manner and basically give contracts, turn the funding over to the communities so that they can build their own houses, turn over the funding so they can do their own capital projects, and possibly turn some of the government departments over to the communities. That is working toward self-government.

#### Denendeh And Nunavut Discussion

I realize that in the past the Dene Nation or the chiefs have made a commitment to the East that we support Nunavut, but in return we would like, and which was agreed upon, support for constitutional development for Denendeh, which is very important to us. When we do divide, the Dene/Metis will become a minority in the West. At the rate government is growing, that is just a matter of time. Our chiefs voted in favour of division in the past. They have supported Nunavut for their own homeland, and our people want the same.

I have never ever heard anyone talk about division calling the new territory in the West a new western territory. The first time I ever heard it is in this paper. For all the years I have been around, people have always said "Denendeh". They never say anything else, it is "Denendeh" and "Nunavut" and that is it. I would like to see the government, as well as ourselves as Members, work on issues that are day-to-day issues of the people and that are concerns now. We have to work on the Metis health care benefits; we have to work on buffalo issues in my region; we have to work on even getting compensation benefits for Wilfred Giroux and education. We have to work to get our children better educated; we have to work to make sure that we get more graduates; we have to work to make sure that we have more aboriginal people in the public service. Thirty-one per cent, as far as I am concerned, is still unacceptable. We have to spend a lot of energy on those things.

I guess in the background in a longer road and a broader look, constitutional development is important too, but let us not put that ahead of everything else and let us not only concentrate on that. As far as I am concerned, in the next election, maybe some people need that as an issue. There are enough issues in my riding that I do not need that one to run an election campaign on. Maybe some people are grappling for issues for the election. I had heard that it gets crazy in the last year of a term, and the last few days I am starting to realize that maybe the rumours I heard are true. I have not been here before in the last year of a term.

With that, I would just like to close by saying that I guess we will have the opportunity to debate political and constitutional development at a later stage in this Assembly, but do not let that overshadow everything else, and let not that be the meat on the plate -- maybe the salad but not the meat. Mahsi cho.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Thank you. Member for Sahtu.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Chairman, I want to say that after three years of working at these issues of political and constitutional development I have to say that this fledgling debate makes me very happy. I do not agree with everything that is said, but that is the nature of political debates, in all the ones that I have been involved in the last 15 years or so of my life. I think that is the nature of what we are engaged in. Some people say that it is important, other people say it is not. Other people are willing to let political and constitutional decisions be made by a handful of people. That is sort of a historical trend.

I know that, according to some people here, the issues of political and constitutional development -- maybe they are not important in Yellowknife South or Yellowknife Centre or in the riding of Nahendeh, but I think it depends on how we describe the different situations that arise. I know that there was a handful of us that worked within the Dene Nation for many years trying to develop and articulate what it was that the Dene leaders wanted as far as constitutional development was concerned. There was always that group of people that said, "It is not important; we can leave it for some other time. Jobs are more important; housing is more important; the economy is more important."

#### Concerns Of Aboriginal People On Control Of Land

Yet when the agreement in principle was presented, for instance, in Hay River the huge outcry at that assembly that people will remember was basically, "Yes we have got some land, yes we have got some resources, yes we have got a few management boards, but there is nothing in there that gives us, as aboriginal people, any say over the land. We have no control over the land. We have no way to make laws over the land that we get." That is what has led to the demise of the claim. But after the Assembly was over, and since then, those of us that have been following the work plan or the lack of a work plan by the Dene leaders, will see that there was no work done in the last four or five years on how we as aboriginal people, how we as native people, are going to assure ourselves that we are not going to lose opportunities to regain control over the land. Not only to come back and say, "Okay, we are going to own so many hundreds of thousands of square miles", but also to say that we want to know how we are going to be a part of a government. We want to know, as Dene people, as Metis people, as Inuit people, how we are going to be governing our own lands, not only the lands that we own in clear title but all the lands that we traditionally own. That has been, I think, a major quest on the part of all of us. That has been the obstacle, I think, to economic development over the years here in the North that all of us have been obsessed with. I have been obsessed personally with finding ways to regain control over the land that my people, the land that the Inuit people, the land that the Inuvialuit people, the land that the Metis people, have lived in traditionally. That is what the fight is about.

The opportunities I think are here with us now. They are not going to be here five or 10 years from now. They may be, but I am not willing to sleep on it. I am not willing to say, "Well, as an MLA and as a Minister I want to talk about jobs, I want to talk about training opportunities, I want to talk about housing." I can do that. I can do that every day but the opportunities are here now for all of us to do something so that we do not end up like a Province of Alberta, so we do not end up like a Province of Ontario, or any of the other provinces where none of the aboriginal people who originally lived within the borders of those institutions have any say over the way that those governments are run. Here we have an incredible opportunity, the last opportunity in Canada, to do something before the status quo cements itself.

I know that there might be reasons why Members on the other side say, "Well, this looks like it just came out of the blue" or "You dreamt of it last week." That could be but...

--Laughter

...but if you read the paper -- I mean the key point for me here is we are trying to say you have to appreciate what the big picture is, otherwise we are not going to get the job done. That is the reason for trying to push a debate. I do not think all of us appreciate what the big picture is. Not all of us appreciate everything that there is to be said on these issues. I think that is what the challenge is; it is for all of us to find a way to make some changes.

If you look at the chiefs of the Dene Nation, I do not know if you would find one of them that would say, "We like things the way they are. Give us some more houses. Give us some more jobs." I do not think one of them would say, "Leave it the way it is." I would say that they want change and control over the land.

The Inuvialuit have said for years that they want a different type of government. They have tabled, years ago, a paper on regional government. What about the Inuit? They have said they want Nunavut, their own territory, their own government and they have been working at it persistently, consistently. These are all big changes that people are asking for.

#### Opportunities For Change For Aboriginal People

But why is it? I think again, it is a very simple thing; that because although this is our land, the aboriginal people have no control over it. What does it matter if we keep getting little piddling jobs here and there, a house, but somebody else runs our country and the opportunity we have to regain control is lost. That is the challenge because that is what I suggest. We cannot focus only on jobs and interest rates and literacy because in the end we will lose the opportunities we have to make something new and unique for our own people.

I know that it may not be, as I say, important in Yellowknife South or Yellowknife Centre or Nahendeh, but it seems to me that Meech Lake was important to everybody. There was a lot of debate about it here in this House. Why was that? It was because we felt the kind of control that we want over our own future was being denied us. That is why we got into a big flap about it. What about Oka? What was that all about? It is a people that have lost all their land and any semblance of control that they have, not only over their lands but their own lives. That is what Oka was about. A lot of them have jobs. Illiteracy is not really a problem in Oka. I think it is wrong and I think it is dangerous and it is irresponsible to say that this is not important. I think the native organizations have consistently said over the years, "Along with claims, political and constitutional development is the most important thing that we have to resolve." It has been consistent. What we have to do is get this Legislative Assembly to appreciate that as well. I think the opportunities are there for us to do something.

Maybe if you are a non-native person it may not be important. I do not know. I do not want to be categorical about it but I know for myself as an aboriginal person, that in my lifetime, in the next five to 10 years, those are the years that I see where I have an opportunity that perhaps the next generation of people will not have; that I have an opportunity to change the way that we have government, the way that as native people we have been pushed aside, our affairs, control and decision-making we have over our own lives have been taken away from us and that the fight to take it back, the fight to get back some land, the fight to get back and design the kind of government that we have control over, the fight to regain

some cultural integrity, the opportunity is now. If we do not seize it now, then the next Legislative Assembly may come around to find it only to see that the opportunities are lost.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Thank you. Your 10 minutes are up, Mr. Kakfwi. Any further general comments? The Member for Aivilik.

**MR. ERNERK:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the Throne Speech I appreciate that it is being discussed in committee of the whole and we do not have to stand up to address this.

Mr. Chairman, first of all the Inuit in our region, in Nunavut, when it comes to constitutional issues in the Nunavut area we tend to come together and support each other. Even from parts of Alaska and Greenland our people tend to get together and support each other when it comes to constitutional issues. I found this out last summer when we went to Greenland for Inuit Cultural Institute meetings. We all had the same concerns regarding constitutional development.

When it comes to political and constitutional development and employment, I tend to push them aside. I was going to address them later in the session, but I would have appreciated if they were in the Commissioner's Opening Address, especially education and employment opportunities. I am going to have an opportunity, perhaps, when the Finance Minister gives his Budget Address.

I think the most important things we have to discuss are language services and the justice system in the NWT. They were not even included in the Commissioner's Opening Address. The languages we speak in our region are very important to our people and our way of life. They have great value to our people. Those of us in the Legislative Assembly have to push our government to recognize the aboriginal languages in the Territories, along with English and French. I think the aboriginal languages should be officially recognized.

The aboriginal languages are starting to be implemented in the workplaces and also in the justice system. We have used them in the Legislative Assembly in our sessions, but when it comes to economic development and constitutional reform, the GNWT is not really pushing for the aboriginal languages to be implemented. Even in the federal workplaces, in Transportation and other departments, I wonder why, when the GNWT was really for the official aboriginal languages, were you not involved in the federal departments when it comes to aboriginal languages -- right, Mr. Allooooloo?

#### Justice System Must Improve

I know that this is progressing quite slowly, but I would like to have seen something mentioned in the Commissioner's Opening Address yesterday to the effect that the justice system in the NWT has to be improved quite rapidly. I can give my input to implement aboriginal languages in the justice system. I think it is time the Inuit people get involved in the justice system in the NWT, just like their fellow Canadians, and perhaps even become judges and lawyers, using their own languages in the NWT. I would like to see this become a reality. I do not feel the GNWT is setting this as a priority. They seem to be taking it slowly.

I would also like to see the communities in the NWT be given more powers because it is obvious that Yellowknife is the centre of attention. When are the communities or even the hamlet councils -- we have recognized those organizations as representatives of the people in the Territories. I think we should start strengthening their powers within their communities. Perhaps in the future this will apply with the



constitutional development in the coming years.

Last of all, Mr. Chairman, the Commissioner's Address yesterday -- most of it I supported and I do not want to be misunderstood by the government, especially in regard to constitutional development and land claims and other issues. I support that fully, and the people that are trying to have their land claims in the western territory; I support that fully. I do not want to be misunderstood by the Government of the NWT. Since the Meech Lake Accord has fallen apart -- I was not sorry that it fell apart as it was, because it was an obstacle for us to face in the NWT, to become a province in the future.

I still support fully the aboriginal people in the NWT and I am hoping that in the future they will be able to sit in on Ministers' conferences. All those organizations I have just mentioned, I would like to see them in a round table discussion and discuss the issues we face today in the NWT. We were the first people in Canada when Canada was founded and we are the true owners of this land.

Last of all, Mr. Chairman, just looking at the way it was drafted in the Commissioner's Opening Address, it seems to me that they did not know what to talk about or give a speech about when it came to the Commissioner's Opening Address. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe):** Thank you. At this time the Chair would like to recognize Chief Edward Erasmus from Rae-Edzo. Welcome to the House.

--Applause

Further comments on Tabled Document 1-91(1). Member for Nunakput.

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:** Mr. Chairman, I think there has been quite a bit of comment about why this particular subject may or may not be important at this time. I guess the words "political and constitutional development" sound rather sophisticated in our small world and in the areas of immediate need. But I guess the issue is really where and how decisions are made and by whom they are made.

I think it would be very remiss not to put this particular question of political and constitutional development on the table at this time. Perhaps we would all prefer, and we probably recognize right now that the fundamental bread-and-butter issues are very predominant in our communities. Certainly those are number one priorities. However, what has to be recognized is that whether we like it or not, a decision on division and a vote on division will be put forward very soon. That is of particular importance to me because my constituency is the Beaufort region and we have been bantered back and forth according to the value, whether economic or political. Most times it is very disconcerting because when the new initiative or the renewed initiative on division comes up the issue for my constituency is, although they would no doubt prefer not to deal with it at this time, and I recognize that, the fact is that we are going to have to deal with it; the subject will not go away.

#### **Division Necessary For Settlement Of Nunavut Claim**

Certainly with the Nunavut claim, the TFN claim, part of the emphasis that is going to be made is that the claim is not whole unless division occurs and that there is a vote on division and that a Nunavut government is a fundamental part of the claim and complementary to the claim. So important to the claim that it is the same question of the problem of extinguishment. The Inuit cannot see a claim, a TFN claim, being fundamentally settled unless division occurs and there is a Nunavut government to complement it.

The process calls for a decision to be made at or about the same time as a settlement of a TFN claim. The Inuit have said that the claim cannot be total unless that decision is made. The federal government, the Department of Indian Affairs, in the negotiation process has stipulated to the territorial government, to cabinet, that there has to be a process whereby that can be recognized. As a cabinet, a number of us may really feel that the issue could really be set aside but we cannot do that and we are forced into the need to make a further decision.

The constituency that I represent has always felt, particularly in the Beaufort communities -- and we have had difficulties in Inuvik and Aklavik because they are mixed communities -- the division line will probably go along what was recommended in the Iqaluit agreement, which puts my constituency in the West. So whether I like it or not, representing people although we might have something better to do with our time, I would say that if we let the initiative of Nunavut go along and then at the last minute we will have you same people say, "Well, why are you bringing this issue up at this time?" What kind of make-up of a government are we going to have in the West? That is a question that is going to be placed before us and those are questions that are far-reaching and obviously will take a great deal of thought.

I guess it is far easier for me to say Tuktoyaktuk, Nunavut but there is no way that I can say Tuktoyaktuk, Denendeh. I will tell you why. Nunavut is an Inuit name depicting Inuit land as far as I am concerned. Denendeh is a Dene word depicting Dene land. Our land is not Dene land but it is Inuit land. We are caught in a particularly bad situation as the question of division is going to be put to us very soon because it is part of the deal with the TFN claim.

#### **Constitutional Development And Economic Issues**

To go further on some of the things that Gordon Wray mentioned. Every day we talk about constitutional development. It is not as though someone is going to come and tell you, "Let us sit down and talk about the political and constitutional development of Yellowknife, Fort Rae, or of Tuktoyaktuk." We talk about that every day in terms of devolution; how much control goes to a community; the splitting of a budget in terms of who is going to actually take over certain responsibilities at the community or regional level; how far do we go in giving more responsibility to boards and agencies? That is a constitutional and a political decision to give that much authority to those boards and agencies. Every day of our life, even though we do not realize it or do not think we are doing it, we are discussing and moving toward different political set-ups, different constitutional ideas on how we should organize ourselves and our businesses.

In dealing with employment, jobs, security of resources, and allowing stability to companies so that they feel that their investment dollar is better protected and they will not be unduly pressed to over-expend, economic development, energy development, because the projects cost a lot of money, big bucks, people want to know just exactly how much they have to spend to comply with the constitutional regulatory controls that exist. They want to know who makes the decision and who to deal with. It is terribly confusing now as we have not settled on those regimes.

Certainly even talking about how we set up a health board and what make-up that is going to be, that is constitutional development at a community or regional level. All these things are out there and when you want to make a decision it is extremely difficult because you have to take into consideration where people are with their claim, with their political aspiration, with their ownership that they desire within the claims process and all that is all tied together.

When we talk about claims I think one of the problem areas that the Dene/Metis claim suffered was a constitutional one on extinguishment or how much power they have over their own lands. That is a decision on where and how decisions are made and by whom, and we are going through that process every day.

#### **Economic Well-Being Depends On Political Stability**

I am telling you, even though some of us would like to push the issue aside and say it is not important right now, a lot of the other decisions in terms of the economic well-being of the Northwest Territories depends on whether we can make those decisions and to rationalize the regimes that make the investor have some stability that is required. Let us talk about the Taitson line. There is some concern that perhaps we will have such a regulatory process that it will be no longer economical. Those questions are put to us and as a result we have to go to a lot of extra effort to make sure that people are involved, so that people do not feel that they are being pushed outside of the decision-making and the involvement.

These things are all important and it comes right back to the point of certainty. Yes, TFN has made the provision, they want to vote to create a government within their TFN claim area. We have to face that, but immediately upon that and when that comes, very shortly there will be a cry asking what did we do about making sure that what is left of the NWT that is not in the TFN area, what is the make-up of that? How do I as a person from Nunakput go to my people in answer to their question, "How are we going to be protected, how can our political and constitutional voice be heard now in a majority of non-Inuit?"

I have a problem here. Maybe I do not want to address it, but it is going to be here and I have to, and certainly I would like to assure you that in our budget addresses we will try to complement and tell you all the things that we are doing for the NWT, but I think that we will really be remiss if we do not highlight the political and constitutional issue at this time, not because it is the end-all but because we would not be giving to this Assembly, notice that the plans that very closely down the road will...

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Madam Minister, your 10 minutes are up. The committee has to agree if you want to continue.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

--Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Proceed, Madam Minister.

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:** Again, the issue is going to be forced on us and we must be ready to take that challenge. Have we thought about it? It may be that some of us feel that it will never happen because it has been going on and on and on, as some of the Members have said, and it comes and goes. The fact is that the TFN claim is around the corner and what is being put forward is that at the same time there is a question of division to reconcile, and that Nunavut, or a government in that area, be formed separately from the rest of the NWT. It has always been my aspiration that the Beaufort communities be in the Nunavut territory, and it will be a very sad time for me when I will have to come to the realization that maybe it is not possible, in order to allow a greater number of people to have their own aspirations.

But I will not sit quietly by and not represent my constituency. I will continue to be very strong on wanting to know exactly what type of protections we will have in a broader constituency in which Inuvialuit will become a minority. Whether I like it or not, I have to deal with that. Whether I

think other things are more important, I still have to deal with it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Thank you, Madam Minister. General comments. Mr. Ningark.

**MR. NINGARK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am one person that likes to take advantage of even bad situations; that is to my advantage.

(Translation) ...supporting his Address because there was no mention of economic development, and today the Inuit and Dene people are trying to get a land claim. After land claim settlements, we should be able to run our own affairs. Especially in sessions like this, we usually try to deal with wildlife, oil exploration, minerals. I am pretty sure we will be involved in those areas as well, and also education and again we will be able to run education, and also our own language. We want to be able to use our own language at the workplace.

What we have said in the past was that we do not have enough support; that is why the land claims are taking so long. This was addressed by the Commissioner. It does not matter if it is Dene or Inuit. The aboriginal people are supposed to be recognized by the government. While we are in this session we have to look at our regions and their needs. We have to express our concerns to the House, but when it comes to land claims we cannot clearly discuss them at the Legislative Assembly sessions. The Commissioner recognizes this in his opening speech. As I was saying, land claims are very important to us. TFN is our representative in land claims and all the communities in the North are supporting TFN.

I was not going to just let it go, so in a way I support his Opening Address, but I think there should have been more on the topic of economic development mentioned in the Speech. I think we are just going to be going back and forth on this subject, so thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Mr. Allooooloo.

#### **Political And Constitutional Discussions Important And Timely**

**HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO:** (Translation) I think in particular in dealing with the Nunavut proposal, as my colleague next to me, Ms. Cournoyee, said, part of their western territorial land claims is attached to self-government and today we have to start working on what our future will be for the Territories and what kind of constitutional developments we will plan for our future. (Translation ends)

What we are discussing today about political and constitutional development is very important. I disagree with some of the Members that said earlier that this is not very important at this time and there are more important issues. I will quote from the Speech from the Throne: "We have arrived at the time when crucial decisions must be made. They are decisions that will affect not only our political and constitutional future but our social and economic futures as well."

I believe, as Mr. Kakfwi said, we could solve all the social and economic problems of this day, but if we do not solve the political and constitutional development within our territory, we will continue to struggle as so many native people have in the country or in the United States.

I think the vote on division took place in 1982 and that question was resolved. It is now up to the people in the NWT when to divide. Because of the TFN claim that relies heavily on the creation of Nunavut, we are at the crossroads for the

political and constitutional development within the NWT. We have to decide, and the TFN claim has to be ratified within the very next short time. If we do not resolve the political and constitutional future of the NWT, they are going to experience some difficulties ratifying the claim. And I do not think it is in our best interests for that not to be resolved. I think it has to be resolved. I think since the Dene/Metis have experienced some setback in their land claims, we need to do our best to see the TFN claim go through.

I believe it is very exciting times for the people of the NWT. My people do not feel the ownership of the laws within the NWT, not just yet. Also since the democratic process that we know today was brought to our country from Europe, our people did not take part at this Legislature until not too long ago. I think we have yet to see the people who are aboriginal people building their destiny, making decisions that will affect them.

#### Opportunity Available Now Could Be Lost

I believe that through the land claim process and also the political development of the NWT, we now have people in place, such as ourselves, who are aboriginal people that could guide political development in the NWT. It is an opportunity that is not available to all the aboriginal people within North America and I think, as my colleague, Mr. Kakfwi, said, it is an opportunity for us to take, it is an opportunity that we could lose, same as those people in other provinces or in other countries who once had the opportunity and have lost it.

I believe that the issues of social and economic futures of the Territories could be resolved once we resolve the political and constitutional development within the NWT. And those issues have to be resolved in our mandate. The opportunity that exists today for us to take part in the development of the constitutional development might not exist in the next government. It exists today. We have to make a decision. Since the TFN claim calls for legislation to be in place by 1992 for the division of the NWT to be enacted after five years, I think we have to start talking about the political future of the two possible territories.

In regard to the names of the two territories, I think it will be up to the people who are living in each of the two territories to decide what sort of name they will have.

(Translation) Mr. Chairman, we have opportunity here to develop our future. This opportunity is available for us today here in the NWT but is not available any longer to aboriginal people in the country. They no longer have this opportunity. They have lost it. We have an opportunity to mould our future and I think we should take this advantage to work on the political and constitutional future of our Territories. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Mr. Ballantyne.

**HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE:** Thank you. I think a lot of people have made very good points and I think this discussion we are having today will be a good preamble to the fuller discussion we will have later on during the session.

I want to make a number of comments. I think when I have listened to what people have to say today I basically do not think that people are that far apart as it may have seemed. I think people perhaps are not interpreting the actual words exactly the way that we meant them. We made a calculated choice to separate the issues of constitutional development. When we say that, specifically we are talking land claims, division, devolution. That is what we are talking about in constitutional development, and things related to those.

#### Constitutional Development Key Ingredient In Land Claims

So when Mr. Sibbeston is saying that he is not interested in constitutional development, that we are interested in land claims, we in fact are talking very much about land claims; it is a very key ingredient.

I guess our experience in the government over the past number of years has been that we have dealt with differently issues. This Assembly has supported division as long as I have been here, supported land claims as long as I have been here; and before, back to Mr. Sibbeston's days, this Assembly supported devolution. We have dealt with these issues over the years as they came up, more or less as separate entities. But then as the years passed, and especially during the last year and a half, it became more and more evident that the issues are absolutely linked.

Just to draw some examples to see the sort of problems that we face and the reason that we are bringing forward this paper. If you look at the issue of the TFN claim. The TFN claim is inextricably tied to division. Without division there probably will not be a TFN claim. Another reality is that the institutions set out in the TFN claim are not institutions which will easily mix with the ones that we have here, for instance, in the Western Arctic. So that is a reality.

Since I have been here we have had at least three votes that have dealt with division, the latest one during this Assembly when there was unanimous agreement to divide. Mr. Alloooolo tabled the AIP here in this Assembly with article four which said in six months we needed a process to deal with division. Either Mr. Patterson or Mr. Alloooolo tabled the letter to the Prime Minister which dealt with article four of the AIP which set out the timetable for division.

I am glad everybody is so interested in this. I thought we needed to debate, and hopefully people will read Hansard.

So I think along the line we have laid out, as best we could, every step of the way, the sorts of things that are happening. But people in the West, I think, have a challenge right now. It is because of the process we put into place, a process that this Assembly has been made very aware of, that decisions are now before us. Although there are those people that say that nobody is interested in constitutional development, in fact those decisions will have a huge impact on people in my community and in the Western Arctic over the next two or three years. Issues such as the cost of division, who will bear the cost of division. If that is not handled properly there will be a greater burden on the Western Arctic, for instance. Those in the West that say it is not a pressing issue should know that if we are talking division we are talking about the possible placement of positions from the West to the East which will have considerable impact on people in the western territory.

When we talk about division I think one of the primary objectives of the Dene Nation for many, many years -- I think it was well articulated by Mr. Kakfwi when he was president of the Dene Nation -- is that in order to sell land claims you need a constitutional package to go along with land claims which defines certain rights of aboriginal people in a new Western Arctic.

Now in the very near future we could have the possibility of a plebiscite on division without that proper consultation process. If we ignore it, the deadline for this plebiscite, the deadline for this decision, is upon us. So I disagree with Mr. Lewis that we have had the same situation for 25 years. It is the first time in our history that we have had an AIP in the

Eastern Arctic which has a very good chance of being finalized. There is a process set out, with the blessing of the federal government, which is leading us down the road toward division. I think it is very, very important for us in the Western Arctic, because we do have this deadline on us, to seriously consider what sort of a territory we are going to have.

#### **Name Of New Western Territory**

I think the question of the name of the new territory to me is not a huge issue, but I do understand what Mr. Sibbeston is saying, because the term Denendeh means more than just a name. I understand that. But the only caution that I would give to Mr. Sibbeston, and I think he will respect this, is that in the new western part of the territory, Denendeh or some other name that might be agreed to later, is that I think there is another group of people that we have to be very aware of. I think Ms. Cournoyea has explained her predicament and I think that if we are to welcome into the new western territory, the Inuvialuit, who I think are key to the viability of the territory, I think before we as an Assembly decide here on a name, we may want to talk to them and perhaps it could be Denendeh with some way to recognize the Inuvialuit -- I do not know -- without taking away from what I think Mr. Sibbeston is saying about the symbolism and the importance of the word "Denendeh". I think that is something that with good faith and good will we could probably work out without tremendous problems.

As far as the other issues of the day, such as housing, economic development, the programs of the government, we decided this year that they would be in the Budget Address. I will be giving the Budget Address on Monday. Every Member will also have an opportunity to respond to the Budget Address. So I think there will be a lot of time in the next few weeks to discuss other priorities of this government.

We put the issue of constitutional development up front in the Speech from the Throne because we consider it is the important cornerstone of whatever we are going to do here in the NWT. We do not pretend to have any magic and we were not intending in the Speech from the Throne to say we have a magic solution. What we would really like here, as we come to these crossroads in our history, is a full debate. We have some ideas that we would like to present to the Assembly. We think it is important that we look at all the issues in unison and not individually, and hopefully out of that debate will come a better understanding for all of us of the problems we have. Hopefully we will have a better opportunity to explain where we are coming from as a government and to respond to the concerns of MLAs. But I think we also have a responsibility to put these very complex issues out front for the public to see exactly what is facing us as a territory. I do not think that will be a negative experience here. I think that is something we have a responsibility to do. These issues are causing a lot of problems now, a lot of fragmentation in the NWT, a lot of bad feelings. I think it is very important that we openly and honestly...

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Excuse me, Mr. Ballantyne, your time is up. Does this committee agree for him to continue?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** (Inaudible comment.)

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Thank you. Mr. Patterson.

**HON. DENNIS PATTERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to say I am just delighted that we do have a real debate going already on political and constitutional development in this Assembly. Maybe we had to shock the Members by doing this but we have got you talking about fundamental issues. And I think that is great. I welcome it and I welcome the discussion of this speech.

#### **Series Of Political And Constitutional Development Documents Tabled**

Members have made very interesting and important comments. I have a few comments on those comments. Some Members have said that we have not had a mandate to bring these issues forward. You know, I have to remind Members, with the budget session of 1988 we brought forward the "Direction for the 1990s" document. On November 4 of 1988 we brought forward a discussion paper on "Political and Constitutional Development in the Northwest Territories". It did not create great excitement here so we tabled it again in the budget session of 1989. On October 27, 1989, we tabled a new paper, "Seize the Day: A Report to the Legislative Assembly on Political and Constitutional Development in the Northwest Territories", and we are tabling another one this session.

Mr. Chairman, all of those documents were presented and they were discussed, not at length, but they were certainly not thrown out by the Assembly and I guess we think that they were accepted as being realistic assessments of the situation as it developed. This paper that we have referred to in the Throne Speech, which is going to be tabled later on, really should be seen as a continuation of that process; not something new, not something last minute, but an evolution of the political and constitutional discussions that we have had to date, reflecting the dramatic developments that have occurred in the last number of months.

Mr. Chairman, I think at the beginning of this Legislative Assembly term we had the potential for putting it all together. There were land claims on the horizon. Two land claims were progressing well. The land claims gave money, ownership of land, management rights over wildlife, land and water. What could not be got in land claims could be got by other means -- devolution: public government controlling health, power, forestry, oil and gas, and minerals. Then there was also the national constitutional reform process which could have defined and recognized aboriginal self-government and aboriginal rights and added further powers and self-determination to what could not be got through land claims and devolution.

Mr. Chairman, we have not got everything we had hoped for in those early days of this Legislature, but we have made some progress. We still have some opportunities to make progress even though there have been setbacks. Mr. Sibbeston says that in his riding people do not care about political and constitutional development, they are only concerned about land claims. Of course Mr. Sibbeston has been a champion of those kinds of issues and so has every Assembly that I have been privileged to be a part of. Remember in 1979, some of us were there, we threw out the previous Assembly's political and constitutional development paper because it did not adequately reflect the aspirations of native people and native organizations. Since then they have been working with us in the Constitutional Alliance. They have been in this Assembly, appearing in this Assembly, and they have always argued, Mr. Chairman, that land claims and political development are intertwined, closely intertwined.

The Dene/Metis claim collapsed, in part, in fact, because of concerns about self-government; concerns about the adequacy of public government to protect aboriginal rights; concerns, as Mr. Kakfwi stated, about aboriginal people controlling their lands and controlling their own destiny. This is fundamental, Mr. Chairman, and this is what the Throne Speech was all about. It was about what Mr. Sibbeston, I believe, hopes for in Denendeh.

I think we have to acknowledge people -- Mr. Lewis and to a certain extent Mr. Whitford -- saying these issues have been

around us for a long time and they will not go away; it is a sleeping giant. Well, Mr. Chairman, in my opinion the giant is stirring and is not asleep.

#### **Inuit Land Claim Driving Constitutional Issue**

Maybe Members did not quite notice or pay the attention they should have but last October the TFN agreement in principle was tabled in this Assembly. Article four has required us to come up with a process to divide the Northwest Territories in six months. We had that process in place in the form of a letter to the Prime Minister which was also tabled in this Legislature only a few months ago, last October, and TFN wants guarantees that there will be a commitment to Nunavut before the final settlement legislation is in place. That claim is moving. The TFN is planning to ratify that claim this coming year. The issue is upon us. It is being driven by the Inuit land claim and it will fundamentally change this Legislature, this government. It will affect the people of the West and it presents the people of the West with an opportunity to create the new and better government that has been aspired to for so long. Maybe we did not describe this new government properly in the Throne Speech.

I am surprised Mr. Sibbeston is pushing the term Denendeh so hard because I know he wants to reach out to the Inuvialuit as well. He worked in those communities with the western forum to reach out to them. I have a funny feeling that had we used another word in the Throne Speech Mr. Sibbeston might have been praising the speech as he is now condemning it. I do not believe the name is so important, Mr. Chairman; I think it is the opportunities it represents for new and better forms of government.

Mr. Chairman, I think that we have been very good at saying no in the Northwest Territories in recent years. We have been good at saying no to land claims; no to certain developments; no to public government; no to the benefit section of the Northern Accord and no to the Charter Communities Act but I think that the time has come to recognize that we now have opportunities to make progress and to make decisions that will be positive, even in the face of some setbacks.

I know that there are many issues that we must deal with: literacy, child care, housing. Those of us in cabinet do travel around to communities now and then; in fact we are tabling some information about that soon, and we have some idea what is going on; we do not sit around in cabinet dreaming about the future all of the time. All of the problems that we deal with, economic development issues, day-to-day issues, remind us that there are fundamental issues which must be resolved. It is not issues like who pays the chiefs' salaries, it is the chief as the reflection of community will. Development decisions are made in Ottawa. Important decisions are made in Ottawa. Only when we have a stake in the outcome and a piece of the action will there be a favourable and stable climate for development.

#### **Speech From The Throne Focussed On Fundamental Issue**

In closing, Mr. Chairman, we could have thrown in a number of issues in the Throne Speech. The speech could have been all over the map and it could have touched a base here and a base there and maybe made some of you happy that something you cared about was mentioned, but we decided to focus on this fundamental issue to make a point; I am glad that the point has been made, whether you agree with it or not. Our point is: This is a fundamental underlying issue that cannot be ignored. We will talk about housing when we get into the Housing Corporation budget. We will talk about aboriginal language issues when we get into the Culture and Communications budget. But let us stop for a minute from the day-to-day issues that, yes, our constituents are pressing

us about, and look at the fundamentals. Yes, there is an election coming up. We know about that. We are elected people, too, in cabinet. But we cannot say, "We will wait for eight or nine months before we do anything." We need to think about continuing to try to make progress, about laying the ground for the next government. They may throw out our work, but let us try to consolidate what we have done so far and still move ahead.

The Throne Speech does not present a panacea or a cure-all. All we are trying to do is encourage further progress, to say where we are and where we can go, and to keep making progress, and I think that Members of cabinet who have the time to dwell on these issues, the way ordinary Members may not, are expected by this Assembly to provide some leadership and to look beyond the current budget session and the current issues that we may be addressing in question period and to try to point the way ahead.

I welcome this chance to discuss our vision, albeit briefly, and I am especially looking forward to the chance the Throne Speech points to to have a full and frank debate later on in this Assembly while we have some of those bread-and-butter issues under our belt, or largely under our belt, through the budget session and budget debate, about these fundamental and interrelated issues, which I think we all fundamentally agree we cannot afford not to deal with. If we do not deal with them, events are going to overtake us.

We have an opportunity, Mr. Chairman, that people in the rest of the country would greatly envy. Let us recognize those fundamental issues, even while we wrestle with the day-to-day challenges that are upon us from our constituents and our communities. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is mentioned in the Throne Speech that legislation would provide for the creation of a Nunavut territory. The same arrangement was implemented in Alberta where the Alberta government made legislation for a Metis settlement: the Land Protection Act, the Metis Settlement Accord Implementation Act, the Metis Settlement Act and also the Constitution of Alberta Amendment Act.

In this case, if the legislation was passed for the creation of Nunavut, then it would perhaps go into the NWT Act, but in the Western Arctic the situation is different because this is where the government was created to administer the whole Territories.

In the Western Arctic you also have to remember that there are 15 communities that have band councils who represent over 75 per cent of the native population in those communities. Those are the communities where the Indian Act applies. Naturally the Canadian Constitution takes precedence over the Indian Act, but the Indian Act is second in line to any other acts which, in my opinion, means that if you apply the Indian Act in those 15 communities they are the laws of those areas and would, in fact, take precedence over any territorial legislation.

Mr. Chairman, the other thing is that the reality right now is that the federal Indian Affairs department recognizes self-government and they are also in the process of implementing a process where self-government could be recognized. We are also in a position right now where budget restraints have caused a lot of difficulties in the communities, but in those communities like Fort Resolution, Fort Providence, Hay River Reserve, Fort Liard, Wrigley, Kakisa, Trout Lake, Nahanni, Fort Norman, Fort Good Hope, Fort Franklin, Arctic Red River, Fort

McPherson, Aklavik, Colville Lake -- those are all communities where band councils function.

I wonder whether or not the government recognizes that in those communities perhaps the band councils could function as the government. This has never been mentioned. Instead, this government does not recognize band councils, as far as I am concerned, and also does not try to accommodate band councils to take on the roles and responsibilities of some of those functions in the communities. You only have two charter communities.

In those communities, Mr. Chairman, you have a situation where you have the municipal council and you have the band council, which do not always co-operate in their functions. They also have the local education authority or the community education authority, the hunters and trappers association, the alcohol and drug committee, the social services appeal committee and committees created to control the flow of alcohol into the communities. You have a lot of responsibilities that are outside those two main bodies.

Mr. Chairman, I recognize that in the Eastern Arctic perhaps the creation of Nunavut could be done through territorial legislation, but in the Western Arctic that might not be a reality. In the Deh Cho region at least, the communities have chosen strongly to apply under the Indian Act their rights to services and also ask that they take on those responsibilities. In order for those communities to be satisfied, the government has also to be able to take on a position to say, "Yes, we do recognize band councils." I think they should take on a more responsible role as defined under the Indian Act or defined under the treaties; they should take on more responsibility for education rather than creating a community education society or divisional boards, which is the case right now.

#### **Political And Constitutional Development Should Be Election Issue**

Mr. Chairman, this is one area in which political and constitutional development at this late stage in the 11th Assembly maybe should be addressed during this coming election. I do not think that eastern Members at least should concern themselves about what the Western Arctic government should look like, but at least if Members make their positions clear on what they in their own vision see as a government in the Western Arctic, then they do have a mandate to take into this House for the 12th Assembly. I do not think that, at least from my observations in the Deh Cho region, political development as envisioned by the territorial government is that big a concern. The basic reason for that is that they have never been given an opportunity to actually have a forum in which they can address that issue. The constitutional forum has been dissolved or has very little profile, so we have a situation where you cannot properly address this, but I believe that the whole issue could be resolved if we make that an election issue.

Further in the Deh Cho region there are strong feelings with regard to the Indian Act and the treaty rights. There is a strong feeling that they are going to start exercising those rights that are implemented under those acts and those are federal acts that take precedence over territorial legislation.

The reality right now is that the aspiration in the Deh Cho region is that they would like to see a form of self-government, and they would like to see it formed on the basis of what they feel is self-government, being defined by themselves, and also being able to implement it in the regions.

They also support the court challenge with regard to aboriginal rights. So they will wait and see what the decisions are but if everything else does not work out to their favour

then the directions that the region is considering is to start applying what they are entitled to under the Indian Act and under the treaty rights.

I would also like to ask the eastern Members -- I support Nunavut and the word "Nunavut" means "our land". If you want to interpret Denendeh it also means the same thing, so I do not see any reason why the support cannot come from the eastern Members to also recognize the fact that before people came to this territory this used to be our land and we always called it that; that has never changed. All of a sudden because we look at the Western Arctic government the word "Denendeh" no longer exists. It still exists and if you talk to any native person who does not speak English they will always say that this land is theirs.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Mr. Gargan, your 10 minutes are up. Do you wish to speak more? We can ask this committee if they are agreed.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:** All that I am saying is that the vocabulary in the Western Arctic for Denendeh for people who do not speak any other language except their own language, this is a very common word. That has always been the practice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Thank you. Are there any further general comments? Mr. Kilabuk.

**MR. KILABUK:** (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As an aboriginal person I would like to make a comment regarding this issue. The understanding that I have -- I am learning a lot more about this issue. A few years ago, perhaps in 1964, I was becoming familiar with the government's system and it has been 25 years since I have been hearing about political issues. Ever since then I have not seen any land claims settled or the Nunavut territory has not come to reality as of yet. I think the obstacle that we face today is that we have to have a foundation, namely constitutional and political development. Even though the Nunavut may become a reality some day, I think the legislation is the obstacle that we have to conquer. We have to be actively involved in forming the constitutional and political development in the Northwest Territories.

I am very proud to say that this is being discussed today and I think this is a very good head start in tackling this major issue that we are facing today. Even though we have a debate on this issue we seem to be progressing very well. In the Commissioner's Opening Address he mentioned that he did not have good words to say -- in the meeting today I think we are coming up with very good suggestions as to how we should go about this constitutional reform. We all know that the aboriginal people in the NWT have great strength and have great ideas as to how we should create our Territories.

I think that the government knows that we have all kinds of resources in our land. There is energy and zinc and other minerals in our land. I think that is the reason why the federal government is hesitating to proceed with the land claims in the NWT, even though we are capable of handling our own government.

#### **Input From Constituents Needed**

I appreciate the fact that this is being discussed today so that we can remind the government and our people to go forward

with this issue. On behalf of my constituents I wish to express my gratitude that this is being discussed and when we have our constituencies backing us we have a stronger voice in whatever we have to discuss in the Legislature. I always have to inform my constituents about what is happening in the Legislature and this is the subject that I will be discussing with my constituents at a later date. I think we have to have community input when we are going to tackle this constitutional reform since we were elected by our constituents.

Mr. Chairman, these were the concerns that I wanted to raise and I am quite happy about the way things are happening in this debate about the constitutional development. I am glad that this was mentioned in the Commissioner's Address now that we are able to discuss it further. I am sure in the future we can continue to discuss these major issues that are important to us. Perhaps in the years to come people will talk it over in the Legislative Assembly and I think this is a very good issue that is being debated today. We all gave very good input to this and I think this is a very good start. I do not think we would have discussed this at all if it was not mentioned in the Commissioner's Opening Address. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Thank you. Tabled Document 1-91(1), Speech from the Throne. Is this committee agreed that the matter is concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

--Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** Thank you. What is the wish of the committee now? Mr. Pedersen, I did not hear the motion, sorry. Mr. Pedersen.

**MR. PEDERSEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):** There is a motion on the floor which is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. I will now report progress.

#### ITEM 18: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**MR. SPEAKER:** I will call the House back to order. Item 18, report of committee of the whole. The honourable Member for High Arctic.

**MR. PUDLUK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering CR 1-91(1) and Tabled Document 1-91(1) and wishes to report that Tabled Document 1-91(1) is now concluded. Your committee now wishes to report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** You have heard the report of the chairman of committee of the whole. Are you agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

--Agreed

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 19, third reading of bills. Item 20, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the special committee on constitutional reform immediately after adjournment this evening. Meetings for Friday, February 15th, at 9:00 a.m.

#### ITEM 20: ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of the day for Friday, February 15th.

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. Petitions
10. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
11. Tabling of Documents
12. Notices of Motion
13. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
14. Motions
15. First Reading of Bills
16. Second Reading of Bills
17. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters: Committee Report 1-91(1)
18. Report of Committee of the Whole
19. Third Reading of Bills
20. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until 10:00 a.m., Friday, February 15th, 1991.

--ADJOURNMENT

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Publications Clerk, Department of Culture and Communications  
Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, N.W.T.  
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