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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1991

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

--Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Richard Nerysoo): Orders of the day for Friday, February 22, 1991. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife North. The honourable Member for Baffin Central, point of order.

MR. KILABUK: (Translation) Mr. Speaker, we do not have the earpieces here. I would like one of the Pages to bring us the earpieces, please.

MR. SPEAKER: I will just remind the honourable Members that the matter was not a point of order; it was a point of privilege. We will now proceed back to orders. Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife North.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Ministers' Statement 9-91(1): GNWT Intervention In Alberta Versus Friends Of The Oldman

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Mr. Speaker, I have an update on our intervention in the case of Alberta versus the Friends of the Oldman River Society, which was heard at the Supreme Court of Canada this past Tuesday and Wednesday.

In 1988 an environmental group from southern Alberta, called Friends of the Oldman River Society, started an action in federal court to force the federal government to follow its environmental assessment review process guidelines made under the federal Department of the Environment Act. The Oldman dam is a provincially owned mega-project intended to provide irrigation to the dry land farming areas of southern Alberta.

All of the parties involved in that court action agreed that the environmental assessment review process guidelines had not been followed. Their positions were different, however, in that the federal government argued that it was not necessary to follow them. The Province of Alberta intervened in the action and supported Canada's position. Alberta's position is that the Alberta-owned project should not be subject to federal review.

Groups Try To Force Environmental Studies

What the guidelines order requires is that when an area of federal decision-making responsibility is impacted, the federal government must conduct an environmental screening for potential environmental effects. If there are significant effects, then formal hearings must be held.

At the trial, the Friends of the Oldman River Society lost their bid to force the federal government to follow the guidelines. They appealed that decision successfully to the court of appeal. Federal areas of responsibility include fisheries, navigable waters, and Indians and Indian lands. The court found that the environmental impact of the project could affect those areas, and that there should have been an environmental assessment. They ordered the federal

government to do it.

The federal government and the Province of Alberta appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada. The general issue before the Supreme Court were, first, whether the federal government has the constitutional powers to enact the guidelines; and second, whether the federal government is required to follow the guidelines here.

Meanwhile, in 1990, an Edmonton-based environmental group, called Friends of the North, began an action against the federal government to force them to do an environmental assessment review process of the Daishowa pulp mill. The Government of the Northwest Territories intervened in support. The federal government, supported by Alberta and Daishowa, obtained a court order in December 1990 to delay the Daishowa hearing until after the Supreme Court decision in the Friends of the Oldman River case.

The Government of the Northwest Territories intervened in the Oldman dam case at the Supreme Court of Canada. We decided that if the Supreme Court of Canada was going to potentially dismantle the environmental assessment review process guidelines, it would be harmful to our position in the Daishowa case. We saw that it was important to bring our perspective to the court. Review processes like the ALPAC and Kiggavik ones have produced significant positive changes to development proposals. The environmental assessment review process review is the only environmental process available in the Northwest Territories.

The federal government position is that the guidelines order is constitutional but the order itself does not require that it be applied. Our position is that the guidelines order is constitutional and ought to be followed by the federal government.

Sixteen other parties were interveners in the matter heard by the Supreme Court of Canada. They can be broken down into three groups. The first group is composed of the provincial governments which all, except Manitoba, supported Alberta's constitutional position. The second group is composed of environmental groups which all supported the constitutionality of the guidelines and supported forcing the federal government to conduct a review. The third group, including aboriginal organizations from the Northwest Territories, supported the constitutionality of the guidelines and argued also that the federal government had a duty through Treaty 7, and its fiduciary responsibilities to Indians, to conduct a review.

So as you can see, there are a number of different agendas being brought forward in this case, and that is why we thought it was very important that we intervene to make sure that our perspective was brought to bear on the Supreme Court.

One implication in this matter is that if the guidelines are dismantled in any way, it will lessen their usefulness as an environmental assessment tool, both within the Northwest Territories and on upstream projects. There are presently no other assessment tools, although Bill C-78, a new federal

environmental law, is a possible replacement -- and I want to emphasize that is not yet clear -- if it gets through the federal legislative process. Another implication of the decision to come is that the Supreme Court of Canada could make further statements about the fiduciary duties of the federal government to native people within the context of environmental protection.

The case was argued before the full nine Judges of the Supreme Court of Canada. The court, after considering all arguments, reserved judgment. We expect a judgment by the summer, and at this moment the outcome is very difficult to predict. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Kivallivik.

Ministers' Statement 10-91(1): 1991 Canada Games

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Minister responsible for the Canada Games, I would like to provide to the Legislature, information on the Northwest Territories' involvement in the Canada Winter Games that began in Prince Edward Island on February 17, 1991, and will continue through March 2, 1991.

I am pleased to inform the Assembly that one of the largest teams ever will represent the NWT in the 1991 Canada Games. It is with equal pride that I advise you that of the 82 athletes and coaches to represent the NWT, nearly 40 per cent are residents of communities outside Yellowknife. This fact alone signals that our initiatives to develop sport programs and elite athletes in all areas of the NWT are beginning to bear fruit.

In the first week of the competition, Mr. Speaker, NWT athletes will compete in the sports of badminton, biathlon, squash and ladies curling. In week two we have representation in men's curling, cross country skiing, figure skating, ringette and speed skating.

As Minister responsible for the Canada Winter Games, I was pleased to be able to travel to Charlottetown this past week to represent the government at the opening ceremonies. On behalf of this Assembly, I extended our best wishes to the athletes and encouraged them to work for their personal best. In carrying on the tradition of being good ambassadors for the North, Team NWT will, I am sure, make us all proud.

Just an aside, Mr. Speaker. We do now have one bronze medal which is the best we have done since 1983.

--Applause

I know you will join me in wishing our young athletes the best of luck in their competition with the best young athletes from across Canada. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife North.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Mr. Speaker, I seek permission to give a very short emergency statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Proceed.

Ministers' Statement 11-91(1): Absence Of Ministers In The House

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: I would like to inform the House that the Government Leader and the Deputy

Government Leader are not here today, and that the Hon. Nellie Cournoyea will be acting as Government Leader for today and will take any questions that were meant for either Mr. Kakwi or Mr. Patterson. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Environmental Impact Of Pulp Mills

MR. WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not think that we can ever say too much about environmental concerns and the subject of pollution. As is so often the case, it is not we, the residents of the North, who are responsible for the mess caused to our air, to our water and to our land. Often it is either voluntary, involuntary, or deliberate, or even subtly brought upon us.

Take the logging industry for example, Mr. Speaker, in the boreal forest. The first major impact came from the search for furs and with the discovery of minerals, and the eventual settlement that came out of these two major industries. The need for wood grew through the use of timbers for mines, for fuel for the steamboats, and the fact that the growing population required heat. Yet in spite of all that use, that was nothing compared to the clear cutting in northern Alberta and British Columbia for the pulp and paper industry. Unfortunately, the industry is attractive to the local economy. Interest groups lobby hard for jobs that will result from all of this offshore money that is available and waiting to be spent. It is jobs that are the prime concern, not the effects downstream. I believe that in some cases interest groups will ignore potentially hazardous conditions in favour of economical opportunity.

Peace River in Alberta is a good example, Mr. Speaker. When Daishowa paper mill was being built, there were few, if any, concerns raised and few, if any, were concerned enough with the water quality or the air quality in the immediate area to stop construction. Now that the mill is being built and \$550 million spent, they are expressing shock from the smell and from the water quality in the river.

I believe the same fate awaits the residents of the Athabasca area where the ALPAC mill will soon be built. I believe that all is not going to be well.

Takashi Saito, the chairman of the Daishowa paper mill in Peace River, said that it was compared to "a flower growing in an untouched northern frontier... Now the flower has truly blossomed." Well, that is some flower, Mr. Speaker, and that is some blossom they have got.

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

Member's Statement On Nuisance Ravens

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Always on a Friday, after a long week, we try to find something rather interesting to talk about and sometimes they seem to be very small things. But this morning we discussed in ajauqtit, just for a very short time, an issue raised in City Hall about ravens. Apparently the people in City Hall find these little animals such a nuisance that they want to destroy them. I know some Members have been upset because they deface the front of the building in which we work and some Members, of course, from other places, say, "Well, they are ravens from our community coming into Yellowknife to tell you exactly what we think about you." So when we discussed this whole issue of

a plan to get rid of ravens, several Members said that is one of the problems. When we see something we do not like we like to destroy it. Suddenly something that started off as being funny ended up being something very serious.

What we are saying today, and there are a lot of young people here today, is that it is so easy to say, "Here is a problem. Let us just blast it out of the water. Let us get rid of it," whereas we have very smart people in this world that enable us to go to the moon and do all kinds of wonderful things.

So I am going to suggest to Madam Cournoyea today, who is in the place of the Government Leader, that she tell him that maybe this is one problem that the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories could solve. Instead of just having people with guns and traps, they could say, "This is an interesting and intriguing problem," and maybe with the brains that we have, we can solve it simply by using a little bit of what is up here instead of just simply taking a gun and shooting these creatures that, although they may frighten you from time to time and make a mess here and there, really, you know, they are one of God's creatures and we could find a better solution. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Members' statements.

Prior to proceeding with the next item, I wish to introduce to the Members of this House, guests in our gallery, the grade five class from Mildred Hall Elementary School, with their teacher, Bill Strain.

---Applause

Item 4, returns to oral questions. Returns to oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return To Question O41-91(1): Repairs To Fort Providence Senior Citizens Home

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, I have a return to the question asked by Mr. Gargan on February 15, related to the repairs required to the Fort Providence senior citizens home. The repairs required in the Fort Providence seniors' residence, associated with condensation occurring in the ceiling spaces through an oversight of the corporation, was not included in the annual maintenance and improvement budget for the current fiscal year. To address this omission, my officials have requested an estimate of the cost of repairs required from the Fort Providence Housing Association so that the repairs can be carried out in the next fiscal year. As we discussed yesterday, the repairs to the ceiling will be done at that time.

A requirement to replace some of the furnishing in the home will also be addressed, as the association will be identifying in its capital budget some of the older furniture to be replaced at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Returns to oral questions. The honourable Member for Amittuq.

Further Return To Question O27-91(1): Sealskin Subsidies For Hunters

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Arlooktoo on February 15, regarding sealskin subsidies for hunters. The honourable Member is correct that the Department of Renewable Resources provides a subsidy to harvesters selling

sealskins. At present, the subsidies are issued once a year as part of the fur incentive grant program, which is NWT-wide. It is a considerable administrative job to compile and review the thousands of records for fur and sealskin sales from across the NWT and issue cheques to individual harvesters. I can understand that harvesters would like more immediate returns under this program and the department will be reviewing payment methods and schedules. However, there are more basic concerns with the present program which need to be examined. The sealskin subsidy was started when sealskin prices were depressed and it was anticipated that prices would recover. As we are all aware, the prices have continued to fall to the point where now there is virtually no demand for the hides. The department will continue to pay sealskin subsidies for this year but is looking at alternate ways to assist Eastern Arctic harvesters in the future. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Returns to oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput.

Further Return To Question O34-91(1): Follow-Up Action On Meeting Concerning Fort Simpson Hospital

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Sibbeston on February 15. Mr. Speaker, I made a commitment to this Assembly to return with more information resulting from my recent meetings with the village and Dene councils in Fort Simpson to discuss health delivery concerns.

I can report that a three year arrangement has been made for a physician to provide services in the Fort Simpson area for eight months of each year. The contract for 1991-92 has been signed and the physician, Dr. Wezelman, commenced duties in Fort Simpson on January 4, 1991. Regular visits are part of his duties, which means that when he is in the settlements there will be no physician in Fort Simpson. When Dr. Wezelman is away for longer periods, coverage will be provided by a locum-physician.

I believe this longer-term arrangement will be more satisfactory for the Fort Simpson area since it will provide for greater continuity of care. With the objective of continuity in mind, every effort will be made to keep the number of replacement physicians to a minimum. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Returns to oral questions. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Aivilik.

ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question O107-91(1): Number Of Athletes From Each Region Attending Canada Games

MR. ERNERK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission I would like to direct this question to the Minister responsible for the Canada Games 1991, with regard to his statement this morning.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister indicates that nearly 40 per cent are residents coming from communities outside of Yellowknife. I wonder if he could give me a breakdown as to where these athletes are coming from, in terms of regions in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

Return To Question O107-91(1): Number Of Athletes From Each Region Attending Canada Games

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes indeed, as I said, it is one of the most notable successes of

these games, that this is the largest ever representation from outside of Yellowknife. In fact, the Member's constituency has the third highest number of athletes. The breakdown is: one from Baker Lake; one from Fort Liard; four from Coral Harbour; two from Arviat; one from Aklavik; one from Clyde River; two from Coppermine; 16 from Hay River; one from Fort Good Hope; one from Inuvik; two from Rankin Inlet; and one from Fort Smith. Mr. Speaker, 12 of these athletes are from what we call the Nunavut, or Eastern Arctic area. This is the largest ever representation from the Eastern Arctic at any Canada Games since their beginning. It signals some major successes developing in our programs.

I would also like to mention the one bronze medal that we did attain came from Mr. Pollard's constituency of Hay River. The Hay River biathlon athletes have done very well in the competition.

Obviously we are doing something right, and when I can see six people coming from the constituency of Aivilik to compete in an elite competition in southern Canada, then we know that things are definitely improving. Thank you.

--Applause

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

Question O108-91(1): Date Of Last Survey On Bowhead Whales

MR. KILABUK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources. It has not really been our concern in the past, talking about bowhead whales. If there has been a survey done, I wonder if he could tell me the last time this survey was done.

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

Return To Question O108-91(1): Date Of Last Survey On Bowhead Whales

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They are doing some research on the bowhead whales, which is done by the federal government and also by the Canadian Wildlife Federation, but as of today the Canadian government has told us that there are not enough bowhead whales to give out quotas to the communities or to the NWT. That is what I have been told in the past. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member for Baffin Central, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question O108-91(1): Date Of Last Survey On Bowhead Whales

MR. KILABUK: (Translation) He did not answer my question. When was the last time they did the survey? That was the question, but he did not answer my question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Amittuq.

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will take the question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member is taking the question as notice. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho.

Question O109-91(1): Proposed Amendments To Firearms Legislation

MR. GARGAN: (Translation) I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Renewable Resources. The government from Ottawa is talking about the amount of ammunition used in guns. I would like to ask the Minister when they will be finished this study on this project and when they will be finished with the paper they are working on, on this matter. Thank you.

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

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure of the question. I wonder if the Member could clarify the study further? Thank you.

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

MR. GARGAN: Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I will ask my question in English. Mr. Speaker, this past summer there was concern with regard to the gun laws in Canada. I believe that the federal government is in the process of amending or changing this gun law so that, I believe, the amount of ammunition that you can have in a gun at any given time will be reduced, I believe, to one. You can only have one shell in a gun, or something to that effect. It only takes one bullet to kill something. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not this is going to be in effect or whether or not the government has taken another position on that.

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

Return To Question O109-91(1): Proposed Amendments To Firearms Legislation

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The proposed amendment by the federal government to amend the Criminal Code's firearms provision is on the table of the federal government's agenda. There was a committee struck of the federal Parliamentarians to look into the proposed bill, and we have no information at this point on the legislation being placed. The proposed amendment calls for legislation to restrict the amount of ammunition that could be in the magazine of a gun. Also, it calls for mandatory firearm safety training, and testing will be required prior to issuing a firearm acquisition certificate for the first-time firearm acquisition holders.

As the bill is not passed, we have no information as to when this bill will be in effect. So far we have submitted written comments, through our Minister of Justice, the Hon. Michael Ballantyne, to the federal Justice Department on our concerns. They have been in the committee's hands for quite some time and I will keep the House informed as to the development of the bill. Thank you.

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

Question O110-91(1): Documentation For Old Age Pensions

MR. NINGARK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Social Services. During the session last year my question concerning old age pensions was that in some communities, especially in Gjoa Haven, there have been some problems with their birth certificates. I wonder if the Minister could check into this with her staff to see if something has been done. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Slave River.

Return To Question O110-91(1): Documentation For Old Age Pensions

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was under the impression that the department had looked into assisting those people to produce documents or statutory declarations, but if there are any particular additional individuals, I would be pleased to take their names from the Member and advise the department to address that. Thank you.

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

MR. NINGARK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, when I travelled to Gjoa Haven not too long ago I was told that at least one, or maybe both of them, were still not receiving the old age pension. I would urge you, Madam Minister, to check into this with your staff in Gjoa Haven and deal with the matter accordingly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I was not quite sure that that was a question; it was more direction to the Minister than it was a question. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question O110-91(1): Documentation For Old Age Pensions

MR. NINGARK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It is Friday today. I wonder if Madam Minister could check this very serious matter within the next week. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question O110-91(1): Documentation For Old Age Pensions

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, if the Member is willing to give us the particular cases, we will look into them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot West.

Question O111-91(1): Future Development On Rivers Designated Under The Heritage River System

MR. PEDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. In his lead-in remarks the other day he mentioned a number of rivers that were being considered for designation under the heritage river system, and one of those was the Coppermine River. Could the Minister tell me, when a river is designated under this heritage river system, does this interfere in any way with possible future developments on the river such as fishing or hydro?

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

Return To Question O111-91(1): Future Development On Rivers Designated Under The Heritage River System

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you. Fishing and activities like that, no, but potentially hydro, yes. What having a heritage river does is, in consultation with the community and probably in the Coppermine area, with the TFN, a development plan for the river is prepared to try and preserve at least some of the more outstanding sites and scenic views.

So there is a potential that there may be some problems with some hydro development.

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

Question O112-91(1): GNWT Support For Bowhead Whale Harvesting

MR. ERNERK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources and one of my colleagues from Baffin, regarding the bowhead whales. Since we are both Inuit, I will be supporting him regarding bowhead whales. The GNWT, are they supporting having a bowhead whale quota? (Translation ends)

I will repeat it in English. My question is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources. Does the GNWT support the harvesting of bowhead whales on a limited basis? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question O112-91(1): GNWT Support For Bowhead Whale Harvesting

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, of course the territorial government supports the harvesting of bowhead whales, if the quota could be allowed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member for Aivilik, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question O112-91(1): GNWT Support For Bowhead Whale Harvesting

MR. ERNERK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary, and it is in regard to the quotas placed by the Government of Canada with regard to the harvesting of bowhead whales. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister could obtain legal opinion as to whether or not the Government of Canada has the power, the authority, to establish quotas for bowhead whales and other animals, especially for subsistence living purposes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question O112-91(1): GNWT Support For Bowhead Whale Harvesting

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With regard to the bowhead whale harvesting in the Eastern Arctic, it is the position of the federal government that the species are still endangered in the Eastern Arctic. I will attempt to get the legal opinion at the Member's request. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South.

Question O113-91(1): Report On Disturbance At Yellowknife Correctional Centre

MR. WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question I would like to direct to the Minister responsible for Social Services. It deals with the question I asked her last week about the report that is being undertaken that deals with the disturbance at the Yellowknife Correctional Centre on January 1st. The Minister indicated that she was not going to make this public. I would like to ask her whether or not this report has cleared cabinet now and when will this report be made

public?

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

Return To Question O113-91(1): Report On Disturbance At Yellowknife Correctional Centre

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to advise the Member that I did receive the official report on my desk on February 15 and have not yet discussed it with my cabinet colleagues and have not decided as to whether or not this report will be a public document. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question O113-91(1): Report On Disturbance At Yellowknife Correctional Centre

MR. WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, because this report came to her on the 15th and because today is now the 22nd of the month, what priority is her department taking, or with her, that this be read and discussed and the public made aware of what took place there, and what kinds of recommendations are going to come out of this? What priority are they placing on that report?

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

Further Return To Question O113-91(1): Report On Disturbance At Yellowknife Correctional Centre

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure the Member is aware that there is a process for issues to be dealt with in cabinet and that we do request items that we feel are necessary to be discussed. There is a process to put it on the cabinet agenda, and at times, I can tell the Member, it is difficult to get our items on as quickly as the Member may feel that we can process them.

I do want to let the Member know that in respect to the recommendations on the report, I have discussed the report with my department officials and we will be trying to address the concerns that were brought forth to us in the report. However, I want to advise the Member that it is certainly not a report that is going to be shelved and forgotten about. We do place this on a priority. We have already taken immediate steps to correct some of the area that has been damaged in the correctional centre, or attempt to correct the areas that have been damaged in the correctional centre.

It is not an issue that we will drag our feet on. We are very, very restricted for space in YCC and the Member, I am sure, is aware that the damage done by the inmates at YCC placed an extra bit of pressure on us in obtaining beds than we had initially anticipated. I am sure that the Member is also aware that once the disturbance at YCC happened, we took immediate steps to transfer some of the inmates so that we could meet the demands that were placed upon us in the correctional system to ensure that inmates were looked after that were normally housed in the area that they had damaged as a result of the disturbance.

I want to advise the Member that we are trying to address this issue but it has only been one week since the report was placed on my desk. I intend to discuss it, in the future, with cabinet and to follow up on the recommendations and try to meet the recommendations that have been requested for us to look into. Thank you.

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

Question O114-91(1): GNWT Running A Surplus Store In Yellowknife

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I very rarely give notice of a question but my question to the Minister of Government Services is this, Mr. Speaker: The government now runs a surplus store and you can go shopping there. It is open on Friday afternoons. I would like to ask the Minister for Government Services, under what government policy does the government run a store to sell surplus stuff?

MR. WHITFORD: Really? Where is it? We want to go.

---Laughter

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

Return To Question O114-91(1): GNWT Running A Surplus Store In Yellowknife

HON. TOM BUTTERS: I thank the honourable Member for giving me notice of the question because I did not know that this was going on, either, and I have since briefed myself on the situation. I notice that in the recent Yellowknifer there was an advertisement saying, "Friday is government surplus cash and carry day."

---Laughter

Although we are not very specific on what we sell, I understand that we might be sought after for false advertising because I am told, that really, it is junk that is being offered.

The authority that the department is operating under is that we are able to dispose of goods that are no longer serviceable or are surplus to our requirement, by sale, transfer or donation. I think Members are aware that on a number of occasions the government has, when approached by an MLA, sought to turn such goods over to non-profit organizations.

The method of disposal available to the department include the following, after the Commissioner, or his delegate, authorizes the disposal of material that is damaged, obsolete, or surplus to the GNWT requirements by: transfer to another region or department; sale through public auction; trade-in; sale, transfer or donation to territorial non-profit organizations or local residents; sale through negotiations to northern residents; or transfer to the Government of Canada.

Where such materials are identified, I understand that they are first listed on the electronic bulletin board, on HP desk, so that if other departments desire the goods they can pick them up.

The major objective driving the department is to reduce space in the warehouses that we manage, because this stuff builds up and builds up. At one time, I believe, the department held it for the auction sale that occurs here every year. The material sold is material that is generated from the operation in Yellowknife and I believe the revenue realized each month is something in the order of \$1000. The pricing that is put on the material has been developed as a result of prices received in the past for goods that were sold at auctions.

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

Supplementary To Question O114-91(1): GNWT Running A Surplus Store In Yellowknife

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One man's junk may be another man's treasure, Mr. Speaker. Although this so-called junk was only bought for use in Yellowknife, it was taxpayers' money that was used to buy it. Since we have so many people from out of town who do not live in Yellowknife, could the Minister tell us whether the same kinds of opportunities exist in their areas so that they can go shopping there too?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Inuvik.

Further Return To Question O114-91(1): GNWT Running A Surplus Store In Yellowknife

HON. TOM BUTTERS: The practice that the Member has alluded to has been carried on here for some two years and it has been carried out in two communities, Fort Smith and Inuvik, more recently. We are offering this surplus material to residents of other communities as well. I imagine it might proliferate if it becomes a very popular activity.

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

Question O115-91(1): Posting Of Bond Re Participation In Expo '92

MR. ZOE: Mr. Speaker, in the last few days I have been enquiring about Expo '92 in Seville, Spain. I questioned the Minister of Finance and I questioned the Government Leader, particularly with regard to finances. Today I want to make my question more specific and direct, and I will direct it to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. I would like to ask the Minister if our government has posted a bond for our participation in Expo '92 in Seville, Spain.

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

Return To Question O115-91(1): Posting Of Bond Re Participation In Expo '92

HON. GORDON WRAY: No, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question O116-91(1): Medical Supplies Shortage, Coral Harbour

MR. ERNERK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Health. During our meeting with the hamlet council of Coral Harbour on January 29, 1991, in which the Minister of Social Services was a participant, a concern with regard to medical supplies was mentioned to us in terms of shortage of medical supplies and in terms of no nurse replacement when the nurse leaves the community. I wonder if those problems have been solved, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I would have to look into that specific matter. I am not aware of the day-to-day individual shortages in the area, so I would have to check into that and return with a reply at a later date. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the honourable Member taking the question as notice?

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is taking the question as notice. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot.

Question O117-91(1): Monthly Clothing Allowance, Gjoa Haven

MR. NINGARK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After the next election I may require the assistance of Social Services...

--Laughter

...so my question is directed to the Minister of Social Services. Madam Minister, I received a phone call from Gjoa Haven saying they no longer receive the monthly clothing allowance there. Is the monthly clothing allowance excluded from the social assistance payments? Thank you.

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

Return To Question O117-91(1): Monthly Clothing Allowance, Gjoa Haven

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Mr. Speaker, not that I am aware of. However, I am aware that the departmental social workers in most communities supply the monthly clothing allowance to the recipients, either on a quarterly basis, or I believe in the spring or toward wintertime again. Maybe this has been happening in Gjoa Haven, going from a monthly basis to either a semi-annual or quarterly basis. I will check into the situation to determine how the recipients are dealt with in Gjoa Haven. Thank you.

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

Question O118-91(1): GNWT Rental Increase, Fort Providence

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to Mr. Ballantyne with regard to rents. I did receive a letter from a teacher in Fort Providence who has a concern that his rent will go up by 90 per cent, effective April 1st, because he has no other choice but to live in the three bedroom house, I believe, since no other accommodation is available. I would like to ask the Minister if, in fact, that will happen even in communities where they do not have a choice. I could see that is a privilege in Yellowknife or other larger communities where there are single units, but you do not have that opportunity in a small community like Fort Providence.

I would also like to know if, for example, for the person who pays \$560, is the subsidy included in that so that it may be over \$1000 that he is paying? Does that include the \$450 subsidy?

MR. SPEAKER: I just want to remind honourable Members to pose one question when asking questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I believe that question was partially asked of the Government Leader the other day, and he had replied in a manner that he would further look at the accommodation directive that has been put out. I would like to take that question under notice and respond to it at a later time.

My recollection is that the average increases were somewhere about 23 per cent but it would vary according to the individual

that was being addressed in terms of over-accommodation. However, I will take that under notice. If the Member would like to provide the specifics, we can answer that question as it relates to the individual, as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is taking the question as notice. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River.

Question O119-91(1): Funding For Economic Development Officers For Small Communities

MR. POLLARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance. Yesterday the committee of the whole passed a resolution with regard to the Economic Development department freeing up some money to hire development officers in small communities, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Minister of Finance is, will he get together with Mr. Wray and discuss this issue to see if it can be implemented this year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question O119-91(1): Funding For Economic Development Officers For Small Communities

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Mr. Speaker, this government is always open to reasoned discussion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question O119-91(1): Funding For Economic Development Officers For Small Communities

MR. POLLARD: Perhaps a reasonable reply is what I am looking for, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I misunderstood, but was that a yes answer, Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Yellowknife North.

Further Return To Question O119-91(1): Funding For Economic Development Officers For Small Communities

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: I detect an element of paranoia here. Yes.

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

Question O120-91(1): Vacant Superintendent Of Municipal Affairs Position, Rae

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. I have not been dealing with that department for quite a while. Mr. Speaker, the position of the superintendent of municipal affairs in the Rae area office has been vacant for a number of months now. I would like to ask the Minister, why has this position not been filled yet?

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

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the vacancy and the time taken to find somebody to fill it. I will have to take the question as notice and reply early next week.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is taking the question as notice. Oral questions. The

honourable Member for Yellowknife South.

Question O121-91(1): GNWT Rental Of Office Space

MR. WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A lot of the questions here today dealt with space, government money and MACA, so I am going to combine all three in a question which I am going to ask to the Minister of Public Works, under whose jurisdiction the rental of space comes. It has come to my attention, Mr. Speaker, that a major department has recently moved to new quarters. It has also come to my attention that there was never a tender issued or let for the rental of space for this major department. I would like to ask the Minister if this is, in fact, the case, that this major department has moved, and ask her whether or not tenders were ever put out to invite people to submit proposals or anything like that for space for this major department.

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

Return To Question O121-91(1): GNWT Rental Of Office Space

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, first of all, there were no tenders put out for this major space that was required to permit the consolidation of a department. A survey was taken in town to see what was available to put the consolidated department together. The requirement was for 24,500 square feet, and in surveying the town, there was only one building that had that particular space available. The survey was done previous to negotiating a contract with the particular development company to lease that space. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question O121-91(1): GNWT Rental Of Office Space

MR. WHITFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am curious because I do not imagine that these needs suddenly appear. I can understand if the building burned down, or something like that, you are going to need an awful lot of space very quickly, but is there any process that this government uses to ascertain, on a yearly basis, or a five year plan, what their needs are going to be in order to submit this to the public or to the business community, so that the business community has an opportunity to meet the needs that this government might have? Is there a policy that directs Public Works to survey and ascertain their needs and to follow a sequence of events that will eventually lead the business community to participate in this survey? Is there anything like that?

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

Further Return To Question O121-91(1): GNWT Rental Of Office Space

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, as the Member is aware, and other Members, over the last while there has been quite a bit of pressure not to increase office leasing in Yellowknife and we have gone through a very strenuous exercise in the last couple of years on just what the Legislative Assembly feels that they can permit in expansion of office requirements here in Yellowknife. We have a seven year plan that had outlined what their requirements were. A little later we were asked to cut it down again -- you know, spread it over and cut down on the stated future requirements. It has been quite an exercise over the last period of time. The Department of Public Works responds to the client

departments on what their requirements and needs are. Certainly in this area, it took quite a long time to finally decide exactly what was going to be permitted in expansion and office requirements. As the Member is quite aware, the Department of Public Works had come forward over the last several years on several occasions to brief the Members on what the overall requirements were. They are probably also aware that we have been requested to change that on a number of occasions in order to cut down what we would be spending on office space.

Mr. Speaker, I think at this point in time some of the major companies have expanded considerably in office space, mainly because they had predicted the normal growth of government requirements and as a result, there is quite a lot of office space here and they are presently seeking tenants. So they have projected in terms of what they feel the government is going to require and subsequently we have cut back quite a lot on what will be permitted in terms of new growth of office space. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question O121-91(1): GNWT Rental Of Office Space

MR. WHITFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am afraid the Minister's reply has left me even more confused as to what policy or what practice is followed. I realize that she may have indicated to the Members how much space they need, but we are not the business community. What I am asking is, if there is that much space in the city, then perhaps it should have gone to tender so all these other people could have had a chance to submit. What I am asking is whether or not her department has a policy that determines this space and when it is determined and after it is passed through this House that, yes, they need the space and they will get the money for it, then the next step is to put this out for tender. That is the question I have asked. Is this done? Is there a formula or format that they follow so that it is known, not in this House only, or in the committees, as to whether or not you will get the money? The question is whether or not the public knows what the government's requirements are so they can forecast their building. Is there a policy that follows that format?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Nunakput.

Further Return To Question O121-91(1): GNWT Rental Of Office Space

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I was trying to answer the question that was put to us whether we had a long-range plan that we could produce a projection. I am sorry, I guess I could have been more specific. First of all, we normally put out to tender and advertise in newspapers. We could go to a proposal call. We could go to a negotiated contract. In this particular instance with the requirement that was put forward to the Department of Public Works for a consolidated office space where everyone could be together, we did a survey and it was ascertained that at this point in time we would go to a negotiated contract because there was only one place that had the type of space that was requested by the client department. So we negotiated it after we did a survey to see whether we should spend the money to go to a public tender. The request was to acquire the space. At this point in time, in the terms of the negotiated contract, the process then would be to take it to cabinet and the information was presented to cabinet and the department got permission to negotiate the contract. That was the process on the negotiated contract. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Just prior to proceeding, I would just like to

continue to remind Members about supplementary questions and that they should contain at least a short preamble to seeking or posing those questions to the honourable Members. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question O121-91(1): GNWT Rental Of Office Space

MR. WHITFORD: Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for rambling on, but would the Minister be able to provide this House with the list of places that her department looked at for space?

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

Further Return To Question O121-91(1): GNWT Rental Of Office Space

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Certainly, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question O122-91(1): Consolidation Of Government Records

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Still on the subject of space, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Government Services whether in fact they are in the process of consolidating all government records that take up a tremendous amount of space, so you can take advantage of modern technology, to put it in a format that is easily accessible and to save this government an awful lot of money.

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

HON. TOM BUTTERS: I wonder if the Member would repeat the question, sir? Thank you.

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

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Governments create lots of records. We have been in business a long time. These records take an awful lot of space. Other governments have reduced these records to a very small space through microfiche film, all kinds of modern technology, and they save an awful lot of money in the long run. Is the government looking at that practice for implementation for our records?

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

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the government is doing more than that. We have already moved to reduce the amount of space required by records through processes such as the Member has described. I cannot provide him with the details so I will take the question as notice and give him a full reply as to how we are dealing with that question.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is taking the question as notice. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River.

Question O123-91(1): Federal Government Penalizing GNWT For Good Fiscal Management

MR. POLLARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I was in a

meeting that the federal Minister of Indian Affairs was at and he made reference to the fact, Mr. Speaker, that people who were seeking funds from him should perhaps see this territorial government, because we have a balanced budget and no accumulated deficit. I would ask Mr. Ballantyne if this is a burden to him. Does he get that same kind of thing said to him when he is discussing things with federal officials? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question O123-91(1): Federal Government Penalizing GNWT For Good Fiscal Management

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question is a good one and it is one expression of perception that has consistently come from the federal government as I have been Minister of Finance because this government, and this House, has been quite prudent in their financial affairs and I think we have run a reasonably good ship as compared to every other jurisdiction in this country. I found it always unfair that it could be somehow held against us. It has been held against us during the negotiations for the formula financing agreement that somehow or other, because we had done a good job, we should be penalized for having done that good job.

Yes, I find it frustrating and I find it hypocritical that those sorts of statements are made publicly and I think it shows the sorry state of the country where a government that has tried hard to be fiscally responsible is held up to public criticism for achieving some very, very positive and constructive ends. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question O123-91(1): Federal Government Penalizing GNWT For Good Fiscal Management

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, in that case, I wonder if the Minister of Finance would write to the federal government and tell them that we no longer wish to be penalized for good fiscal management. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question O123-91(1): Federal Government Penalizing GNWT For Good Fiscal Management

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you. I definitely appreciate that suggestion and I would be more than happy to convey that message from this government and this Legislative Assembly to the federal government.

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

Question O124-91(1): Establishing Soapstone Quarry At Kirchoffer River

MR. ERNERK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct this question to the Minister responsible for Economic Development and Tourism. It is with regard to soapstone. Firstly, I would like to thank his department for assisting the people of Coral Harbour by bringing in some soapstone by aircraft on December 28, 1990; 1300 pounds of it. Thank you.

My question to the Minister, Mr. Speaker, is, I wonder if the Minister could indicate to me and to the people of Coral Harbour whether or not he would be willing to assist them with regard to sponsoring a quarrying operation at Kirchoffer River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question O124-91(1): Establishing Soapstone Quarry At Kirchoffer River

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe I advised the Member that we had a couple of alternatives. One was that we had located this deposit at Kirchoffer River. The other was potentially bringing some stone over to Coral Harbour by boat from Rankin Inlet. I am not quite sure which one we are going to do yet. I can assure the Member, however, that this spring or summer we will assist the community of Coral Harbour to obtain soapstone for their needs. As to which one we will go with, I do not know yet; but rest assured that Coral Harbour will have soapstone by this summer.

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

Supplementary To Question O124-91(1): Establishing Soapstone Quarry At Kirchoffer River

MR. ERNERK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that answer. Can you do both?

---Laughter

It is a serious question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Kivallivik.

Further Return To Question O124-91(1): Establishing Soapstone Quarry At Kirchoffer River

HON. GORDON WRAY: I do not know if we will be able to do both. What we will determine is the quality of the stone at Kirchoffer and the price. If the quality of the stone at Kirchoffer is good and it does not have any asbestos content and the price is reasonable, I would suspect that is the preferred route. If, however, there are problems, it may be cheaper to bring it over from Rankin by boat but the options are open and we will just see what happens.

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

Question O125-91(1): Existence Of Historical Advisory Board

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Culture and Communications. I have in my possession, Mr. Speaker, a very ancient or old act regarding historical sites. There are a lot of concerns in the communities with regard to sites that are of value to the communities and they would like them protected. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he still has the historical advisory board that looks into identifying these historical sites and put them in the act, such as Marble Island and those kind of sites.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is taking the question as notice. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho.

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Social Services. It is with regard to employees who have criminal records. I understand that in some -- maybe it is Personnel. I will direct my question to Mr. Ballantyne, then.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I will ask the honourable Member to direct his question appropriately.

Question O126-91(1): GNWT Policy On Employees With Criminal Record

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the honourable Member for Nunakput, Ms. Cournoyea, regarding employees that have criminal charges. What happens to them as a result of those charges? Are they then fired or suspended? What is the policy with regard to that?

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

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that question as notice and reply at a later date. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is taking the question as notice. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South.

Question O127-91(1): Flammable Material In Hot Air Balloon

MR. WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question I would like to direct to the Minister responsible for Safety. The House is probably aware that a few weeks ago a major balloon landed in the Northwest Territories. It was abandoned and given to a community close by because of the amount of material that was involved in the making of this big balloon.

I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Safety whether or not she is aware that this material in this balloon that has been given to this community is a potential fire hazard? I understand that it is highly flammable even though it is made of aluminum. I would like to know whether or not the Minister is aware, or her department is aware of the fire potential that this material may contain.

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

HON. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take that under notice and advise the department.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is taking the question as notice. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Aivilik.

Question O128-91(1): Beach Clean-Up At Repulse Bay

MR. ERNERK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to direct my question to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. It is to do with the beach clean-up in Repulse Bay. I wonder if he has any information on that request from the hamlet of Repulse Bay, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Inuvik.

Return To Question O128-91(1): Beach Clean-Up At Repulse Bay

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Yes, I did ask the mayor, Mr. Kaunak of Repulse Bay, when I spoke with him at Rankin Inlet whether there had been any action taken on that proposal. I believe that we do not have within our budget money for that specific purpose, but I believe there is a fund available, I do not think we have had a written request from the community. Should that be received, I would imagine that some money can be identified for that purpose.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Time period for oral questions has expired. Prior to proceeding with the next item, I would like to draw to the attention of the honourable Members the presence of Chief Cece McCauley from Inuvik, in our gallery.

---Applause

Item 6, written questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South.

ITEM 6: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Question W3-91(1): Cost Of DPW's Rent Of Space In The Northwest Tower And Length Of Contract

MR. WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a written question I would like to direct to the Minister responsible for Public Works. In light of the Department of Public Works' recent renting, leasing, of 2400 square feet of space in the Northwest Tower, will the Minister provide me with the amount per square foot that this space is being rented for and the length of time that the contract entered into?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Written questions. Written questions.

Item 7, returns to written questions. Returns to written questions.

Item 8, replies to Opening Address. Replies to Opening Address.

Item 9, replies to Budget Address. Replies to Budget Address.

Item 10, petitions. Petitions.

Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Aivilik.

ITEM 12: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

MR. ERNERK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two letters that I would like to table. The first letter is Tabled Document 19-91(1), a letter written to the Hon. Nellie Cournoyea regarding the Community Education Society from the community of Rankin Inlet. The other letter is Tabled Document 20-91(1), a letter addressed to me from Bill Gawor of Rankin Inlet. The two letters are concerning the Leo Ussak Elementary School. There are health hazards to the students and teachers working at the school. This is a very big concern to the community of Rankin Inlet. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Hudson Bay. The honourable Member for Hudson Bay.

MR. CROW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Tabled Document 21-91(1), a document on request for contribution: economic co-ordinating position and other expenses, from His Worship, Peter Kattuk, the mayor of the municipality of Sanikiluaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Tabling of documents.

Item 13, notices of motion. Notices of motion.

Item 14, notices of motion for first reading of bills.

Item 15, motions.

Item 16, first reading of bills. First reading of bills.

Item 17, second reading of bills. Item 18, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Bill 7, Committee Report 2-91(1), Bills 8, 9, 11 and 12, with Mr. Gargan in the chair.

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

Bill 7, Appropriation Act, 1991-92

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gargan): The committee will come to order. We are still on Department of Economic Development and Tourism. Before we go on with the department, we will take a short recess.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): I would like to call the committee back to order. We are dealing with the main estimates for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. We are on business development. We concluded yesterday on page 17.13.

Department Of Economic Development And Tourism

Business Development, Total O And M, Agreed

Business development, total O and M, \$15,488,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Before I continue, Mr. Minister, could you introduce your witnesses for the record?

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me Mr. Dwight Noseworthy, deputy minister of Economic Development and Tourism, and Mr. Jim Kennedy, director of finance and administration.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. We will move on to the deferred item of details of grants and contributions. We deferred the contributions section of it. Contributions, Mr. Gargan.

Motion That Department Of Economic Development And Tourism Consider Increasing The STEP Program Amount Based On Demand, Carried

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this time I would like to make a motion. Mr. Chairman, the motion reads: I move that the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, under grants and contributions, consider increasing the community works program STEP, subsidized term employment program, based on requests and demand. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Mahsi cho. Your motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Basically the Financial Management Board had identified the STEP program

as a low priority and that has put a cap on increasing that amount. Also, the Minister did indicate that if they doubled it they could use that up, too. I would think there is a demand for that program and if they increase it I am sure the communities would make use of that. I am sure the Ministers through the years must have received a large number of proposals for consideration under this program, and it would seem that a lot of those have been turned down because of the limited amount of money. For this reason I am making this motion to get the support of the Members so that the Minister will be able to consider giving this particular program a boost that would certainly benefit the communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Question is being called, and the Chair does not recognize a quorum. Mr. Clerk, would you ring the bell? Thank you. The Chair recognizes a quorum. Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Contributions, Total O And M, Agreed

Contributions, total contributions, \$6,108,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

Grants And Contributions, Total O And M, Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Total grants and contributions, \$6,628,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

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

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion with respect to the details of grants and contributions. Mr. Chairman, I move that we defer details of grants and contributions to give the Department of Economic Development and Tourism an opportunity to consider my motion for change.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Mr. Gargan.

Motion To Defer Department Of Economic Development And Tourism Main Estimates, Carried

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my motion and I will make another motion. I move that we defer the Department of Economic Development and Tourism's 1991-92 main estimates.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): I have a motion on the floor to defer the O and M main estimates of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

The O and M for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism is deferred, and also the capital portion of the department was deferred yesterday, so that concludes our consideration of your department for the time being, Mr. Minister. I would like to thank the witnesses for appearing before our committee, until such time as you are called back.

I believe the next department listed for consideration is the Department of Transportation. Mr. Government House Leader.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Mr. Chairman, with the concurrence of the House, the government would ask if we could stand down temporarily the Department of Transportation budget and deal with Bill 12, the Write-Off of Assets and Debts Act, 1991.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): The committee is being asked that we stand down further consideration of the budget and move on to Bill 12. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

--Agreed

Bill 12, Write-Off Of Assets And Debts Act, 1991

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. We are dealing with Bill 12, Write-Off of Assets and Debts Act, 1991. Mr. Minister, are you prepared to make your opening remarks?

Minister's Opening Remarks

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The purpose of the Write-Off of Assets and Debts Act, 1991, is to authorize the write-off of certain debts listed in the schedule to the act. Pursuant to the Financial Administration Act, the write-off of government assets or debts exceeding \$20,000 must receive Legislative Assembly approval. The write-offs being proposed in this act will not require a new appropriation. The write-offs will be charged against allowances for bad debts which were established in previous department budgets at the time it was determined that collection of the debts would be unlikely. I provided to the standing committee on finance details of the individual debts that we are looking at writing off. With that, Mr. Chairman, I am open to any questions on the bill.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. The Member for Hay River, as chairman of the standing committee on finance, does your committee have any comments to this particular bill? Mr. Pollard.

Comments From The Standing Committee On Finance

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Chairman, the standing committee on finance has reviewed the bill and we are recommending it to the House, sir.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. General comments. Member for Kitikmeot West.

MR. PEDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the Minister could let me know -- these things that we are being asked to write off today are all from business loans from Economic Development and Tourism. A number of Members of this House, in years gone by, tried to get information on Economic Development and Tourism loans and other financial activities to the public when they occur. We have always been told that we cannot have that because there is a client/banker relationship and we can be given a rough regional breakdown of expenditures, but we cannot be given any details.

The only time we do get details is when we see the write-offs and I wonder if these write-offs are at all related back, and the individuals who authorized these loans in the first place are held in some way accountable, at least in their career advancement, as to their judgment or lack of judgment, as a result of this. I notice, for instance, two loans in the Keewatin at the same time and I would find it interesting if they were authorized by the same person. In which case, I would question his judgment. Is there, in other words, some way that you relate the lack of success in this back to the judgment that went into granting these loans?

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

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Quite frankly, in the past there was no accountability. With the new Business Credit Corporation and the strict guidelines and procedures and accountabilities, yes, there is going to be accountability. The problem for me is that most of these loans -- for example, Arctic Plumbing was done in May of 1972; Keewatin Building Systems was done in the previous administration; Kivalliq Freighting was done in the previous administration; Cooper and Sons was done in March 1973; and King William Island Enterprises goes back to 1982. In fact, none of the individuals associated with any of these loans are working for the department any longer.

Quite frankly, these represent a very small minority of the loans that we give out. I think it has to be accepted that when we are loaning money there is going to be default. There are going to be times when people default for circumstances that are beyond anyone's control. I do agree that in the past there have been problems with accountability, but hopefully with the new legislation and the way we are streamlining things in the department, we will be able to hold more people accountable than we did in the past.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. General comments. Mr. Pedersen.

MR. PEDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do appreciate those comments. It was not so much of going after somebody from the past because I realize some of these are very old. I think that with the new legislation coming in we are setting up services, not banking services, but they are similar to banking services and it is necessary that we start applying some of the same criteria. Certainly in the banking community, loans officers -- the success of the loans that they authorize is considered in their performance reviews and should be in our department, too. I have no further comment, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister for his reply.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): General comments. Honourable Member for Hay River.

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Chairman, if the Minister of Finance thinks it is appropriate, I think it would be advantageous to Members of the committee to have the briefing notes on the reasons why these businesses got into difficulty, read into the record, sir. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: We have no problem with doing that. The Minister for Economic Development and Tourism will read them into the record.

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you. This will take quite a while, so bear with us.

Arctic Plumbing

Write-off of debt, Arctic Plumbing. The outstanding debts for

write-offs stem from two separate loans from the business loan fund made to the company. In May, 1972, an initial loan of \$35,000 was made to fund the purchase of a shop. The loan was well maintained over the period until 1980. After that period, the firm ran into difficulties that eventually led to a joint business loan fund/Federal Business and Development Bank forced sale of the property in 1987. This sale raised enough funds to settle the original \$35,000 loan but did not raise sufficient funds for the three annual \$4800 insurance payments that the GNWT made to protect the assets while the firm was not in operation. These three payments and accrued interest total \$18,592.90.

In September, 1982, it was recognized that further support would be necessary for the firm to remain in operation. An additional loan of \$54,000 was provided to the firm to fund working capital requirements related to undertaking contract work that was projected to generate revenue in excess of \$100,000. Due to an economic downturn, combined with management turnover, the firm did not realize adequate funding from the contract resulting in \$33,332.43 in principal and accrued interest remaining outstanding.

All avenues of obtaining funds from this now defunct firm, and its principal, have been exhausted to the point that a write-off is being proposed.

Keewatin Building Systems

With regard to the write-off of debt, Keewatin Building Systems. In July, 1987, Keewatin Building Systems received a loan of \$50,000 to consolidate debt and provide working capital for the summer construction season. Security on the loan was obtained through a chattel mortgage on assets, a promissory note, a personal guarantee of the firm's principal, and a share pledging agreement. The latter is a security device that pledges to the GNWT shares owned by the client.

After payment of less than \$17,000 had been made, the client left Rankin Inlet, abandoning his business and his vehicle. The vehicle has been seized, based upon the chattel mortgage, and will be sold to recover funding that will be applied against the debt of the client. It is anticipated that the proceeds after storage costs are paid will be minimal.

The GNWT is in possession of the share certificates of the business. The Department of Justice is currently working to recover funds, based on the share pledge agreement. It is projected that the funds generated will be less than the outstanding debt. Write-off of debt does not relieve the debtor from the liability to eventually pay the outstanding amount. Any amounts generated from the sale of the vehicle or the share pledge agreement will be offset against the write-off of the debt. As the sale of the vehicle and the processing of the shares is expected to take some time, and as recovery of the debt from the debtor is not currently possible, it is recommended that write-off be proceeded with at the present time.

Kivalliq Freighting

In June 1984 the client received a \$40,000 business loan fund loan to purchase a freight liner to haul freight from Churchill to Rankin Inlet. A personal guarantee and a chattel mortgage on the vessel were obtained as security on the loan. Through poorer income generation than planned, partially due to mechanical problems with the vessel, payments were not made in full according to the loan agreement. After a series of amendments to the loan agreement were made to meet the client's ability to pay, it was recognized that collection was unlikely. The vessel itself deteriorated to the point that by the time it was recognized, the principal of the firm could not make payments. An amount of \$46,000 in repairs would be

required to make it operational. As a result, it is very unlikely that the vessel can be sold.

Our review indicates that the client has no other personal assets and as a pensioner cannot afford to repay the loan without undergoing severe hardship. On this basis, write-off is proposed.

Cooper And Sons Aviation

In March 1973 a \$30,000 loan was issued to Cooper and Sons Aviation to fund the purchase of an aircraft to be used for commercial purposes in the Norman Wells area. Irregular payments totalling \$17,250 were made over the next eight years. The majority of the payments went to retire accrued interest on the loan. As security for the loan, a chattel mortgage on the aircraft was obtained. Based on the overdue status of the loan in 1982, the airplane was seized for resale. The aircraft was sold in 1987, with the four thousand dollars raised applied to the outstanding interest balance.

Since 1981 no payments have been received and reviews of the debtors' financial situation indicate that no funding can be recovered to pay for the outstanding balances. On this basis, write-off is proposed.

King William Island Enterprises

In September 1982 the client received a loan of \$25,000 to provide interim financing for an Eskimo Loan Fund loan. The funds were used to establish a snowmobile parts business in Gjoa Haven. As a direct result of poor management and poor economic circumstances, income was never generated to the point that the loan principal could be paid against. Any payments that were made were utilized to retire accrued interest charges. As security on the loan, an assignment of the Eskimo Loan Fund proceeds was obtained. Due to difficulties in the client's obtaining a lease assignment for the land the business was to operate on, caused by difficulties in tracking down the previous lessor of the land, the Eskimo Loan Fund loan was never drawn on.

When the lease assignment was finally obtained a year after the GNWT loaned the funds, it was obvious that the business would not be a success. As such, the Eskimo Loan Fund refused to advance funds, which in turn left the business loan fund loan outstanding. The business has been without inventory since 1985; it is unable to continue operations; and the principals have no assets to seize.

Although the principals are working, they are supporting large families. Pursuing repayment at this time would cause severe hardship, and on this basis write-off is proposed. I believe those are the five, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Member for Hay River.

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister has some more information on the fact that a plane was sold and the proceeds amounted to some \$4000. I wonder if the Minister could tell us what kind of a plane it was. It seems awfully cheap, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. GORDON WRAY: Mr. Chairman, I do not have that information available to me but I can obtain it for the committee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Member for Hay River.

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Chairman, sometimes banks are heartless people and they pursue people to the end, until they

have every last drop of blood that they can. I am pleased to hear the Minister saying in his remarks that where there would be severe hardship caused to a person supporting a family, or people who are elderly, they are not going to pursue redeeming those loans, Mr. Chairman. It may not sound like a good business thing to say, but I think that when the government loans money it has to take some responsibility for getting those people into business and the downside is that sometimes they fail. Although I am not advocating that in every case, in cases where there is severe hardship I would ask the Minister to continue in that vein. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. General comments. Is the committee ready to go clause by clause. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Clause 1, terms. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Clause 2, write-off of debts. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Schedule 1, debts written off, \$208,962.92. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Bill as a whole. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 12, Write-Off of Assets and Debts Act, 1991, is now ready for third reading? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Thank you. Member for Natilikmiot.

MR. NINGARK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): I have a motion to report progress.

MR. ERNERK: Point of order.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): Your point of order, Mr. Ernerk.

MR. ERNERK: Mr. Chairman, I see no quorum.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Zoe): I have a motion on the floor to report progress. It is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

--Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

ITEM 19: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to call the House back to order. Item 19, report of committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Rae-Lac la Martre.

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bills 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12, and CR 2-91(1), and wishes to report progress, with one motion being adopted, and Bill 12 is now ready for third reading.

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

CLERK ASSISTANT (Ms. Perkison): (Translation) Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the standing committee on finance immediately after adjournment today. Meetings for Monday, February 25th: ajauqtit at 9:00 a.m.; the special committee on legislation at 10:00 a.m.; and Nunavut caucus at 11:30 a.m.

ITEM 21: ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of the day for Monday, February 25th.

1. Prayer
 2. Ministers' Statements
 3. Members' Statements
 4. Returns to Oral Questions
 5. Oral Questions
 6. Written Questions
 7. Returns to Written Questions
- CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**
8. Replies to Opening Address
 9. Replies to Budget Address
 10. Petitions
 11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
 12. Tabling of Documents
 13. Notices of Motion
 14. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
 15. Motions
 16. First Reading of Bills
 17. Second Reading of Bills
 18. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters: Bill 7; Committee Report 2-91(1); Bills 8, 9 and 11

19. Report of Committee of the Whole

20. Third Reading of Bills

21. Orders of the Day

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m., Monday, February 25th, 1991.

---ADJOURNMENT

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