



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 1987

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Angottitauruq, Mr. Appaqaq, Mr. Arlooktoo, Hon. Tom Butters, Hon. Michael Ballantyne, Ms Cournoyea, Hon. Tagak Curley, Mr. Erkloo, Mr. Gargan, Mrs. Lawrence, Mr. MacQuarrie, Mr. McCallum, Hon. Bruce McLaughlin, Mr. Paniloo, Hon. Dennis Patterson, Hon. Red Pedersen, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Richard, Hon. Nick Sibbeston, Hon. Don Stewart, Mr. T'Seleie, Mr. Wah-Shee, Hon. Gordon Wray

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Don Stewart): Orders of the day for Monday, March 16th. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Sibbeston.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 36-87(1): Government Leader's Statement

HON. NICK SIBBESTON: Mr. Speaker, as Government Leader, I rise to inform the House of the position that the government has taken in respect of the recent event calling into question the conduct of the Hon. Tagak Curley.

At the first appropriate moment after the matter arose, I spoke with Mr. Curley at great length about his conduct and the position that he has placed himself and the government in. As Government Leader, I suggested that he immediately tender his apologies to the honourable Members of this House. Mr. Curley made a statement of apology in the House on the very next day. In addition, Mr. Curley sent a letter of apology to Mr. Sam Gargan and to myself as Government Leader. I am of the view, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Curley has taken the appropriate action required by him in tendering his sincere apology. I am therefore satisfied that I have discharged my responsibility as Government Leader in respect of this issue and no further action is necessary on the part of myself, as Government Leader.

This matter is, however, pending before this Assembly and honourable Members will cast their votes on the motion before the House on this issue. In our system of consensus government, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Executive Council are elected by all Members of the Assembly and hold office at the pleasure of the Assembly. Since honourable Members have elected Ministers by motion of the Assembly, it only follows that they may also remove them by motion of the Assembly. In both those situations, the matter is strictly the business of the Assembly and each Member of the Assembly is entitled to vote individually. What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that we, as a government, consider the matter to be one of a free vote.

It is out of respect for this convention, which is now firmly established in our consensus form of government, that the Executive will not vote on this issue in unison, but rather as individual Members of the Legislative Assembly exercising their prerogative to elect or remove a Member from the Executive Council. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. That appears to conclude this item for today. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Appaqaq.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Sanikiluaq Youth Playing Hockey

MR. APPAQAQ: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want the Members to understand that we have tried very hard in Sanikiluaq to get the young people a place to play hockey; a hockey arena. But this has not come about. We have been trying again to get an arena and I would like to inform the Members that beginning today they are going to be playing hockey with the other northern Quebec people. This is very important to us. I would like Members of the Legislative Assembly to support the Sanikiluaq people because they are going to be playing against the northern Quebec communities and I would like the Members to support my constituency. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Appaqaq. Item 3, Members' statements. That appears to conclude Members' statements for today. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Wray.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 095-87(1): Responsibility For Delivery Service Truck Accidents

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to oral Question 095-87(1), asked by Mr. Gargan on March 3, 1987, regarding incidents involving municipal delivery service vehicles.

In response to Mr. Gargan's questions regarding incidents involving municipal delivery service vehicles, I join the Government Leader in his assurances that any accident occurring in a community where the municipality or the local council is involved is taken very seriously by this government.

I believe Mr. Gargan's questions were in reference to two incidents: one occurred in Fort Good Hope on June 20, 1986, and the other occurred in Snowdrift on June 30, 1986. I will address Mr. Gargan's questions in three parts, Mr. Speaker. First, responsibility; second, compensation; and last, measures taken to ensure the safe operation of municipal service vehicles.

First, responsibility for the operation of the vehicles in each incident lies with the owner/driver of the vehicle. In the case of Fort Good Hope, where the local government is unincorporated, the owner/driver was a private company contracted by the GNWT to provide the service. In Snowdrift where, also, the local government is unincorporated, the owner of the vehicle is the GNWT and the driver was an employee of the band council.

Second, with regard to compensation. Any injured party or relative of the injured party has the right of recourse by legal action through the courts. The courts then determine if there was any negligence on the part of the owner/driver of the vehicle. If negligence is found, the court may award damages to the injured party or family. The court decides the nature and/or amount of any award. If negligence is found and damages awarded, the responsible party's insurers would respond to court direction. In the case of the Fort Good Hope incident, compensation was provided to the family by the insurer of the company who owned and operated the vehicle.

I would like to explain further that in the Snowdrift case, a nominal accident benefit was paid to the family by the GNWT's insurers. The basis for this payment is the standard death benefit payment provision, which is a mandatory provision of every vehicle insurance policy required under the NWT Insurance Act. The payment does not imply liability on the part of the GNWT, nor does it limit the family's right to seek further compensation.

Third, I would like to outline the measures taken to ensure the safe operation of municipal service vehicles in hamlets and settlements. Presently, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, in conjunction with the Department of Public Works and Highways, is evaluating the feasibility and cost of "cab-over" chassis designs for water and sewage trucks. A cab-over chassis places the driver at the extreme front end of the truck, offering much better forward, down and sideways visibility than the current truck design. As an additional safety measure, the department will be providing back-up alarms for water, sewage and garbage trucks in hamlets and settlements.

Regarding training, I have made community level training a very high priority for the department, particularly for the Municipal and Community Affairs works activities. The Member can be assured that the safety aspects of operating service delivery vehicles will continue to be stressed by my training and program delivery staff. Also, where municipal service delivery in hamlets or settlements is contracted to a private business, my department will work with the local government to ensure that the same vehicle design and operator training safety measures are applied.

I and my department officials are very aware of the impact incidents such as those which occurred in Fort Good Hope and Snowdrift can have in a small community. Together with the Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Public Works and Highways, I will continue to emphasize safety in municipal service delivery operations. We, as a government and as individual members of our communities, must all do what we can to ensure the safety of the people in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 0116-87(1): Responsibilities And Legislation For Soapstone Quarries

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to oral Question 0116-87(1), asked of the Government Leader by Mr. Arlooktoo on March 5, 1987 and which was referred to me by the Government Leader, with regard to the regulations surrounding soapstone quarries.

In checking the status of the land upon which the two major active soapstone quarries in the Member's constituency are located, my department has confirmed that the land is federal crown land. Therefore, the federal government, through Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, has responsibility for the administration and control of the quarries according to the territorial quarrying regulations under the Territorial Lands Act.

Under the regulations, an individual, that is one person, may take in any year without a permit, not more than 40 cubic metres of stone without payment of any fees or dues. The regulations also contain three restrictions: Individuals may quarry stone for their own use but not for barter or sale; the individual must be a resident of the Northwest Territories or Yukon; and there cannot be a lease, sale or licence of the quarry site in effect. Concerns about or infractions of these regulations should be brought to the attention of the federal government land use office in Iqaluit, which I believe Mr. Andy Theriault is the supervisor of. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 4, returns to oral questions. That appears to conclude this matter for today. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Wah-Shee.

ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 0138-87(1): Capital Funding For Band Councils

MR. WAH-SHEE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. I understand that when the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs were discussing the transfer of capital funding, that there seemed to be a confusion in regard to who exactly is responsible for band council capital funding. As I understand, to date, the Department of Indian Affairs has the understanding that they do not have any responsibility for providing funding for the band council in terms of their capital funding and I also understand that this administration does not have a policy in place which would include the capital funding of band councils. I wonder if there is going to be any discussion between the administration and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in regard to who exactly is responsible for funding of capital expenditures for the band councils?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 0138-87(1): Capital Funding For Band Councils

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, indeed, there is ongoing discussion taking place between ourselves and Indian Affairs. Quite simply put, Indian Affairs takes the position that, unlike everywhere else in the rest of Canada, an exception is being made in the Northwest Territories. They maintain that they transferred responsibility for capital funding for band councils to the territorial government. This government and previous governments, in checking through the records, can find no transfer agreement between ourselves and Indian Affairs; nor can we find any financial agreement between ourselves and Indian Affairs that would indicate that they had transferred any funds. We maintain that because band councils were created under federal legislation, they are a responsibility of the federal government and as such, once again, the federal government cannot abrogate their responsibility to provide capital funds to band councils. We have made the offer to the federal government that we are even willing to help facilitate the construction of these facilities utilizing our own forces, if they were to provide the upfront money. The discussions are still ongoing and we have not had a definitive statement from Indian

Affairs yet as to whether or not they will accept this responsibility, but I can assure the Member that even though we do not have a policy we have been, to a limited extent, making some moneys available for band council facilities. Usually where we are building joint facilities for band/settlement what we do is we build one building. However, it is a source of major discussion between ourselves and the federal government. Unfortunately, I cannot report to the Member that we have come to a successful conclusion yet; we are still very much in the negotiating stages. Thank you.

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

Question 0139-87(1): Revision Of Residential Tenancies Act

MR. MacQUARRIE: My question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Minister of Justice and it is in respect of the Residential Tenancies Act. I know that the Minister would like to bring in a revision -- well, a new Residential Tenancies Act -- and I am wondering if sometime very soon the Minister will be able to release that to the public so that there can be additional public input on it; if so, could the Minister indicate when?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 0139-87(1): Revision Of Residential Tenancies Act

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The chairman of the standing committee on legislation is correct. I tabled the legislation at the session, brought it in front of his committee, and we have made some amendments. I have not taken it to my Executive Council colleagues but I intend to do that before this session is finished, to get their approval, at which point I will be prepared to release it to the committee and to the public for further comment.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Oral questions. Mr. T'Seleie.

Question 0140-87(1): Consideration By Executive Of Petition 3-87(1)

MR. T'SELEIE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Government Leader a question. On February 23rd, I tabled Petition 3-87(1) concerning the arena/curling rink in the community of Fort Good Hope. I would like to ask the Minister when I could expect that the Executive would be considering this petition.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 0140-87(1): Consideration By Executive Of Petition 3-87(1)

HON. NICK SIBBESTON: Mr. Speaker, the rules of the Assembly provide for the Executive Council to reply within 60 days. The matter will be dealt with by the Executive in due course and we will correspond with the Member on the government's decision as quickly as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Sibbeston. Oral questions. Mr. Paniloo.

Question 0141-87(1): Treatment Of Arthritis, Baffin Region

MR. PANILOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question is directed to the Minister of the Department of Health. In the Baffin Region there are quite a few patients who have got arthritis. They are not getting any help at all from the doctors. My daughter has been like that for a whole year and there are quite a few other people who are like that, too. The nurses and the doctors state that there are no pills or anything like that for it. Perhaps you can look into this further and give me some response at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. McLaughlin.

HON. BRUCE McLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take the question as notice and report back to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. You are taking the question as notice and will report the matter back. Oral questions. Mr. MacQuarrie.

Question 0142-87(1): Status Of Local Government Legislation

MR. MacQUARRIE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs similar to one that I just asked. The Minister has tabled local government legislation, several bills. Those were distributed to municipal governments, to various communities. The Minister has indicated that there will be some changes to those bills yet, and I thought that by this time those bills would be distributed. Yet we have not seen them. So could I ask the Minister when we are going to have the finalized versions of that local government legislation?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must apologize to the Member. I was under the impression that they had in fact been given to the committee. However, it is obvious that they have not, so I will have to check back with the department. I suspect that they will be available within the next few days, but I guess I will have to take the question under notice and provide an answer to the Member.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is being taken as notice. Oral questions. That appears to conclude this matter for today.

Item 6, written questions.

Item 7, returns to written questions.

Item 8, replies to Opening Address.

Item 9, petitions.

Item 10, reports of standing and special committees.

Item 11, tabling of documents.

Item 12, notices of motion.

Item 13, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 14, motions.

ITEM 14: MOTIONS

Motion 18-87(1), Retention of Flow-Through Shares in the Income Tax Act. Mr. Ballantyne.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to proceed with that motion today and I will reintroduce the motion at an appropriate time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The motion will be dropped from the order paper. Motion 19-87(1), Egg Quota for the NWT. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to proceed with this motion at this time, I would like to stand it down.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The motion is set down. Motion 20-87(1), Removal of Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Mr. Gargan.

Motion 20-87(1): Removal Of Minister Of Economic Development And Tourism

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act requires this Assembly to recommend to the Commissioner, Members for appointment to the Executive Council;

AND WHEREAS the Hon. Tagak Curley was recommended for appointment to the Executive Council by this Assembly by Motion 4-84(1);

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly lacks confidence in the Hon. Tagak Curley to sit on the Executive Council;

NOW THEREFORE, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that this Assembly recommend to the Commissioner that the Hon. Tagak Curley be removed as a Member of the Executive Council of the Northwest Territories, forthwith.

MR. SPEAKER: Your motion is in order. Proceed with your motion, Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, my motion is with regard to a note that was sent to me by Mr. Curley regarding a budget item in his community of Rankin Inlet, to the amount of \$100,000. However, before there was a vote on the item, there was a note sent to me by Mr. Curley saying whether he should support my constituency, if I did not support his community. That was what the note said. And I felt very disturbed by this particular note because, Mr. Speaker, at that time we were speaking to a motion and I felt threatened and I felt very intimidated by a Member of the Executive Council sending me a note like that. I just about at that time had a change of heart and voted in Mr. Curley's favour. Because what happened here is that the note was sent to me but it was sent to me threatening my constituency, not me as an individual.

The Member knows very well that this motion to this particular item was defeated and that he did get his wish because of the way that he handled himself. There was no need for any threats or intimidation on his part. It is not only myself, but how effective I am going to be as a Member of this Legislature toward my constituency, especially if this particular Minister does not -- I did not support his motion again. So does this note still apply? I do not know. This is what I am questioning the Member, and I believe that my confidence in him no longer exists because of this particular note. I do not know whether he is going to represent my constituency objectively.

We put these people in there to look at all the NWT, including their own constituencies. But for myself, as an ordinary Member, the difficulty is that it is very hard for me to represent my constituency if threats like that are given by the Ministers. There has to be some type of fair play. I have very much difficulty now that this whole thing came to life, whether these types of intimidations will go on in this House and whether we, as consensus government, will be able to properly represent our own areas with objectivity.

Now there was also an apology done by Mr. Curley. However, this goes far beyond parliamentary procedures where public apologies are required. And I believe that there was a direct threat to my constituency by the Minister. There was no mistake made. This particular note was addressed to me and was also signed by Mr. Curley. So Mr. Curley knew damn -- excuse my language -- Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member knew the contents of the note that he sent to me. I do not know whether he knew what the results of the particular motion were going to be, with regard to the \$100,000 item. But I would think that the way he conducted himself, I was sure that perhaps maybe it could have passed with no difficulty and he did not have to jeopardize himself by incriminating himself by writing a note like that. But the Member did, he was aware of the note that he wrote to me. This was no mistake made.

So Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask of the Members that if we are going to have consensus government, a democratic government, and we have some fair play on the part of the Ministers toward us ordinary MLAs, then the honourable Member himself made a mistake by writing me a note of threat. Whether he has done that to other Members or not, I cannot speak for those Members. But for me, as an ordinary Member, I feel very offended and I no longer have confidence in the particular Minister. I would like the Members to support this particular motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Secunder, Mr. MacQuarrie.

Comments Of Secunder To Motion

MR. MacQUARRIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to second the motion with some personal regret, because in a small consensus House where friendships are built across the floor, it is a very difficult thing to deal with a motion such as this. Far better, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister, when he realized, as he obviously did, that he had done something very wrong, had offered his resignation as is customary in many Houses such as this, and then perhaps left it to the magnanimity of the House to decide otherwise, if that was the House's will. But the Minister did not do that. Not having done it, it is regrettable next that the honourable Government Leader did

not exercise his responsibility and ask for the resignation of the Minister. But that was not done either, Mr. Speaker, and so it has come to this pass. Because it has, I will deal with it -- although with some personal regret -- as a Member I will deal with it resolutely, with conviction and determination, as I hope other Members will.

I have seconded the motion because the note that was sent from Mr. Curley, a Minister of the government, contains a threat; a threat that was designed to bias the judgment and stifle the free speech of a Member of this House. It is, to be sure, only an implied threat, I recognize that. But given the circumstances at the time, it is a very clearly implied threat. If I had received such a note at such a moment, it would have been very clear in my mind, Mr. Speaker, what that Member intended.

If we have a Minister who says that in fact that is not really what he intended, that the note means something else, then I say that that in itself is reason enough to remove that Member from a Minister's portfolio. Because if a Member cannot recognize a threat when he writes one, then we ought to have great concern about him handling government business and having to deal with a great many people, both from within this Assembly and in the public at large. The threat itself is very serious because it is a threat to use departmental, and that means public, power, to punish Mr. Gargan's constituents if Mr. Gargan fails to speak or vote in the way that Mr. Curley would like him to.

Support For Worthy Projects

Mr. Speaker, all elected Members at times promote projects that they believe to be worthy. And in speaking to other Members looking for support for what we believe are worthy projects, we are often reminded by other Members that they have worthy projects as well, that they would like us to consider supporting.

Often we say, "Yes, I will give it every serious consideration." That does not mean you will necessarily go along with it but you will seriously consider it, not ignore it right off the bat. It is true that sometimes Members even go beyond that and regardless of merit, make a commitment individually to support some other project in return for support for their own.

But in Mr. Curley's note, Mr. Speaker, there is a critical and very significant step beyond the use of personal influence. Here, we have a Minister, as I said, threatening to use public power as personal power in the way of retribution and that, Mr. Speaker, is absolutely intolerable. It may be that this sort of thing is done from time to time behind the scenes, that we do not know about. If so, it is wrong whenever it is done but it is clear, Mr. Speaker, that once it sees the light of day that it cannot be ignored, that it must be stopped immediately. That type of thing is an affront not just to Mr. Gargan, but to all of us, as Members of this House.

We are sent here to exercise our best judgment and to speak our minds freely in the best interests of all of the people of the Northwest Territories. Any attempt by anyone to thwart an MLA in his obligation to discharge that duty must be regarded with the most grievous concern. If I, for example, were to disregard this incident and let it pass without comment or without censure; if I, for example, were to abstain in the vote that is upcoming, or even to vote against this motion and to support the Minister, I would be saying something very clear, I think, to my constituents and to other people of the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker. I would be saying that I tolerate attempts to intimidate me, that others can threaten me with impunity, that I can be dissuaded by threats from doing what it is my duty to do and then, Mr. Speaker, if that were the case, those who elected me and other people of the Northwest Territories, because we have an obligation to them all, would have every reason to be alarmed at me being a Member of this honourable House.

Rest Of Executive Council Have No Responsibility In The Matter

In this matter, Mr. Speaker, I wish to make it clear that I do not hold the rest of the Executive Council accountable for what has occurred. Mr. Curley obviously acted on his own initiative in this matter. He did not consult other Members of the Executive Council. He did not ask their advice and they, therefore, bear no responsibility for what he has done and they clearly have no obligation to support him in the name of Executive Council solidarity. The only way, Mr. Speaker, they can become party to it is to act on their own volition and to voluntarily support him in what he has done and most specifically, take on the burden of that responsibility by voting to support him when this motion is voted upon. I hope for the active support of Ministers in this motion, but I would say, Mr. Speaker, that I could understand abstentions by the Ministers in that if the

motion fails, it may be very difficult for Ministers to continue working with Mr. Curley if they had voted against him. But, while I can understand an abstention on their part, if any Minister should actually vote against the motion, I must say at this moment, Mr. Speaker, that I would regard that, personally, as them condoning such conduct and a question of confidence in those Ministers would have to rise in my mind.

In moving to take away the honourable Member's ministerial appointment, I agree that it is a pretty serious matter. Yet it is a response, Mr. Speaker, to a very serious violation of privilege. All should remember that in removing Mr. Curley's ministerial appointment it is not removing something that inherently belongs to Mr. Curley, that is his by right and that the removal of which would in some way diminish him as a person. Rather, Mr. Speaker, he, for some years, has enjoyed a privileged appointment bestowed in trust on him by Members of this House. It is that and that alone, Mr. Speaker, that would be taken away if this motion passes. Even if it could be said in some ways that the Minister has been a good Minister, yet, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that no one is indispensable and that there are other competent Members in this House who could replace him and perhaps show their merit as a Minister as well.

Mechanism Exists In Party System

I think it is particularly important, Mr. Speaker, that Members of this House act courageously and forthrightly in the matter, because in a party system, Mr. Speaker, there is a mechanism that helps to persuade Ministers that they must have a jurisdiction-wide concern. That is the idea that a government is answerable collectively to the people, to the whole jurisdiction, and if one Minister does not have sufficient sensitivity or intelligence or sense to recognize that, then the Government Leader and other Ministers will soon remind him, Mr. Speaker. But here in this consensus House there is no such mechanism. Each Member, and the public as a whole, must rely on trust that Ministers are objective and fair to all citizens in their handling of government business and public money. But if once, Mr. Speaker, that trust is clearly violated, then we can no longer extend that trust in good faith. We would be naive in the extreme to do so.

There are some though, Mr. Speaker, who might say, "But Mr. Curley has apologized, is that not enough?" The answer is clearly, "No, it is not enough." Even in the law, Mr. Speaker, an apology for an offence is never enough and some things are more important than the law, namely, the conduct of those who make the law. That is what we are talking about here. An apology is not enough. An apology is appreciated, it is not without its effect because it will in the future perhaps more readily dispose Members toward re-establishing a relationship of trust with the Minister, but the apology itself cannot, and does not, restore the trust that has been violated. If there were only an apology and no other censure, the Minister would still hold that public power that he has threatened to use in retribution and he would still have the opportunity to use it. Mr. Speaker, if some want to get by with just an apology, I say very clearly, today is not a day for sentimentality. Today is a day for right action. The apology, as I said, the apology does not restore trust. That can be restored only by the evidence of future actions. Meanwhile, the time is now and the event is before us, and I would say that all Members ought to pluck up the courage to do what must be done.

Credibility Of Consensus House Is At Stake

What really is at stake is the credibility of a consensus House. Hypothetically, I have sometimes said that I wonder -- because we meet in caucus, 24 Members, and establish honest friendships -- I wonder when the chips are down, do we have what is necessary as Members to demand accountability because it is hard to demand accountability of friends. What happens in this House today, Mr. Speaker, will show whether our system can demand accountability or not, or whether it is necessary to move toward another system, toward party politics. To any Member who honestly believes what Mr. Curley did was wrong and yet will not vote to remove him, then we can say that that Member is kissing accountability goodbye in this system because Ministers will then have learned that you can act as you will, so long as you apologize if you get caught.

I say, Mr. Speaker, let us send a message to all present and future Ministers in a consensus House that the manipulation of public power or even the threat to manipulate public power for personal advancement -- and there is not a hint of that in this case -- or for personal retribution, which is the centre of this case, simply will not be tolerated. If the motion fails to pass, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that some of us and our constituents are certainly vulnerable to impetuous or

vindictive action. Nevertheless, it is worth the risk, Mr. Speaker. In this case, I am reminded, once again of the great wisdom that there is in old proverbs. There is one that says, "It is an ill wind that blows no good." So that even, Mr. Speaker, if this motion should fail, with the recording of this vote, we as Members, will have a much clearer idea of the character of those whom we have named to the Executive Council. And people across this territory will have a much clearer idea of the character of the people they have returned to this House this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. MacQuarrie. To the motion. Mr. Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley's Statement

HON. TAGAK CURLEY: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a short speech. I am not going to try and convince the motion. I would like to thank the people who have made the motion. They have stated what they understood, but I am going to state what I understand as well. We say at the House that we always exchange memos back and forth. Maybe at times, some of our Members are not exactly -- but they are -- but they are taking my memo out of context. In my ministry, I have never used my ministry to use my power in the wrong way or to scare anyone. I am very sorry that my memo was taken out of context. I was trying to explain it further before. Whatever is happening in other communities, not especially in my constituency, but other constituencies as well, I always support them. They might be of different circumstances to my constituency. I was not trying to make any difference out of -- you are judging me today and I will take whatever judgment you take of me today.

I want Sam Gargan to know -- sometimes I am not -- I seem to be powerful. I am not powerful to anyone at all. I am very proud of being a Member of the Legislative Assembly. If someone tells me that I am not telling the truth, it is not correct. I took Sam Gargan in confidence to send him a memo, if he had...(Translation ends)

...short statement. I respect the integrity of this House. I respect the free speech of individuals. I respect the standards that this Assembly is founded upon for the people of the Northwest Territories, to uphold the rights of the minority, individuals and all races within the Northwest Territories. I have defended them and I will continue to defend them.

Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate and I regret that my note caused, in many respects, such an overblown impression of what I meant. It was intended to give the message that one project was no different from any other project wherever it was. That was what I was trying to portray. Obviously because of my lack of ability to make my point clear, it was misunderstood. It was not a threat. I do not believe in threats. I think threats are a sign of weakness and it was never intended to be a threat.

Mr. Speaker, it was wrong of me, and I indicated that last Friday, to have made my points known without being that clear. Mr. Speaker, it was wrong of me and I accept that as a human error, to make that impression. And, Mr. Speaker, I can go so far as to say that it was morally wrong of me to have made that impression. But I stand before all the Members of the House -- my defence lawyer did not come here, Mr. Speaker, so I must defend my own actions.

Mr. Speaker, in my last three years as a Minister, I have never used my influence to try and persuade my officials from disregarding the criteria that are set upon many of the policies of my department. All the policies with respect to the items that are covered in the estimates are covered by policies and guidelines. I am proud to say that we have caught up with every single area of my portfolio programs and so on. They are now covered with policy guidelines. I am sure that the Members will understand as we examine the policies. But, Mr. Speaker, I am not here to defend the department, but myself.

Mr. Speaker, in my remarks last Friday, I stated to the honourable Member my sincere apologies for the note which he thinks is threatening. I must again state it to all Members of the House, it was never in my mind -- entered in to me at that time, that it was going to be taken as a threat. If that were the case, I would have an open heart; that would have told me that it was wrong of me to give a threat. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, I cannot -- I will not expect anyone to understand the same feelings that I have.

In my notes, Mr. Speaker, I indicated in my statement of privilege, I am sensitive to the fact that Ministers must not abuse their responsibilities. I uphold those principles, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, but again, I think it is unfortunate that we have turned to such distrust amongst ourselves. It is something that I regret and I will be standing by and be it a judgment of the House. I have communicated my feelings, not only to honourable Members, but to the Government Leader in that regard. So, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that Members will vote according to their conscience. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Curley. To the motion. Mr. Erkloo.

Mr. Erkloo's Comments

MR. ERKLOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to speak first of all, as an Inuk. In the beginning there were no Inuit people in the Legislative Assembly. There are five Inuit in the Legislative Assembly now. Personally, it is an honour to be an Inuk and to be a Member of the Legislative Assembly. There is one Inuit Minister in the Executive Council. Two years ago, when Tagak Curley came over to Igloolik, I told everybody who he was, and I was very proud of him being an Inuk Member of the Executive Council. I still remember that. For that reason I want to see still more Inuit present in the government. For people who cannot speak English very well, we can speak to them in our own language. It is a lot easier to have Ministers who can speak your own language and you can relate to in your own language. The reason I say this is because of the fact that there are three different cultural backgrounds in this House. However, we are elected to the Legislative Assembly to look after our constituency and to represent them at the Legislative Assembly. We have no other mandate aside from that.

For people who are to be Ministers, we selected four from the Western Arctic and four from the Eastern Arctic. So there are the two Members from Keewatin, and they are both Ministers even though there is not as much of a population in Keewatin as in Baffin and there is only one from Baffin. We sent those two because we trusted them to look after our representation and our concerns. However, as we started to discuss the issue of the boundary, our real colours started to surface at that time. Although the Minister we are talking about right now did not use so many words, he implies time and time again in private meetings and in the House that MLAs from Baffin did not know what they ought to do.

Now I would like to state my mandate as an MLA. I am going to quote what Tagak said in the morning of March 12, 1987. He said that he was sorry, he apologized to Sam Gargan and to the House for what he has done. He stated that he was "trying to let him know his viewpoint as one MLA to another". I believe he stressed that that was the reason he wrote that note. In my view, the apology was not in order simply because if you look at the note closely you will see as I saw it yesterday, "the department" will not support your constituency. In other words, what he was saying is this: "If you are not going to support my community, then I will not support yours." To me that letter he wrote did not come as from one MLA to another but as from a Minister. I am sorry to say this but I cannot interpret that note any other way but as blackmail. It is too bad it had to come this far but I am going to support the motion not so much because of that note. I am going to support the motion mainly for two reasons: I think it is about time we MLAs from Baffin stand up and let the message be known that we are not to be pushed around. Secondly, we as ordinary MLAs have to let the remaining Executive Council know who put them there. We elected them to look after the whole of the NWT for us. If they are going to do things that we do not approve of, then we should have something to say in it. I am going to support the motion for these reasons. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Erkloo. To the motion, Mr. Paniloo.

Mr. Paniloo's Comments

MR. PANILOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a short comment regarding the motion. I will be in support of the motion because I want to look at the whole of the NWT as equal. The reason I want to support the motion is because we are going to be electing new Assembly Members pretty soon and if Mr. Curley wants to get back into his portfolio, he could always try again. I would like to tell the Ministers also that the ordinary Members are not people to play around with.

That Minister is okay in my books and he helps the people of the NWT and his constituents. But I do not want to see any Ministers making mistakes of that kind, because if that happens I feel that there will be more mistakes committed. If my constituents understand, and if I vote against it, my

people will probably not like me for helping out the person who made a mistake. I am proud of the Minister for having the portfolio of Economic Development and Tourism and because there has never been an Inuk in that position before. He has been working to help us to understand a little more and he has done a lot of work for the Dene and Inuit communities. But my only reason is that the Ministers over on the other side will have to understand and make it clear in their minds that if they make a mistake, they have to pay the consequences, and I will be in support of the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Paniloo, to the motion. Mr. T'Seleie.

Mr. T'Seleie's Comments

MR. T'SELEIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as an ordinary Member, I cannot see my way around either abstaining or not voting in favour of the motion because it is not possible for me to condone what happened a few days ago, where a Member of this Assembly was threatened on the way that he thought he would conduct himself in the Assembly. I think that even if Mr. Curley was my best friend I would still support the motion to have him removed under the circumstances.

MR. MacQUARRIE: Hear, hear!

MR. T'SELEIE: Mr. Speaker, I do not think this matter is a simple matter that can just be dealt with through an apology because I think it has wide-ranging implications for a consensus type of government. I, myself, believe in consensus government. I think that if this motion is defeated it means that future Ministers can support projects based on their own likes or dislikes of one region or another, and I would not like to see that. Mr. Speaker, one thing that disturbs me in the last couple of years is the fact that many of my constituents have come to me and said that in order to get what you want from this government, you have to be on the Executive. I still do not believe that. I do not believe that we need to get on the Executive to get what we want in our constituency. I think it is still possible to work through a consensus system.

Mr. Speaker, I think if this motion is defeated, then we need to know what system we are working under. If we are working under a party-type system and we are not on the right team, we need to know that in order to represent our constituents. At least I would like to know what the rules are. If the rules are that I have to be friends with somebody in order to represent my constituents then I would like to know those rules and if the motion is defeated I continue to pursue those rules, if they are there. I would like to see them outlined to me to know who I have to be friends with and who I have to please, etc.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. T'Seleie. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Mr. Arlooktoo's Comments

MR. ARLOOKTOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy to be able to stand up to talk about the motion but I will not be in support of the motion. I want all the Members to realize that, because we, the Inuit people, were assured by the people that we wanted representation from the Inuit and we have an Inuk who is a representative, Tagak Curley, who became the Minister when we elected him. This has been a happy experience for me because he is a Minister and he is an Inuk. He has been able to talk to us and anyone can talk to him, as I think he understands all the NWT residents' dialects. For that reason, I would like him to be a Minister. I would like to say that coming from the Baffin Region, when my people apologize, then other people accept the apologies and I know that Mr. Curley apologized and I felt that he was doing what he felt was his right, to apologize to that person. I am happy to say that we, the ordinary MLAs, seem to have more strength now, after he wrote the note. It seems that we have more strength now; although it might mean something else to some other Members, I am just happy about it. I think that it made us realize that the Ministers, some of them, might be like that too. It is going to help the MLAs and I am happy that we are probably waking up now, if there happens to be something, a mistake, that is occurring. I will not be in support of the motion and I would like all the Members to know.

Even if Tagak Curley is removed, we are going to get another Minister from the East again. We should probably not be able to get one from the East because of our lack of education, but we are going to have to get one from the East anyway. So, for these reasons, because he is able to speak his beliefs, I will not be in support of the motion and I would like the Members to know. The

people that elected me would probably tell me to say the exact words that I just said because when there is an apology made, an apology should be accepted, that is our way of life. So, for these reasons, I would like the Members to know that I will not be in support of the motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. To the motion. Ms Cournoyea.

Ms Cournoyea's Comments

MS COURNOYEA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will not be supporting the motion. We have five more months to go in the term of this Legislative Assembly. The budgets that are before us will be approved by us here and as Mr. Arlooktoo says, the Executive Member responsible for doing not a very good thing to another Member has apologized. He has apologized. I do not believe that these last few days have been very good days for him. I do not know whether there has been any evidence put forward that he has not handled his department in the best way he knew how. We may not agree with him. I may not agree with him in a lot of ways he handles himself and I suppose a lot of people do not agree in a lot of ways how I handle myself. However, we do not have a long term left and I suppose that this type of action, Mr. Curley will face when he goes for re-election, in his own constituency.

In regard to the matter of the note, I have received some very healthy notes myself in the past and I have sent some very healthy notes as well. I believe that we are all guilty of that. But have we evidence that the Minister has not done his job as a Minister or are we dealing just with the note? I do not believe the note should have been sent and I believe that I would have been just as upset, but I saw it probably as a seasoned person from the Beaufort Sea who has been kicked around a lot politically. I probably would have sent an equally juicy one back to Mr. Curley.

I am sorry and feel badly that Mr. Gargan felt threatened by that note, particularly, because in all my life in politics, politics have not been pretty. It has not been the best vocation in life. I do not know if anyone does everything quite well. In taking the contents of that note that Mr. Gargan received, the seconder of the motion gave us a long sermon, and I found many threats in the sermon we received from the seconder.

AN HON. MEMBER: Agreed.

---Applause

MR. MacQUARRIE: But I don't have public power.

MS COURNOYEA: Yes, you do, and you exercise it very well.

MR. MacQUARRIE: That's a personal opinion.

MS COURNOYEA: So, Mr. Speaker, I suppose in any vocation you take on in life, the most difficult is when you represent people and you hold a position that is very privileged as an Executive Member of this government. But there is not evidence, other than the note that Mr. Curley will not treat Mr. Gargan's constituency well. I would suggest that he probably would treat it very well.

Now as for how we represent our constituency and what we take to heart and what we do not, in not supporting this motion, it is not that I agree that any Executive Member should send these types of messages or assert a power or threat over anyone else. I am not supporting that. But I am supporting this government. We have five more months to go and I do not believe that this Member will misuse his position in that five months.

Minister Has Built Up Budget Required To Run Department

We have a lot of work to do. The Northwest Territories is in serious economic difficulties. Mr. Curley has designed a budget and has worked very hard to build up the budget of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. There was not a heck of a lot there when he got in and now I feel, although I do not agree with everything that is in it and I would put priorities on certain areas more than others, I do believe that this Minister has conducted himself in the best way he knew how, to muster the kind of dollars that are required to run that department. And it has a long way to go yet.

Mr. Speaker, we were asked by this motion, and attached is a note. When I went to Inuvik this weekend, I went looking through some healthy notes that I received over the past and I could have taken that to heart. But I want to see this present Executive continue to do the job until the end of its term. I want to give support to that.

I do not know, when I held the position on the Executive whether I always did everything right or I conducted myself always with prestige uppermost and on a high platform of duty and respect -- the way everyone would like to see me. I suppose I made my mistakes. I believe this was a mistake and I believe the Member is being punished for it and he has not forgotten and he will not forget this reprimand he is receiving today. However, I think it has gone far enough and I will not support the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms Cournoyea. Mr. Appaqaq.

Mr. Appaqaq's Comments

MR. APPAQAQ: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will make my statement brief. This is a personal thing. I just wanted to let you know. In 1979 I was elected for the first time and I was not even aware what economic development was. I heard over the radio about economic development, I heard the name over the radio but I did not know what they were doing. It took me a while to know what economic development was, because they were not just doing an ordinary job, but they were doing something about economic development. After four years, as I see it, especially in the Baffin Region, there is a lot of economic development going on at this time. There is a lot of private businesses being implemented and they are finally starting to get response from the government. As I heard before, they did not get any response, when they wrote to the previous Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

I was not even aware of how Economic Development could help the private sector or the people. This is educational for me, the way they are trying to remove him from the Executive Council. But I will not be in support. I would like everyone to know, because there are only five months left to go for us to be in the Legislature and for the Executive to be here. We approved the budget for Economic Development and Tourism; if we were to take him off the Executive Council, they would have to delete this budget also, because there is quite a large amount of money for the whole NWT, and I do not think this should be just managed by his colleagues. There are only five months left and this budget we approved is for the whole year. I know I heard that this is not going to be affecting the department, if he was taken off. Looking at it from our point of view, and our constituents, when there are new Ministers, it takes a long time for them to complete something. When it is a new job that they have to undertake, they are going to have a lot of orientation and they are going to be just run by their own employees and the employees tell them you are going to have to do this and that. I am sorry that I will not be able to support the motion, because there are only a few months left for us. We are going to have to be aware of what we can do and I am very happy that we are able to represent our constituents.

I never had to apologize to anyone in the House myself, but when they said something wrong within this Legislature, they apologize to the other people. The Minister of Economic Development apologized also and when they do not want him as a Minister in this Legislature and when -- if they were to delete him from the Executive Council, I am going to try and remove that apology he made also. It is going to have to be that way. The way I understand it, in our culture, an apology is something that has to be accepted as an apology and to mend old wounds. The apology that has been made has to be accepted. For these reasons, even if I am not an MLA any more, I am going to think that if they were going to remove him from the Executive Council, I would also like for you to remove the apology also. I will not be able to support this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Appaqaq. Mr. Pudluk.

Mr. Pudluk's Comments

MR. PUDLUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a few comments, Mr. Speaker. I am willing to support this motion for one reason. This apology on March 12, 1987, is good apologizing, but it is in the wrong place, Mr. Speaker. Because at that time, we did not know what he was talking about when he made a point of privilege. We did not know there was a note, it was not circulated to the Members. I would accept his apology if he were apologizing after Mr. Gargan's statement. It is a good apology but it is in the wrong place, the way I see it.

(Translation) As elected Members, the public view the work we are doing by our jurisdictions. Also, we are looked at by the whole NWT population. If this is going to occur with the future MLAs, there will always be things like this occurring, if we just leave it. We are going to have to look at the future, especially as elected MLAs. We are elected by a large number of people and we, ourselves, elect the Ministers. At that time when we were elected, it was really good when they were Ministers for two years, and we could change them if we wanted to after that time. We also have the privilege to remove someone if we have to. As I mentioned earlier, if he had apologized right after Mr. Gargan's statement, it would have been better. Thank you, that is all I have.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pudluk. To the motion. Mr. Angottitauruq.

Mr. Angottitauruq's Comments

MR. ANGOTTITAUURUQ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I do not want to sit back and relax and abstain from the motion. But before I make myself clear on where I stand to the motion, I would just like to say that the Minister in question, to me has a good hard working record. I believe he brought economic development closer to the people of the North. He seems to understand both the Inuit needs and has good dealings with the southern businesses. From there on, I will have to go on to the motion.

I regret where I am going to stand on the motion. I am going to support the motion for one purpose only. As an individual MLA, I have not put my secret ballot votes to every one of the people that have been elected to the Executive. I, as an individual MLA, if I make a report regardless of five months left, or even with the good work of the person, and accepting the apology, not remembering one rule of one place, and which I am talking about is the Assembly. I believe that when you try to do something and some person disturbs you, you want to carry on and do something to have your ways followed. I believe at this time with the note that was sent, even with the explanation said by the sender that it was not the intent of the note, the way it was understood. As Members, we have to be very careful so that we really do not have to make an apology afterward. Especially I guess with the Ministers. I know how frustrated they get. I know how many long hours they have and I know how many meetings they deal with and I know how they negotiate and I know how hard they work. I do not think that as Assembly Members, we would just accept each individual just by their apology and hope that they not do it again. When something is done somewhere, sometimes it is very hard to get away from it. I have worked in a number of areas and I have had some experience in some similar ways. But I am not saying that anyone who does something should not ever be forgiven. But I do not think the Assembly like this would keep on working when one of the Members has something in mind for the rest of the Assembly to carry on regardless of how many months it has left. I think the only way we could work better is to trust each other and I know how hard it is to trust each other.

There are times, too, when I have been given notes and even orally I have been shouted at as a Member. It would have been a different story for me, as a Member, to shout and give notes to the people who have elected me. I am here, if I am talking about these threatening remarks that I have received, they were different from the ones from the people that were sitting here, that are sitting in this Assembly. But I think to send a message to another Member during a debate is a serious offence. It sure must be. Regardless of what the apology has said, and the person who apologized, regardless of the information of what it says, I am led to believe that I have to vote in favour of the motion in the hope that this House operates better before the next election or after the election. That is the way I believe it and I cannot further explain my belief as a Member. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Angottitauruq. To the motion. Mrs. Lawrence.

Mrs. Lawrence's Comments

MRS. LAWRENCE: Mahsi cho. (Translation) I am not going to speak for too long but I would like to have some say on this motion. This Minister here -- we MLAs were the ones that put him in that position, in the ministerial position. I had a lot of faith in him so this is why I had voted for him. The way my constituents have voted for me and they place their trust in me, I had placed my trust in that Minister. Although he offered an apology here in the House, I feel he had done wrong by passing that note. (Translation ends)

If this motion should pass, I hope it will not set a precedent for future Ministers because it just seems that we are going to be wasting a lot of time trying to remove the Minister and not really doing the work that we are elected to do. We always seem to find fault, even sometimes without even trying. I find that some people are really good at doing that and I do not have too much time to do that myself. There are a lot of good things that have to be done. As I mentioned, when I first elected the Minister among ourselves, I was very excited because that was my first time involved and I elected them with respect and confidence. I feel that the Minister learned his lesson and suffered the consequences of his action and probably this is a good lesson for the other Ministers and future Ministers. Since we only have a few months left I feel that there are certain things that need continuity and for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I have not told anyone this up until now, but I will not be supporting this motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Lawrence. To the motion. Mr. Sibbeston.

Hon. Nick Sibbeston's Comments

HON. NICK SIBBESTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first thing I wish to say is that the issue is that of an MLA undertaking a non-confidence vote against a Minister arising out of an action in this Assembly some days ago. As such, as I stated earlier, I do see the matter as being one of a free vote. I do not see the motion as an attack on a Minister as a result of a government policy and in turn I do not see the motion as an attack on the government whatsoever. It is simply a motion that questions the conduct of a person who is occupying a Minister's position.

Mr. Speaker, I had a chance to speak to both Mr. Gargan and Mr. Curley immediately after the incident and afterwards, as the events unfolded to the giving of the notice of motion and thereafter right to today. It is clear to me that in Mr. Gargan's case he was truly offended and the note did appear as a threat to him. I understand his reaction and respect his decision to take the steps that he has taken thus far.

On Mr. Curley's side of the issue, I am of the view that he did make a mistake in sending the note he did. The note was written in the heat of debate on Mr. Curley's department when a project, a fish plant, was being challenged by some of the Members. I have looked closely at the note, sideways, upside down, and rightside up and when all is considered, it can be interpreted as a threat. There are two significant points made in the note: 1) possible support or non-support from the department in Mr. Gargan's riding; and 2) linking that with support for the private sector in what Mr. Curley says is his community. I do believe that the note can be interpreted as threatening by someone who receives it. It essentially says, support a project in my constituency or else my department may not support projects in your constituency. So, I have come to the conclusion that the note was in bad taste; it should not have been sent and a mistake was made by Mr. Curley.

However, I do note that Mr. Curley has apologized for his mistake. He has written a personal apology to Mr. Gargan. He has apologized publicly in this Assembly and he has written to me as Government Leader apologizing for any embarrassment or adverse reflection that his act may have on the government. He remains steadfast in saying that he did not intend the note to be a threat. Short of getting on his knees, Mr. Curley has done all he can to say that he is sorry. Mr. Speaker, I accept that Mr. Curley is truly sorry and that he should be forgiven.

Point Has Been Made

I feel that the action that Mr. Gargan has taken, publicizing the note, giving the notice of motion of non-confidence, proceeding with the motion to this point, have all been sufficient to make his point. Mr. Gargan has made his point that Ministers are indeed accountable. Just as they are chosen by the Members to be on the Executive, so, too, they can be replaced if they misbehave.

I do not agree with Mr. MacQuarrie when he says that to vote against the motion is to tolerate such action or to vote against the motion is to become party to the misdeed. I do not agree. This is a matter of individual judgment. I have judged the incident and I obviously have judged it differently than Mr. MacQuarrie. I have considered the seriousness of the incident, and I recognize that for the most part it was an act in the heat of debate. It was an emotional act and it was clearly a mistake. I am conscious, too, of a certain amount of tension that has pervaded throughout this winter Assembly. I understand how such an incident could occur. So it was not a premeditated act taken in sober, normal circumstances.

I believe in a way of life, Mr. Speaker, that recognizes that people do make mistakes but that they also can be forgiven and learn by their experiences. I am not saying that all incidents are forgivable. There are many acts which I would not be prepared to forgive and forget and for which consequences must be severe. But this is not one of them. I have my high standards, too.

Mr. Curley has been on the Executive for three years. During that time he has done a reasonably good job of his portfolio, Department of Economic Development and Tourism, and I have confidence in him. He has not always had a full complement of staff. At the moment he is without a deputy minister and is operating the best he can. I do believe Mr. Curley has the confidence of the business community in the North. He was recently voted as the Man of the Year by the tourism industry. Of course, our Expo pavilion was successful in part, due to Mr. Curley's efforts.

Only A Few Months Until Election

Members must remember, too, that we only have a few months, as other Members have said, until this Assembly is finished. An election is only months away. To make a change now, I consider, would be very disruptive to the department and to the government as a whole.

So, Mr. Speaker, in my own individual case, MLA for Nahendeh, I am prepared to give Mr. Curley a second chance. This is not to say that I condone Mr. Curley's action, but I recognize that he apologized and that is sufficient for me. I know he has been under a certain amount of duress and stress and strain in the last few days, resulting from this action. When all is considered, I do consider that he has suffered enough and Mr. Gargan, in making the motion, has made his point. I think that is where the matter should lie. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. Mr. Ballantyne.

Hon. Michael Ballantyne's Comments

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, like all the Members, have thought quite deeply over the last few days about how to deal with this motion and I think it has caused a lot of problems for all of us. It made all of us take a good look at ourselves. I know I have been Minister for only 15 months and I remember when I was first sworn in, how proud I felt that I had the confidence of this House and I thought how fortunate I was to have the opportunity to perhaps add something to the NWT. I have tried to carry out my responsibilities in that light in the last 14 months.

I have found many distressing things about the discussions of the last few days. I felt in many ways all of us Ministers are on trial here and felt that the Legislative Assembly itself is on trial. I do not know why, but I have this feeling over the last four or five days -- I am feeling guilty; what if I make the wrong decision? I said, "Why should I be feeling guilty? What have I done to feel guilty?" It has been quite distressing to me.

I know there have been conversations that have taken place among all of us over the last few days and there have been very strong points put forward and there have been different interpretations of the note. Some people have taken very strong opinions as to what the note meant to them and what was the symbolism of the note. In speaking from my own personal point of view, over the last four or five days, I have tended toward supporting the motion. I think that there is no excuse for what Mr. Curley did, whatsoever. It is wrong and the public should be aware that as MLAs we do not support that sort of action. I think it is very important that we give that example to people.

Life Of A Politician Has Changed

I think that in 1986-87 the life of a politician has changed dramatically. I think the public perception of politicians is at an all-time low. As we read in the papers, Minister after Minister is falling into disgrace in southern Canada, sometimes for incidents that I might not feel to be important but somebody else does. Because of the system that we have in southern Canada, a premier or prime minister can make a subjective value judgment, whether or not that premier or prime minister thinks that the embarrassment to his or her government warrants the dismissal of the minister. What I really want to emphasize is the value judgment.

I do not think anybody has a handle on morality. Mr. MacQuarrie made some very strong statements today and I felt somewhat threatened by some of the things that Mr. MacQuarrie said. I think we all have to understand that the fundamental nature of consensus government is that the collective

group here put the Ministers in and the collective group will be making the decision to take the Ministers out. According to our rules, which I think need a very good hard look, it will be treated just as an ordinary motion. And under the rules of this House each Member has the right to vote for or against or abstain. So I reject Mr. MacQuarrie's argument that to abstain or to vote against is somehow wrong, because it is not wrong. It means that a Member has a different opinion than Mr. MacQuarrie. I fully respect Mr. MacQuarrie's right to his opinion and I fully respect the other Members' right to their opinion, because I am sure all of us look at this a little differently.

At the same time, as a Minister has an obligation and a responsibility to ensure that his or her actions are proper and are perceived as being proper to the public, I think this Assembly also has a right, which is also a privilege, to remove a Minister. I think that right has to be used very, very carefully. Because of some of the comments that I heard earlier concerning it, it seems to me that we are embarking on a step now, for the first time ever, in our Legislative Assembly, without really thinking about it. What does it mean? Is this right of removal going to be a capricious right? Because some Minister at some time upsets a Member, the threat of removal will be there? Mr. MacQuarrie very eloquently talked about the tyranny of the minority. I think we also should think about the tyranny of the majority, because I do not think it will be possible for a Minister to function if, at every turn of the road, there is a perceived threat that, for whatever reason, he may be thrown out of office. So I think there has to be a balance in this discussion. I think there has to be a lot of thought in the discussion.

Problem With The Process

Although I do not, in any way, support Mr. Curley's actions, I think there is a deeper, more profound, thought here that we, as an Assembly, are to be judged here. The process, the trial, as it were, where all of us sit as a judge and jury and executioner, where there are only two options -- hang the person or let him go free -- I think is wrong. I think the fact that Mr. Curley has only one opportunity to defend himself, I think that is wrong, where the accuser, Mr. Gargan, has two opportunities. I think that in the heat of the debate, those who are the best debaters can win out; that facts and reasons can be left behind. So I have a major problem with the process.

I think that we, as an Assembly, should look at how we deal with votes of non-confidence. Perhaps we should look at the possibility of a subcommittee of this particular House, if there is a problem or a perceived problem, where a Member could make a motion and that goes first of all to the subcommittee who will listen to it objectively, who will look at options, who can recommend to this House appropriate punishment. Here we have an either/or situation. I am told by Members of this House that I have to say, "Yes, get rid of Mr. Curley" or "No, I support Mr. Curley." I disagree with both.

I, as one MLA, cannot support the motion because I do not agree with the process. I think the process has been ill thought out, I think that it could very potentially lead us into major difficulties as a Legislative Assembly in the future. But I cannot vote against the motion because I think what Mr. Curley did is wrong. There are those that say that by abstaining, one is absolving oneself of responsibility. To any of you who say that, I say you are wrong, because for me, this was the most difficult decision I have made in the last nine years and the first time I have ever abstained from a motion. Because in good conscience, I could neither support this motion nor can I reject this motion. I want to say that my abstention is a protest on two levels: One, it is my way of saying that Mr. Curley made a mistake. I think Mr. Curley was wrong. But also, I am saying I think the process that we have to get rid of Ministers is also wrong. It is open to abuse and it should be looked at.

I want to end by saying, as all of us look at ourselves, that each of us in the future could be a Minister and none of us is perfect. I look around this room and can say we have all made mistakes. When people are making this decision, I think everyone should take a good hard look at themselves and say that, under the same circumstances or if they were in the same position, they too might make a mistake. So, Mr. Speaker, to me this is a strong statement, and for the first time in my political life, I will abstain. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. Mr. McCallum.

Mr. McCallum's Comments

MR. McCALLUM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This issue that is before us in the motion, Mr. Speaker, I am sure it has, for a great number if not all MLAs, caused some concern as with me. Perhaps the motion did arise because of the heat of discussion on the Minister's budget and on discussion on his responsibilities and I could, of course, lay some claim to having precipitated the whole discussion. Nevertheless, though I had been critical, not only of that Minister but of other Ministers, I will make my decision not on that basis but on the basis that I have to judge what has occurred. In discussion of the changes to the rules committee, notwithstanding Mr. Ballantyne's last remarks, I believe that when we were discussing this kind of issue, when it arose, I think by and large most Members agreed that a vote of censure or non-confidence was appropriate in regard to a single Minister in his particular discharge of responsibilities. I am of the opinion that the motion is appropriate.

I was rather dismayed to hear some Members say that the rationale for voting one way or the other would be made on the basis of race -- where one came from. I do not want to do that and I want to make it perfectly clear that is not it. I do not believe any MLA should be treated better than anybody else. I think everybody should be treated equitably, but fairly.

I think that the Minister obviously has many supporters because of the performance of his responsibility in areas. Some, of course, have said that we should not do anything because of the very limited time left in the life of this House. But I do not think it is a question of time that is left remaining. I do not think it is an issue of one's race or where one comes from. I do not believe it is how well the Minister has performed. I believe it is what has been already said by Mr. Sibbeston, that it is a perception of a judgment on an individual basis. If one feels threatened, if one feels very disturbed about it, then obviously one will be guided by that. I do not think it is wrong to say or to suggest that if one is on the government side, one has greater responsibility; greater accountability in the perception or the view of those who are not on the government's side; more influence, obviously, without the hub of all the decisions that government makes; and that is what is of concern to Members who are not on the government side.

I would have preferred that there was some other way to work out the dilemma that is here. I would have preferred personally that the Minister had thought that he had done wrong, as he indicated he did, that he did agree he made a mistake, whatever adjective you want to put in front of it. If the Minister would have taken the action himself, it may not have gotten down to this. But that is not forthcoming. As I had indicated to you, I believe the motion to be appropriate at this time. The Minister has admitted he has done wrong. The perception is that in so doing, admitting that and saying what he did, in an instance where he will make decisions one will feel threatened. We each will make a judgment on it. I do not expect that I am going to make a judgment that is going to be unanimous around the table of this House. But judge it, I shall, and I shall vote for the motion.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McCallum. To the motion. Mr. Richard.

Mr. Richard's Comments

MR. RICHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we elect Members of this Assembly to serve as Members of the Executive Council of the government, we are electing them to positions of responsibility and we expect them, Mr. Speaker, we trust them, to carry out that responsibility with fairness and objectivity and certainly with integrity. We trust Ministers not to use their privileges as Ministers or their powers as Ministers improperly or for an improper purpose. We do not allow Ministers to hold their power as Minister as a club over the head of MLAs or anyone else, in order to gain something, even some worth-while, desirable project for the Minister's community or constituency. In short, Mr. Speaker, what we demand of our Ministers, Members of the Executive Council, is a high standard of conduct. Mr. Speaker, it is clear to me that what Minister Curley did was wrong and, to his credit, he has admitted that. He intimated to a Member of this Assembly that the department would not support projects in the Member's constituency if that Member did not support a project in the Minister's constituency.

Mr. Speaker, no matter how the rest of us may feel about that particular communication, it is clear to me that the Member for Deh Cho felt that the Minister was using his position as a means of intimidating him as an MLA. I guess each of us can ask, was he in fact intimidating the Member for Deh Cho? Was he threatening him? That is for each of us to decide. I regret, Mr. Speaker, that I have concluded that he was.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that a Minister must resign from the Executive Council for committing such a wrong is to impose a very high standard of conduct on a Minister on the Executive Council. But, Mr. Speaker, I believe that is what is required, a high standard of conduct. A Minister of the Crown, and we do not use the expression perhaps precisely like that in our jurisdiction, but a Minister of the Crown must be beyond reproach. Mr. Speaker, this motion calling for the removal of my friend from Aivilik, has caused me much concern and much anguish over the last few days. I know that that Minister regrets his action and has acknowledged that he was in error. I feel, however, Mr. Speaker, that if this Assembly does not support the motion which has now been introduced by the Member for Deh Cho, that we, as an Assembly, will in effect be condoning this conduct and we will, in effect, be lowering the high standard of conduct which we expect of Ministers. I do not believe that Members who support this motion are doing so with any sense of a holier-than-thou attitude, because we do and we must expect a certain level of conduct by our Ministers. We must be free to put our trust, our utmost trust, in those who are elected to the Executive Council to conduct themselves with full integrity. Thank you, sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Richard. To the motion. Mr. McLaughlin.

Hon. Bruce McLaughlin's Comments

HON. BRUCE McLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a long working relationship with Mr. Curley. He has been a friend and a person to have a lot of arguments with on committees. We have argued at times where he has walked out of committee meetings because of me and I have walked out of committee meetings because of him. I realize Mr. Curley has a fiery character and I have had lots of disagreements with him but I have found him personally to be a friend with me on the Executive Council. I will even say that I did not support Mr. Curley to be on the Executive Council in the first place. I will say that; I am not afraid to, but I have found that working with Mr. Curley has been an interesting experience in his dealings with Expo '86 and with all his other activities. He has been a hard-working Member. Some people maybe complain that he maybe marches to his own drummer at times, but that is what a lot of politicians do and that is why a lot of politicians are more effective and more important than other politicians. But the passing of that note and its exposure and the Member bringing it up and feeling threatened caused me a great deal of embarrassment at the time. I was pretty surprised that it happened and I am really concerned that almost all of the Members who are not on the Executive have spoken and they have spoken two to one in favour of the motion. I was originally going to vote against the motion because I felt that a resignation was not in order because he had made an apology that would have been accepted. But I see that such a vast majority -- two thirds -- of the non-Ministers do not condone what happened. They have a feeling that this cannot be condoned, that it has to set a precedent and I understand that. But because of my personal feelings for Mr. Curley I am going to abstain on this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. Mr. Wah-Shee.

Mr. Wah-Shee's Comments

MR. WAH-SHEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I think I should say that I think we are fortunate in the Northwest Territories that we do not have as many scandals as the federal government, as my good friend, Mr. Ballantyne, has indicated. However, I feel that this issue here in comparison to some of the other scandals that took place in the federal government is not as serious. However, in the consensus government that we have, I guess the issue is a little closer to home because all 24 of us, whenever we debate party politics, I think the majority of the MLAs are fairly quick to say that we should continue with the consensus system because party politics is not the alternative.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that this particular issue here is very important because it really addresses the whole system of consensus government that we have. Consensus government to me, as far as I interpret it as an ordinary MLA, is that all 24 of us elect the Executive Council and the Executive Council are accountable to the Legislative Assembly because we are the ones that

elected them and they serve at our pleasure. The other thing is that other Members have already indicated that the conduct of Ministers -- there is a high expectation of the Ministers of the Executive Council in comparison to the ordinary MLAs, mainly because you, as Ministers, hold an office.

I think this particular motion that we are addressing is not Mr. Tagak Curley's character or personality, or how well he tells jokes in your Executive Council meetings or how well he has conducted his department. We do that through a matter of course when we go through the departmental budget process. I think as Members of this House, we make our own judgment in terms of how well every Executive Member has performed over the past year. But I think what we are talking about here, the issue, is basically the ministerial powers and how one utilizes the influence that one has. If you are a Minister, you have a lot of influence within your department and if you do not, then I would assume that the bureaucrats are running that department instead of the Minister. However, I feel that I would like to believe that it is the Ministers who are running the departments. As for the various boards, they are accountable. They are appointed by the Ministers. So, therefore, the influence and the conduct of the Minister is very important. The accountability is very important.

I realize that the Ministers are not saints. We all know that. We saw that in the last three years. They are human. So, what disturbs me is that the accountability should not really stop or we should not say that accountability of Ministers stops and we should not remove him or her because we have the last five months to go. Accountability, as far as I am concerned, is right up to your term.

MR. MacQUARRIE: Hear, hear!

MR. WAH-SHEE: Even if you have two more weeks to go and you have committed something that I feel is questionable, then even if you have two more weeks to go, I feel that the Minister should be removed. I do not feel that the government is going to fall apart. There are eight of you and obviously you are all quite capable.

The other point is that it should not really matter where one comes from, whether one is a Dene, Inuk or non-native. The way I look at it right now, Mr. Speaker, is that we have six non-natives and it so happens we have two aboriginal people. One Dene and one Inuk. But in dealing with the situation and addressing it, that does not give you any special privilege, just because you are an aboriginal person. Because in consensus government, we are supposed to treat everybody equally and the judgment we make is based on your conduct as Ministers.

It does not matter what happened 10 years ago. We are talking about 1987. We are talking about today. We are talking about Ministers who are Ministers right now. I think that if we condone what has happened recently, then it does not really say very much in regard to the future. What kind of influence would ordinary MLAs have in terms of supporting various projects in their constituency or even having the right as ordinary MLAs to speak their own minds? What if we differ with the Executive? Does that mean that we get reprimanded for it? I do not think so. I think that all 24 of us are elected, and we are equal.

Ministers Have Responsibility For All Regions

The other point is that as Ministers you cannot say on one hand that you will speak as an ordinary MLA. What happened to your office in the meantime? Public perception and my perception is that you are a Minister so long as you are there and you have to serve at our pleasure. I think the problem that I see right now is that it seems to me that the whole concept of consensus government -- we are at the crossroads. I would like to think that all Ministers are elected to serve all of us and they are Ministers for all the different regions and it does not matter where you have been elected.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. WAH-SHEE: You are elected by us, so you serve and you are a Minister of Economic Development, Municipal and Community Affairs, Education, for the whole Northwest Territories, up to that time when we divide, if that is the case.

---Laughter

But for the meantime you are a servant for all the residents of the NWT. I think the good offices that you hold should be done in the interests of all of us -- all 51,000 of us. It should be clear that we all want to work together under a consensus government, because obviously, what is consensus government? It means that we all decide together what the best course of action is. But in the meantime, there are eight of you on the Executive and we put our trust in you and we have high expectations. And rightly so. Not because you get all kinds of perks and so forth, but mainly because of the office that you hold and you have to use your good judgment to make decisions for all of us.

I think this kind of action, where a Minister uses his office to influence whether a project goes or does not go, under the circumstances, is totally wrong, in my point of view. It should have never occurred and I appreciate Mr. Curley has apologized for it. However, I feel that if we just drop the whole issue and say, "Well, he has already apologized so why don't you just let him run the department for the next five months?" The next time we bring a motion of non-confidence, we have already set a precedent. You already let Joe Blow go last time; why are you trying to remove him this time around? Because we have already forgiven him last time.

As far as I am concerned, I do not think when we talk about accountability, it is a very serious issue from my point of view and I think that anybody who serves as Minister should expect that they have to use their good offices for the good of all of us. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion.

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

Hon. Gordon Wray's Comments

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to have spoken in length on this one but I am very quickly losing my voice. I will have to speed up. I, like others of my colleagues, have been very distressed over the last three or four days in terms of coming to a conclusion on what I should do. I find that within the last five days I am required to vote on two issues which are very distressing issues. In that last vote that took place in this House, I abstained, for reasons which I gave at that time. However, I have come to the conclusion in this debate that I cannot abstain from voting. I cannot condone in any way, shape or form what Mr. Curley did. It was wrong. We all acknowledge that and Mr. Curley acknowledges that. It is not something that you can do as a Minister. You just cannot use your office to intimidate people. However, after saying that, I have to think about it in the context and in the time and in the manner in which it took place. It was not a premeditated action, to sit down and figure out a way in which to intimidate another individual. It was something that was done on the spur of the moment, in the heat of debate, which we have all done in this House. We have said things that we regretted, we have done things that we have regretted.

I wish that I had kept some of the notes that I have had from Members of this House, none of them on the Executive. The threats that we receive, the muttered threats in the back rooms -- unless we do a certain thing, what will happen to us. But luckily, over the last three or four years I have developed a very thick skin because that is what politics is all about. I am not so thin-skinned to run when somebody does something to me. My reaction is to fight back -- just as I am doing now, because the threat that Mr. MacQuarrie made earlier on, to me is far more reprehensible than the threat that Mr. Curley ever made to Mr. Gargan. The fact that I, as an MLA, cannot stand up and speak my conscience and somehow my performance as a Minister is going to be impugned by my speaking my right as an MLA. I find that threat a lot more repugnant and I am going to do now what I would do if I were Mr. Gargan and I am going to vote against the motion, simply because of that, because I will not knuckle under to threats. When people threaten me, I fight back.

MR. MacQUARRIE: Point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: Point of privilege, Mr. MacQuarrie.

Point Of Privilege

MR. MacQUARRIE: That is the third Member who has implied that I used threats in my speech, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the Members explicitly to either state what threat was made in my speech or to withdraw their remarks.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Wray.

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I refer to the comments that the Member made that if somehow Ministers voted in favour of this, then we would be condoning the actions, then that would call into question in Mr. MacQuarrie's mind his confidence in us as Ministers. That to me, is a threat. That to me is saying that even though the Government Leader has indicated that this is a free vote and that we are allowed to speak as MLAs on this and not as Ministers of the Crown, that somehow my speaking as an MLA is going to affect his judgment on me as a Minister, which to me, is totally different from my role as an MLA in this House. That to me is an implied threat, which is what we are talking about in this debate too, by the way -- an implied threat.

MR. SPEAKER: Privilege, Mr. MacQuarrie.

MR. MacQUARRIE: I hold no power over any Member and when I express to Members how my judgment is formed on matters, I can hardly be called responsible for making a threat. I tell them how I will think and why. I hold no power over any of them, such as a Minister, who holds departmental power and threatens to use it over others.

Speaker's Ruling

MR. SPEAKER: The problem is that in any Legislative Assembly, every Member has a vote that may be used at times in various ways. So I suppose that your supposition is not completely correct. You do, as an ordinary MLA, have a power of vote and today you are exercising it in judgment of one of our Ministers. So with regard to the statements, although you do not hold any direct power as a Minister, you still are not powerless. I do not want to get a cross argument going here. You have made your point. You are not a Minister, you are an ordinary MLA, you do not hold any power over the other people within the Assembly, other than by your vote. Mr. MacQuarrie.

MR. MacQUARRIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will accept your ruling. I am pleased to see that my views and my single vote are regarded as a threat by some Members.

MR. SPEAKER: I am pleased that you are pleased.

---Laughter

Mr. Wray.

HON. GORDON WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To continue on what I was saying, I am not going to support the motion simply because I think that what is at stake is a consensus form of government and what some Members of this House may not realize is that they are in the process right now of destroying consensus government. Because when you start to hold Ministers to ransom over perceived threats over what I in my own mind have determined to be a minor issue, because of the way in which it was done, then where does it stop? As a consensus government, we operate a minority government on a 24 hour a day basis. We do not have the power of majority the way a political party does. As such, we are very open to abuse by ordinary MLAs to try to get their own way simply by threatening us that they are going to take us out of a job or vote no confidence. That is not implied. That is done frequently. I do not want to accuse Members of being self-righteous, but nobody, and I repeat, nobody, in this House can hold their head up and say, "I have never done it." All of us as Ministers have been subjected to it at one point in time or another, and sometimes it gets very frustrating. Sometimes you are trying to make decisions in the best interests of people and sometimes you cannot reflect what a majority of MLAs want, but you are always threatened.

Vote Of No Confidence Is Last Resort

By taking this a step further, in this issue, what we have now done is open the door. Every time MLAs feel that somebody has hurt them or somebody has hurt their poor feelings, they are going to bring in a motion of no confidence. Or if we do not happen to agree with that individual on what he wants, they are going to bring in a motion of no confidence.

These things cannot be treated in a whimsical manner. A vote of no confidence, Mr. Speaker, is the last resort. It is the last thing that you do after you have tried everything else and every other recourse has failed. That to me is what a vote of no confidence is. Because when you make light of that system and you abuse that privilege that you are given as an ordinary MLA, then you are abusing the institution of government and you are abusing the trust that people have put in you. When I sat in that back room and voted for seven other people, I did not sit in there as a Minister, I sat in there as an ordinary MLA. And I speak now as an ordinary MLA because if I can

be an MLA when I put people in, I sure as hell can be an MLA when I take people out. So I do not want anybody saying that, because we are Ministers, we have to do a certain thing or vote a certain way. I was not a Minister when I put them in and I am not going to be a Minister when I take them out.

I am going to support Mr. Curley. I disregard the various comments that I have heard around this room. "Well, he is from the Keewatin and there are two Ministers there." "Well, maybe that is not fair, because we have more people in another region." "He is an Inuk, and we do not have too many Inuk Ministers." "He has done a good job." To me, that does not even come into it. We have been asked to sit in judgment on whether the writing of a note sent to a Member was enough to take a man's job away from him. That is what we have been asked to judge. Unfortunately there are too many people in this House who are taking too many other things into consideration and we are not judging the Minister of Economic Development on the simple act of writing a note. There are other things being brought into this debate that have nothing to do with the action that took place. That is why I am going to vote against it.

Like my colleague, Mr. Ballantyne, I object to this process. In this process, you either win or lose. There is no gray area. Well, unfortunately, I live in a world that is not all black and white. I live in a world where people make mistakes and where compassion is shown and where people are allowed a second chance. Maybe that is because where I was brought up in Scotland, luckily we do not follow English law, and we have three verdicts. It is called, guilty, not guilty or not proven. And "not proven" means that where there is enough doubt, you are not found guilty or not guilty and things stay open for a while to judge you and see if you do what you said you were going to do, or see if you did what you did. Maybe that is what colours my judgment, but I do not think that this is a serious enough subject to hang a man and to take his career away from him and to blacken his political reputation. That is why I am voting against this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. You made a point relative to not sticking strictly to the motion. I admit that I have been very, very lenient but I wanted to be sure that everybody could say what they wished to say today. So I did not restrict the matter, because of the differences in culture and so, on points that may seem irrelevant to what the written words say; I have allowed a very wide variance and everybody was treated the same. Nobody was denied their right to speak and I hope you understand why I have allowed as much leeway today in this debate as I have done. Mr. Patterson.

Hon. Dennis Patterson's Comments

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a very difficult matter for us all. I, too, regret that it has come up in this manner. It is difficult for me personally because it involves a colleague and a friend of seven years or more. I would like to make it clear at the outset, that in discussing this very difficult matter with my colleagues on the Executive Council and the Government Leader, I had hoped that other alternatives to this motion could be explored with Members concerned about the Minister's conduct. Unfortunately, alternative approaches were not considered possible. I regret that. Now we are in an extreme situation, which I find difficult and somewhat embarrassing for us all. The Minister of Justice put it very well and I agree with him.

Although I am aware that not all my colleagues on the Executive Council may view the matter in this way, I feel that this matter does reflect on this government. I personally believe that as an MLA, but also as a Minister of this government, it is important that my actions in this matter should not appear to condone actions which had the appearance of threatening a Member of this Assembly. Especially in a consensus government, we must be fair and balanced in discharging the responsibilities placed on us and we must appear to be fair and balanced.

Although I have said I have grave reservations about the process we are apparently irreversibly embarked on today, I do not for a moment question any Member's right to bring such a confidence motion before this Assembly, with respect to any Member of the Executive Council at any time. These kinds of checks and balances, I believe, are especially important in a consensus system. Those of us who are Ministers should never forget that. There are high standards expected of us, even though we all do, undoubtedly, fall short at times. This is as it should be. I respect that right of ordinary Members and I personally, today, do not intend to interfere in any way with that right. Even though we have a consensus system, Ministers are and should be accountable to ordinary Members and the public at all times and although we do have a vote in the selection of Members of

the Executive Council, I have decided it is not appropriate for me to exercise that vote today. Following extensive consultations with a number of my constituents, to whom I am ultimately accountable, and after considerable agonizing personal deliberations, and I hope my reasons have been made clear, I have decided I will abstain on this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. Mr. Pedersen.

Hon. Red Pedersen's Comments

HON. RED PEDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I was elected to this Assembly as an MLA that was probably, not probably, undoubtedly, the proudest day of my life. I consider that it is a great privilege. I was also pleased when I had the confidence of this House and was placed on the Executive Council. But I want to emphasize that to me, being on the Executive Council is quite secondary and it is not of nearly the importance as being an MLA, elected in your constituency. There your own people have confidence in you; here, we are a much smaller body.

Mr. Speaker, this past weekend since Thursday has been a very difficult time for all of us. It is not easy and it is not a pleasant decision that we are being asked to make. Others have expressed regret that it could not have been solved in some other manner; I would like to echo that. I regret that very deeply. I agree completely with those who have said that the actions of Mr. Curley were not acceptable. I cannot condone it. I do not think it is a proper thing for a Minister to do to an MLA or for that matter for an MLA to another MLA. I have read very carefully Mr. Curley's apology to the honourable Member for Deh Cho and, Mr. Speaker, I find the apology to be sincere and complete and I am quite willing, personally, to accept that apology. As some other honourable Members have stated, where I come from an apology is taken at face value, provided that the apology is for an offence that has not occurred repeatedly, time and time again. I have known Mr. Curley for many, many years. He has always been a person of great integrity, a person who fought for what he believes in and he has served his people and the NWT extremely well -- I am sure a lot better than it ever will be my privilege to do.

I was disturbed, as has been mentioned by others before me, by the comments made today by the seconder of the motion that somehow I should not express an opinion on the matter. I disagree with such a suggestion and whereas I do not take it as a threat of anything to happen to me, I would like to say that if certain Members of this House lose confidence in me as a Minister by the way that I am going to vote today, then I regret that very much but so be it. I have always felt that it would be proper that we should all be judged by the words we utter, by actions we take, by what we do and not necessarily on how we vote with our conscience in a particular matter. I do have my own conscience and I intend to use that one. I do not intend to have anyone become my conscience or allow anyone else to become the conscience of this House. We all have it individually. I assure you I do not enjoy being on a losing side of a vote and it would appear today that I am going to be that way, but my conscience dictates to me that I cannot support the motion. As I said, whereas I do not condone what happened and I do not agree with it and I think it was wrong, I nevertheless do not think it was of a severity that should bring forward the ultimate penalty. I would have liked to see something in between but it is not available to us, so, for the reasons I have stated, Mr. Speaker, I will not vote for the motion, I will not abstain, I will vote against the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. Mr. Butters.

Hon. Tom Butters' Comments

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, I welcome Mr. Sibbeston's ministerial statement earlier today which put in context Mr. Gargan's motion and this debate, focussing on the process by which a consensus government throws up or throws out Executive Council Members.

Regrettably, it is a flawed process subject to human whim and bias, malice and misdirection. I noted this failing, this irrational anomaly following the two year caucus review of Executive Council Members, which resulted in the inexplicable removal of two dedicated and effective Executive Council Members. This process must be amended to incorporate the basic democratic principle of natural justice.

This motion before us today suffers from the same flaw. No question I have been required to decide in all my years in this House has given me the mental torment, the questioning of conscience, that this question before us today has. I have, as I am sure have all my fellow MLAs, put in a

weekend of agonizing appraisal and reappraisal. I cannot, do not nor could I ever condone Mr. Curley's action of Wednesday last. His hastily scribbled note to Mr. Gargan was imprudent, overzealous, heedless, foolhardy, unforgivable. Unforgivable? And there's the rub, Mr. Speaker. Is it unforgivable? In the eyes of the mover and the seconder, Mr. Curley's action would appear to be unforgivable -- unforgivable even in light of Mr. Curley's apology. An apology which stated, unequivocally, "I regret my action. It was a mistake", said Mr. Curley. And later, and I quote him, "I am sensitive to the fact Ministers must not abuse their responsibility and would like to make it clear that I had no intention of doing so." He would like to make it clear that he had no intention of doing so.

Now the nub of the question here is whether Members believe Mr. Curley's statement of apology and his clarified intention. If you believe him, if you believe the statement he has made to you in this House, where a Member is constantly on his honour, in keeping with a parliamentary tradition from time immemorial is ever required to speak the truth, then you must accept his apology as it was made to you.

As I have implied, it is regrettable that apologies such as Mr. Curley's have to be made in this House. But we are human beings, under pressure. Sometimes we react irrationally; sometimes combatively, in debate and in heated exchanges. Just as such apologies have been required to be made in the past, they will also be required in this House in the future.

The revelation of Mr. Curley's communication to Mr. Gargan, Wednesday, and its content, came as a severe shock to me. I was personally saddened and upset because I felt, in some sense, culpable. The mover of the motion will remember that within minutes of the incident, I apologized to him for any distress that caused the Member and communicated to him that I did not condone Mr. Curley's action. It was therefore, Mr. Speaker, with considerable disquiet that I read, in the light of Mr. Curley's earlier statement of apology, Mr. Gargan's remarks Thursday morning last, which questioned Mr. Curley's honesty and stated, and I quote: "If the only way an MLA can get things accomplished for his constituency is through entering into secret deals with Ministers, then I question the integrity of this government and this Minister in particular."

There Are No Secret Deals With Ministers

I have heard of no secret deals today and I have listened very carefully to all the remarks of all the honourable Members. I wish to inform the honourable Member and all honourable Members and the people of the North, that to my knowledge and in my experience, there are no secret deals with Ministers. This is a consensus government, Mr. Speaker; secret deals are an anathema to consensus government. I have listened carefully to the mover of the motion, the seconder and those who will be supporting the motion, and as I said, I have heard of no secret deals.

The seconder of the motion has made much of the fact, and I quote him, "...if you want to establish a business in the NWT, make sure you get to meet the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism." This statement should be a point of pride in a small jurisdiction such as the Northwest Territories; that if you wish to start a business in the NWT, that the Minister of Economic Development is accessible and available. That cannot be said in every jurisdiction in Canada. However, I do not believe that the Member was implying anything beyond the obvious interpretation. But Mr. Speaker, justice is the crux of this debate. If you believe Mr. Curley, is "justice" his removal from office, in ignominy and humiliation? Is that justice, Mr. Speaker? Is justice found in the forgetting of past accomplishments by Mr. Curley on behalf of this Assembly and this government? Is justice the refusal to admit to the knowledge of Mr. Curley's mercurial nature, his feistiness and intensity in debate and see in their stead coercion, threats and blackmail? Is that justice?

No, Mr. Speaker, that way lies not justice. Justice lies in the unobtainable goal identified by you a few moments ago, with the prayer that you said today, and I quote it in part, "We will work together, leaving behind every small and selfish motive and to care for this good land and to build a just -- to build a just -- and peaceful society."

Penalty Does Not Fit The Crime

Justice, Mr. Speaker, lies in the fact that the punishment should fit the crime. In this case the motion is not just. It demands a penalty that does not fit the crime. I cannot condone or support a motion of censure that demands such a harsh penalty. There must be a level of censure compatible to the act, for justice to be done. And until that condition prevails, the precedent being set here today will have serious implications for the government of the future.

Justice lies also in giving full consideration to those things that Mr. Curley has done right, as well as in those things he has done wrong -- to those accomplishments that have brought positive recognition and compliments to this Assembly and to the NWT.

Possibly at this moment a statement of Mr. Curley's achievements would be apropos here. I think we remember that the tourism industry of the NWT has named him the tourism Person of the Year for 1986. He was recognized as being the Minister responsible for the number one Canadian pavilion at Expo. Is that incompetence? "Up Here" magazine named him Northerner of the Year for 1987. Is that incompetence? As co-chairman of the NWT Business Council, his initiatives have developed substantial support from the private sector of the NWT. He has chaired the NWT action force on Arctic initiatives and has had considerable success in encouraging Gulf Canada to remain in the Beaufort Sea. He has directed the difficult and prolonged negotiations between the federal government and the GNWT to put in place a new economic development agreement. He has successfully carried out, at the Legislative Assembly direction, the convening of regional economic development conferences across the Territories. And that list, sir, is incomplete.

Next Few Months Critical And Crucial

There is one other important question that Members must weigh. Mr. Curley has served as Minister for Economic Development and Tourism for some three years, plus. This year we, as a territory, are embarked on the most difficult year for our economy that we have endured in the last 20 years. I ask Members to consider whether this motion be supported and Mr. Curley removed from this portfolio; what consequences could happen for our economy in the coming year? The next two or three months could be critical and crucial for the NWT. EDA negotiations have to be concluded for renewal of the agreement next month. Special ARDA agreement, of particular and specific interest to the native business interests of the Territories, must be renegotiated. The initiative to make the national native economic development program, NEDP, more accountable for native economic development in the NWT must be achieved, with as a minor beginning, the establishment of a regional office in Yellowknife.

There is much to do; many unfinished programs and initiatives. The accomplishment is to be measured in days, not months. It is fitting that this decision is in our hands, in the hands of Members of the Legislative Assembly, since it is the Legislative Assembly who elevated Mr. Curley to his position of trust and responsibility. Our decision should be based on our personal knowledge of Mr. Curley, of ourselves and of the people we represent. May we make our decision with justice, objectivity and understanding. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Butters. To the motion. According to my list, that concludes everyone. Did I miss anybody? Mr. Gargan, you will close the debate.

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the debate for this particular motion, there was a lot of mention by the Executive Council that the Members should be speaking as ordinary MLAs to this particular motion. I would like to agree with the Executive Council on that. I also would like to say that I do accept Mr. Curley's apology as an ordinary MLA. However, as an Executive Council Member, I cannot condone the type of action that he has bestowed upon me as an ordinary MLA.

Existing Mechanisms To Judge Conduct

We do have two precautionary measures that we use when we select Members to the Executive Council and that is after two years we review and see which Ministers go back and which Ministers do not go back in. This was based on an agreement with all the ordinary Members here. Also, after the two years, then, of course, we do not have any other mechanism in place to judge the conduct of a Minister and the only way that we probably perhaps might be able to judge a Minister -- there is not any except this type of a format.

I also understand that there might be some serious implications to this government, as Mr. Butters has put it. Of course there would. I have put my own political career on the line here, Mr. Speaker, with regard to this particular motion, primarily because if this motion passes, exactly how much support am I going to get from the Executive Council for my own area? That is in jeopardy too. So, I have not by no means, you know -- like done this in good conscience of knowing that I am putting my political career in jeopardy here, too, because if no other Member would be able to do it, then who is going to do it? We could set a precedent based on good arguments that the

Minister should stay in. I, myself, have felt that I was offended and I do not know how effective I will be from now for the next five, six months as a Member toward my constituency. The most crucial time in my political career is at stake here, too, but I will put that on the line, for what, Mr. Speaker? Well, there is only one thing I could say and that is for democracy, because if we do not have any democracy then, what is this Assembly? In closing the debate on this important issue, Mr. Speaker, I feel that all Members who support the democratic form of government in the Northwest Territories should support this motion.

The question before Members is a question of confidence in this Assembly in Mr. Curley's ability to be a Minister of our government. The integrity of the whole Assembly, I feel, is at stake with this question and Members should vote in favour of this motion so that the people of the Northwest Territories can have confidence in our system of government and send a clear message to the people of the Northwest Territories that this Assembly is accountable for its action. The people have to have confidence that this Assembly is the master of its own house. Mr. Speaker, the question of confidence in a Minister or in the whole Executive Council is fundamental to the democratic system. I am sure Members have thought hard about the motion and will vote in good faith and conscience on the matter and I urge all Members to support this motion. Mr. Speaker, I also would like to say that whatever the outcome of this crucial issue at hand, I would hope that there will be some working relationship between the Executive, the honourable Member and the Members that did vote for or against this motion. Mr. Speaker, I would ask for a recorded vote. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Clerk, a recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour of the motion, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Erkloo, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Paniloo, Mr. Gargan, Mr. T'Seleie, Mr. Wah-Shee, Mr. McCallum, Mr. MacQuarrie, Mr. Richard, Mr. Angottitauruq.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Arlooktoo, Mrs. Lawrence, Mr. Wray, Mr. Curley, Mr. Sibbeston, Mr. Butters, Mr. Pedersen, Ms Cournoyea.

MR. SPEAKER: All those abstaining, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Ballantyne, Mr. Patterson, Mr. McLaughlin.

Motion 20-87(1), Carried

MR. SPEAKER: The vote as recorded are 10 "yes", eight "no", with three abstentions. The motion has been carried.

---Carried

We will recognize the clock; it is four o'clock. We will recess for 15 minutes for coffee.

---SHORT RECESS

Are there any further motions for today? Item 15, first reading of bills. Bill 9-87(1). Mr. Butters.

ITEM 15: FIRST READING OF BILLS

First Reading Of Bill 9-87(1): Financial Administration Act

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Pine Point, that Bill 9-87(1), An Act Respecting the Financial Administration of the Government of the Northwest Territories and Public Agencies, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have a motion on the floor for first reading of Bill 9-87(1). Are you ready for the question? All those in favour? Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 9-87(1) has had first reading. Bill 31-87(1), Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1987-88.

MR. RICHARD: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Point of order, Mr. Richard.

MR. RICHARD: Mr. Speaker, I have no Bill 31-87(1) in my book.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Butters, this would be the final day that Bill 31-87(1) would stay on the order paper without being brought back. Are you ready to proceed with it now? Do you have copies of it?

HON. TOM BUTTERS: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 31-87(1) then will be dropped from the order paper. Are there any other first readings of bills? Item 16, second reading of bills. Bill 26-87(1), Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1987-88. Mr. Butters.

ITEM 16: SECOND READING OF BILLS

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife North that Bill 25-87(1), An Act Respecting Supplementary Appropriations for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the Fiscal Year Ending the 31st Day of March, 1987, be read for the second time. The purpose of this bill, Mr. Speaker, is to make supplementary appropriations and to reduce certain previous appropriations for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1987.

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry, Mr. Minister, I think you are reading from the wrong bill possibly. This is Bill 26-87(1). Shall we try it again? Second reading of bills. Bill 26-87(1), Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1987-88. I understand that the government does not wish to proceed with the second reading at the present time. Bill 8-87(1), Elections Act. Mr. Butters.

Second Reading Of Bill 8-87(1): Elections Act

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Pine Point, that Bill 8-87(1), An Act to Amend the Elections Act, be read for the second time. The purpose of this bill, Mr. Speaker, is to amend the Elections Act to deem the chief electoral officer for Canada as chief electoral officer for the Northwest Territories where an agreement in respect of the conduct of elections exists; to correct technical errors; and to clarify a consequential amendment to the Income Tax Act to state that the payment of a contribution to a candidate may be made during the campaign period or, where the candidate has a campaign deficit, within 60 days of the campaign period as stated in the Elections Act.

MR. SPEAKER: To the principle of the bill. Question being called. All those in favour? Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 8-87(1) has had second reading. Second reading of Bill 30-87(1), Plebiscite Act. Mr. Sibbeston.

Second Reading Of Bill 30-87(1): Plebiscite Act

HON. NICK SIBBESTON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik, that Bill 30-87(1), An Act to Amend the Plebiscite Act, be read for the second time. The purpose of this bill is to amend the Plebiscite Act to allow the rules respecting elections in the Elections Act, 1978 to apply, notwithstanding its repeal by the Elections Act; to set out the question to be asked on a proposed boundary for division of the Northwest Territories; to reduce the period of time, in advance of the day a plebiscite is held that returning officers must be appointed, from 60 days to 49 days; and to make a consequential change to Schedule B.

MR. SPEAKER: To the principle. Question being called. All those in favour? Opposed, if any? Bill 30-87(1), Plebiscite Act, has had second reading.

---Carried

Item 17, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 1-87(1), Appropriation Act, 1987-88; Bill 7-87(1), Education Act; Bill 6-87(1), Criminal Injuries Compensation Act; Bill 2-87(1), Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act; Bill 17-87(1), Mechanics' Lien Act; Bill 14-87(1), Loan Authorization Act, 1987-88; Bill 25-87(1), Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 1986-87; Bill 29-87(1), Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 1986-87; Bill 24-87(1), Student Financial Assistance Act. Mr. Clerk, will you see that Bill 8-87(1) and Bill 30-87(1) are added to the order paper for tomorrow? We will go into committee of the whole with Mr. Wah-Shee in the chair.

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

PROCEEDINGS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO CONSIDER BILL 1-87(1), APPROPRIATION ACT, 1987-88.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): The committee will come to order. Mr. Butters.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Speaker, I believe there are two departments that have had introductory remarks made, Education and the Housing Corporation. The Housing Corporation was last and I wonder if we might proceed with that item at the present time, sir.

Northwest Territories Housing Corporation

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): The Housing Corporation. I believe the Minister has already made his opening remarks. Mr. Minister, do you wish to invite any witnesses before the committee?

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, if I could move to the witness table and invite officials from the Housing Corporation to join me.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Is the committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Minister, for the record, would you identify your witnesses?

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Mr. Chairman, I have with me Hiram Beaubier, who is the president of the Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. General comments. Mr. Richard.

MR. RICHARD: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to get some further explanation from the Minister about a matter that I raised in the Assembly last month and that was the cost of this move of the headquarters offices of the Housing Corporation. The Minister responded to my written Question W9-87(1) with a written return. In relation to that, Mr. Chairman, if the Minister has a response there, there is an indication in paragraph three of the response that the cost of tenant improvements was partially borne by an allowance that the landlord gave against the first year's rental. And also an actual cost to the corporation of some \$24,000. I do not glean from this three page reply, Mr. Chairman, what was the total cost of these improvements. I had anticipated that, when the response came in, it would be a figure of a magnitude of several hundred thousand dollars. Because of my knowledge of the cost of improvements to space of some 19,000 or 20,000 square feet, I know it is very expensive to improve the bare space so that it is acceptable to move people in to use it as office space.

This annual rent that appears, the base rent of \$415,000 -- I take it that is the actual rent. I guess my question when you read paragraph three is, how much was that reduced to or was it reduced from another figure to go with the \$24,000 to actually pay for the cost of these improvements? So perhaps the Minister could expand on that response with regard to the information set out in paragraph three, because I do not believe it is the total picture. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Minister.

Cost Of Move To New Location

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: The information that I have is the actual cost would be in the neighbourhood of \$400,000 and the real cost to us is \$23,000. So the allowance was in the magnitude of \$375,000 to \$380,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Richard.

MR. RICHARD: Well, Mr. Chairman, if we say \$375,000, does that mean that the first year's base rent instead of being \$415,000 was normally going to be \$700,000 or \$780,000? Where does the \$375,000 come into play?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: My understanding, Mr. Chairman, is that it was merely an incentive in the first year, so there is not an extra amount added on to the yearly rent.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Richard.

MR. RICHARD: Mr. Chairman, I still do not understand. The Housing Corporation is in space that somebody paid \$400,000 worth of improvements for. My concern -- and I think the Minister is aware, from the first day I asked the question -- is the advisability of this move and spending these kinds of dollars. When the Minister gives this response that is on these pink pages, I do not see it being the total picture because I cannot find that \$375,000. But, let me move to another point. It indicates, over on page two, that the options that the Housing Corporation saw as open to it were to move the entire office to new space capable of accommodating the entire staff, which is the one they took, or to retain the existing 13,000 square feet in the existing space and get another 6000 somewhere else -- in other words, splitting their office. Picking the option that they did, it appears that the decision cost, over the first five years of this lease, some \$687,000. Now, I see that, with the analysis, Mr. Chairman, as being the cost of deciding we are going to have all of the employees at headquarters in one building as opposed to in two buildings two blocks apart. Am I correct in assuming that the cost of making that decision, one over the other, was close to \$700,000, and that is just over the first five years of the lease?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Minister.

Reasons For Decision To Move

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: The Member is correct that there was a cost to this government to make the decision. The decision was made for a number of reasons, one of which the Member has discussed. For two reasons we found it very difficult, with the new workload that we have in the corporation and with the new programs and a whole new corporate approach, to get the sort of communication, at the headquarters level, that we were starting to demand in the regions. We found that in the construction department, for instance, because of the fact that they have taken over a lot of in-house work, we were severely overcrowded. We had a problem that part of the lease that we had from Northern United Place really was not intended for commercial use. It was originally intended for CMHC to use for low-cost housing. We looked very hard at this and I was as concerned as the Member is about whether or not we would get value for dollars. As I think the Member has asked before, in the Department of Public Works, there are certain standards that are allocated for departments. This move put us within those standards and, for all of those reasons, we thought that, for the extra -- I do not know what it is -- \$125,000 a year, when you are looking at, essentially, a \$120 million a year budget, we thought that there was sufficient value for dollars to make the move. We looked at it in some detail and I asked for a very strong rationale because I was as concerned as the Member about moving for moving's sake, but we thought it was important to the integrity of the corporation to make this move.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Richard.

MR. RICHARD: Mr. Chairman, I see this as, perhaps, what we might coin, the million dollar decision because it is clear from the analysis provided that the decision to go to one building, as opposed to the existing space and some expansion space in another building two blocks away, is costing our government, through its subsidy to the Housing Corporation at least the \$687,000 over the first five year period, on page two. And, I believe, Mr. Chairman, regarding the other \$375,000 or \$400,000 that it appears the landlord chipped in, I can only understand what the Minister is

saying is that instead of charging the Housing Corporation \$400,000, the landlord charged us \$24,000, and therefore the landlord tossed in \$375,000. Now, we know that money is coming from somewhere and the landlord is not doing it out of the goodness of his heart. It is coming from the Housing Corporation's lease payments, or else the developer would not have done it. Developers do not do that.

Space Requirements Analysis And Decision To Move

So, I think this is, Mr. Chairman, about a million dollar decision and that leads me to the question: The analysis that we see in front of us on these pretty pink pages, was this analysis done prior to the decision to make the move? And who made the decision? Was it done by the Housing Corporation or did Public Works? I believe they are referred to here, ...the "corporation sought assistance from the Department of Public Works." That department arranged a space requirements analysis and I am wondering if the analysis was done, that is shown on these pages prior to the decision being made. Was the decision made to move by the Public Works department or by the Housing Corporation itself? The most important part of my question, Mr. Chairman, is whether this analysis -- whether the Minister agrees it was a \$700,000 decision or a million dollar decision -- was done prior to the decision. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: In answer to the two parts of your question. The \$375,000 or \$400,000 in question was an incentive from the developer because they were sitting with an empty building. So it was not a cost to the Housing Corporation whatsoever. In fact they gave us cash in hand to move. So we are talking about a \$600,000 decision. All this information was available to me. I made the decision and took it to the Financial Management Board and had to justify that decision there. So if there is any responsibility for this move, it is mine. I had what I thought was adequate data to make a decision. I made my presentation to the Financial Management Board and they agreed with the presentation, so the responsibility for the move is mine. I had this much information to make the decision on.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Richard.

MR. RICHARD: Mr. Chairman, my final question on this particular item is, when was this decision made? Probably the Minister has at hand the commencement date or the occupancy date, but when was the decision made in relation to that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: It was made in May or June of 1986.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. General comments. Mr. Arlooktoo.

Request For Smaller Housing Units, Lake Harbour

MR. ARLOOKTOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is an information item concerning Lake Harbour and how they should have their construction done. The residents of Lake Harbour prefer to have single dwelling units or units for couples or two bedroom units. There should be more two bedroom and single housing units in Lake Harbour, because there are a lot of people who would prefer to live in a small unit because the rent is so high. Perhaps you should consider having two bedroom or single housing units in Lake Harbour. We know that there are going to be two units built each year in Lake Harbour. We would like you to consider sort of four-plexes or eight-plexes, things like that, that have two bedroom units or single rooms in Lake Harbour. Also, in Lake Harbour there is a very inadequate amount of two bedroom or single rooms and there are also going to be small families that are growing in the community. We would prefer to have these. There are four bedroom units that are not being used and there are a lot of older houses that people are prefer to live in. Perhaps you can plan ahead for Lake Harbour to have one room apartments for single people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am aware of the concern of the Member. When I visited the Baffin in the summertime, that concern was expressed by a lot of people in a lot of communities. More and more younger families, young couples or single people or young couples with

one kid are looking for housing. So the trend now in the Housing Corporation is to build more units to accommodate smaller families. Also I have asked the Housing Corporation to design a new HAP unit which will be a smaller HAP unit, a two bedroom unit, that will also hopefully address some of the problems of smaller families. So we are aware of the Member's concern and we are trying to work toward that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. General comments. Mr. Erkloo.

MR. ERKLOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think in the Keewatin area the houses are being built within the communities and they are being contracted out and subcontracted with other contractors. As you mentioned, it was very successful. You mentioned that this is going to be further implemented. Perhaps you can clarify -- for example, in the Baffin Region, can we have this also in the Baffin Region and when? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Minister.

Separate Supply And Erect Contracts

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are two things that we have planned for this construction season, one of which is that we are introducing the separate erect and supply contracts to all areas of the Northwest Territories. So this year in the Baffin, the contracts will be broken down in that way so that smaller contractors have a better chance of bidding on the contracts. We are also setting up in every community a small committee that will consist of employees of the Housing Corporation from our districts and association staff, a council member, and an employment outreach worker. It will be that committee's objective to identify in every community a labour force and to try to monitor the projects to ensure that we maximize the use of local labour. So we hope that the situation this summer will improve from past years.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Erkloo.

MR. ERKLOO: (Translation) A supplementary question. For example, again in the Baffin, are you going to be offering this within all the 13 communities or just in certain communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: The intention, Mr. Chairman, is to offer this potential in every community. It may take a year or two in some communities before businesses have developed in order to take advantage of this but our intention is that this year that opportunity will be available in every community where we deliver public housing.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Erkloo.

MR. ERKLOO: (Translation) I do not know how far this information has been heard by the communities. Maybe perhaps you could indicate to me whether the communities have been informed of this. In regional government in Iqaluit, has this been related to the communities and how many communities are aware of this program?

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: As part of the program, the Housing Corporation has written to the housing associations and municipalities to set up these labour committees to monitor the amount of local hire. In all the advertising for public housing put out by the Housing Corporation, which is in local newspapers, the fact that there is separate supply and erect has been made known. I have instructed the corporation to get out to the districts as much information about this as we can. I can answer your question now to say that I will have Mr. Beaubier ensure that the communities are aware of both these programs. We have tried to make them aware but because it is a very new program it might be that some communities are not as aware of it as they should be. We will ensure that information gets out there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): General comments? Mr. Paniloo.

MR. PANILOO: (Translation) On HAP programs in the communities in my area, I would like to know how many HAP programs have been implemented in my constituency?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Mr. Chairman, it is my intention when we get to the capital portion of the budget to distribute to each Member the final allocation of HAP and public housing. If Mr. Paniloo could wait until we get to the capital part, I will give it to every Member and they can see exactly what is going to be distributed to each community.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Paniloo.

Renovations To Old Units Purchased

MR. PANILOO: (Translation) Yes, I can wait until we get to the capital but I have another question. In Broughton Island they have been purchasing old houses from the housing association. Can you provide any funding for renovations of these old houses? When I bought an old house I was informed by the Housing Corporation in Frobisher Bay that I could bring up how badly in shape these houses are. When they are purchased can the NWT Housing Corporation assist with the funds because this is a concern to the Broughton Island residents?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: The Housing Corporation this year, if this budget passes, will have a million dollars available for a private home repair program. That is one program that could be used for the renovation of the houses that the Member is talking about. There are two or three other programs that we have or that CMHC has where it might be possible to get money to repair privately owned homes. We will have this year some ability to help people with their private homes but it will be important, once this budget is passed, that we try to get the information out to the communities. The resources we have will be allocated on a need basis so it would be very important that people let the Housing Corporation know what their needs are.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): General comments? Mr. Erkloo.

Co-op Housing Programs

MR. ERKLOO: (Translation) My question is about something the Housing Corporation committee were reviewing. They had recommended that there should be co-op housing made available. From the information I have received, you have implemented this quite well in Yellowknife. Reading from this information, in the matter of obtaining or getting co-op housing going, it is being done in Iqaluit. My question is, are the communities informed from Iqaluit or from Yellowknife about obtaining co-op housing? I know that this has to be approved by CMHC and I realize that this might be outside your jurisdiction but maybe you could elaborate on this further.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: The Member is correct. There is co-op housing in Iqaluit and in Yellowknife and in Fort Smith. My understanding is that CMHC and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs are looking at the potential for co-op housing in some of the smaller communities and they have given a contract to the Arctic Co-operatives Limited to do a study as to the feasibility of co-ops in smaller communities. Once that study is completed we will get the results of that study and we will sit down with CMHC and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to see what is possible in this area. It is an option and it was an option brought forward by the special committee on housing also that we should look at the possibility of co-ops in smaller communities but until we get the results of this study we will not be able to tell you exactly how we can go.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. General comments. Mr. MacQuarrie.

MR. MacQUARRIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to indicate to the Minister, first of all, as I said earlier in the session, that I do have a concern with the size of the budget as a whole and as a result, at an appropriate time, we will attempt to reduce it. I did indicate that I recognized, though, that in attempting to do that, with respect to Ministers' activities, it was not necessarily a want of confidence and I say it in respect of Mr. Wray that I felt that perhaps he needed a little rein rather than spur and that is often a good position to be in. So I would just like to say to this Minister, as well, that I do believe he has taken the job well in hand and initiated a number of things that are very important, both in this portfolio and in his other.

One question that I have with respect to the move, though; again I have a concern with that kind of thing. I noted in the justification that it stated on page two under b), that the space available was inadequate to house our staff to minimum government standards. The question that arises in my mind is, in making that statement, is the department talking about quality of space or was it merely talking about quantity of space and space per person?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Mr. Minister.

Problem With Quantity Of Space

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that the major consideration is that of quantity of space. I am sure there probably are some standards as far as windows and ventilation and that sort of thing, but I think the major criterion is the actual quantity of usable space.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. MacQuarrie.

MR. MacQUARRIE: Yes, I just wanted to clarify that so that there is no intimation that in some way the space that is there is inferior or unacceptable to be used as government offices by some other department, or whatever. It was not a question of quality.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Generally, I would say the Member is correct. There were some 3125 square feet, which was the YWCA sublease, which gave some difficulty because of the configuration of that space. It was not really conducive for this sort of operation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. General comments. Mr. McCallum.

Financing Agreement Between GNWT And Housing Corporation

MR. McCALLUM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to get some information on -- and again I am not sure the Minister indicated it while he was making his introductory remarks; perhaps he can expand on it somewhat -- the whole question of the financial agreement that the GNWT or Housing Corporation has with the government. There is an agreement which has been in effect since 1985. I expect that there is an agreement that has been settled for last year, but is the agreement settled now? Is the agreement in place for this coming year? This agreement, of course, forms the basis for the financing arrangements of the corporation and of course it also deals with the deficit calculation, how that deficit calculation should occur.

It is my understanding that the deficit calculations, the deficit that is reported by the corporation, are adjusted for revenues and expenditures, but they do not require, as it were, an expenditure of funds. There is a provision also for adjustment for other particular areas. I wonder just what is the arrangement that is now in place, and has there been any change in the arrangement for this coming year, over the past year or the year before, within the last two years?

I indicate this, Mr. Chairman, for a couple of reasons. One deals with the whole area of the total financial picture of the Housing Corporation and the consolidated information of the Housing Corporation, consolidated financial information that would summarize, as the government does in other parts of the revenues, assets, liabilities, the expenditures. And I raise that in relation to the total deficit of the government. It is my understanding now, that according to the government accounts, the annual report of the territorial accounts, that the government, I think for the first time, has put down the consolidated financial statement of government as a whole and that includes the Housing Corporation.

Deficits May Be Larger

Once having done that, once having looked at those particular figures, then one gets a little bit overawed, even more so than what we were when the government gave us the fiscal framework for the government this year. It was indicated at that time that we were looking at a \$55 million deficit. With the consolidated reporting, consolidated information, taking into account the transaction between the government and the corporation, then we get a different picture of things. I would even go back one year, as of March 31st, 1986 and the consolidated report of the GNWT. The government did not have a surplus of \$60 million, it had a deficit of over \$26 million. Of course

that deficit would have to be carried forward, so that in 1986-87, with the increased deficit that was reported from last year, the government had a deficit last year of \$44.5 million or more and that is including the Housing Corporation's deficit. I realize I am talking total government but it involves the consolidated financial picture of the Housing Corporation when you total it all in. So that in reality, what our deficit is in this coming year, what it may project to be in 1987-88, will not be a deficit of \$16 million or whatever; we could be looking at a deficit of over \$100 million for this total government.

So what I am asking the Minister is, what is the financial picture of the government now? I recognize you have outstanding loans to CMHC, approximately \$98 million or more. You are going through it, paying it out. You have an agreement with CMHC that they share, 50/50, the basis of amortization costs and I think that there was a certain amount of principal paid and then there is a larger amount of the interest on it that has been paid. I think that, in your book, it talks about an interest payment of approximately \$13 million, as I recall.

So, has the financial arrangement that you have with the government, now, first and foremost, been completed for this coming year? Is there any change in that agreement, or do you contemplate any kind of change, so that all the transactions that the deficit calculations are made on, principal repayments of the long-term debt, as well as the deficit that is reported by the corporation, will be adjusted for revenues and expenditures not covered by an outlay of funds?

Secondly, what is the status of the debt of the corporation at the present time? I think that the last one I saw, was it over \$102 million? Ninety-eight million, I guess it is. I wonder if the Minister could comment on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

Loans Amortized Over 50 And 35 Years

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: Essentially, the financial arrangement that was in place for the last couple of years is still in place and we are not anticipating major changes; we will be sitting down with the Financial Management Secretariat to look at the agreement. The section 43 loans -- I think to a total of \$98,471,000, 13.6 per cent -- my understanding is that those loans have been amortized over 50 and 35 years and the repayment schedule, principal and interest, has been included in our base, and CMHC -- unless CMHC called the loan tomorrow, which they do not intend to do -- well, you are right, in fact, there is a book entry of \$100 million debt. In fact, it does not at all affect the financial picture of the government because the repayment of that is already included in our base and is just part of our overall base right now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. McCallum.

Cash Balance Accumulating From Principal Repayment On Mortgages

MR. McCALLUM: I think that one of the comments that had been made by the Auditor General was that, because of the fact that there were certain funds that the corporation receives that do not affect the operating results and, therefore, are not considered in deficit calculation -- and that is from the principal repayment on mortgages -- the corporation would be accumulating some kind of cash balance that really is not identified for any specific purpose, other than general working capital, and I wonder if there has been a change in things so that, with this agreement, if you are going to accumulate this cash balance, that it be properly noted in your accounting.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: We recognize there is a technical financial problem and, other than that it is quite complicated to try to deal with, it does not affect our cash flow in or out. It is true that the Auditor General does not feel that that \$98 million is being shown 100 per cent properly. As you know, we are going through, right now, a comprehensive audit that we requested. What we thought we would do is, rather than tinker with it now, we wanted to give the Auditor General's staff an opportunity to look at everything, and then make whatever changes we have to make all at one time, rather than just tinker with one part of the system.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. General comments. Mr. Richard.

MR. RICHARD: Mr. Chairman, I may have missed this in the Minister's opening remarks on Friday, but I am wondering, with the initiative that he has announced last week, about the consultative process as taking place with respect to the rental scale, the user-pay program, and one other initiative -- I cannot remember what it was -- but it was a third announcement last week, of how those are happening in the context of the -- I cannot remember the term but it was some sort of task force that was set up, some strategy team, part of which was from outside the corporation, that was set up to do an overall corporation plan. When is it anticipated that that group will conclude their work and how does it fit in with the three announcements that the Minister made last week?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: They follow directly from the corporate plan and the corporate plan identified certain areas the corporation could start working on immediately because I said to them that I did not want a static plan where we had to wait for a book at the end. If this budget is passed, and we get our policy group in place, they will, essentially, take over the implementation of the corporate plan. So these are initiatives that are coming out of the recommendations of the corporate planning team, which flow directly from the recommendations of the special committee. So it is all following in a logical progression. This is the new context of working with communities, which was one of the major recommendations of the special committee and of the corporate planning team.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wah-Shee): Thank you. Mr. Richard.

Rental Scale And User-Pay Program

MR. RICHARD: Mr. Chairman, with respect to the further study and review and consultation on the rental scale and also on the user-pay program, I asked the Minister last week, during question period, about the time frames on those because, in all seriousness, quite apart from my tying it into an October date, it does occur to me, Mr. Chairman, and I am not as conversant with the housing programs as the Minister is, or some other Members of this Assembly, but it occurs to me that the study of the rental scale and the user-pay program is something that should be brought to a conclusion. I know that there are going to be difficult decisions. The Minister indicated that in his response, last week, but I recall from the discussion when the special committee gave its interim and final reports that there are serious inequities in the system throughout the Territories on both the user-pay program and the rental scale, and we all know that we are going to have an election this fall and it would be difficult -- or it would be easy, I should say, to put those kinds of decisions off until there is a new group of MLAs in office and a new group of Ministers and, perhaps, a new Minister of Housing, but that is the sort of procrastination or delay, Mr. Chairman, that I have some difficulty with and I just wonder if the Minister could not give me some assurance that there is some priority being attached to these items. You know, the Minister was on the housing committee -- the special committee on housing that talked about the urgency of these things, a couple of years ago, and the Minister gives some assurance that there is some priority being attached to them and there is a time frame, whether it is before or after October, a finite date by which those who have the difficult decision to make are going to come to grips with it and make a decision. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Mr. Minister.

Initiatives Undertaken By Corporation

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: I disagree very strongly with Mr. Richard that we are procrastinating. I think in the last 14 months, we have taken on a very large number of initiatives, all of which are difficult. We are using design input from the communities. This is the first time that there has ever been a five year capital plan, which took really an amazing amount of work. An update on the needs study took an amazing amount of work. Separate supply is another one. The comprehensive audit is taking all sorts of time of our staff right now; the global agreement with CMHC; the HAP labour funding. We have redesigned the whole management and maintenance system; a brand new private home repair program development. We are involved in special purpose housing now. We have given the commitment to the communities -- as I go along -- that we were going to work with them to develop some of these programs. At the same time as we are doing all that, we are doing a basic reorganization of the goals and objectives of the Housing Corporation. So we do have priorities and I think right now that the staff of the Housing Corporation should be commended for the amazing amount of work that they are trying to do in a short period of time.

To answer the specific question, as I said in the House it was pointless to do a study on user-pay until there is some experience with it. The system right now is not inequitable. The system could be inadequate. The system now is three cents a kilowatt hour below the tree line and two cents a kilowatt hour above the tree line. There is some question as to whether or not it is accomplishing the ends it was supposed to accomplish, which is to try to cut down power costs. But it has only been in effect, as I said, for a year and a half. There has not been time to gather enough data to make any sort of analysis, so we are not procrastinating. We will be collecting that data this summer and we hope to be able to make some decisions on that before the election. I am not using the election in any way as some kind of an arbitrary date for when we are going to stop. I know there is a good chance I will not be Minister of Housing and I would like to get as many of these projects as close to completion as I can, before that time comes.

Rental Scale

With the rental scale, it is a really, really difficult one. The rental scale review is something that every community that I have been to -- and I have been to, I do not know, probably 45 since I have been Minister, 40 or 45 communities -- have said they want to be involved with. And there is a different perception of the problem with the rental scale in every community. I know the Members who were on the special committee can recall that what communities do not want is for us to hire some southern consultants and come through and make a decision. They want to be part of the building of a new rental scale. It is also an educational process for the people in the communities and for our staff, trying to build a consensus about what is a rental scale trying to achieve. You may think that this discussion paper is simplistic and easy, but it was not, just trying to put together some of the basic principles. But our staff in every community will be going with that. That is the beginning of the dialogue, just to explain and learn the problems. I would say that redoing of the rental scale in detail will take a year. They took two years in British Columbia to do it. The last time it was done, it was done badly and there was not any sort of acceptance, at the community level, of the scale that was developed. So for this one, it is not a matter of procrastination, it is a matter of ensuring that it is done properly this time, so that everybody understands all aspects of the rental scale. I do not know if that answers your question, Mr. Richard.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Thank you. General comments. Mrs. Lawrence.

MRS. LAWRENCE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have to agree we have come a long way in housing, even since our trip to the communities with the special committee on housing. There has been a big improvement made. One of the things that came up, many times, was that accountability by the local community. In my area, we managed to get the housing authority established and up until now, it is working. It still has its ups and downs, but they are working very hard at it. One of the nicest things that happened with housing, in my area, in Fort Resolution, was that we had four small units built, each with one bedroom, and a wood stove. That was one of the nicest things that ever happened. It met the needs of these individual elders. If we could do that for more communities, I am sure we would solve a lot of problems of overcrowding and that kind of thing. We have a situation in Snowdrift where an elder was asked to move into one of these modern units and she refused, mainly because it had no wood stove. She is not familiar with the modern stoves that they put in and she was unable to make her dried meat. They live on dried meat all year around. She could not maintain it, either; it was a little bit too big for her.

So, I wonder if the Minister would consider building more of these smaller units in a community. I do not know if the Minister had a chance to see the ones that we built in Fort Resolution, but the community and council worked very hard at it and with the support of everyone, they were able to come up with these units.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Mr. Minister.

Small HAP Houses Successful

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: I would like to thank the Member because she was one of the prime movers of trying that experiment which we tried in Fort Resolution and it was quite successful. Because of that, we are now going to be designing HAP houses -- but smaller HAP houses -- that will be available in 1988-89 everywhere, and in a couple of communities in the upcoming year. I am also looking at the possibility, because of some of the problems that we are having with the HAP program as to eligibility, and because of the very strict standards that CMHC has, of maybe developing our

own program. It would be 100 per cent funded by the Housing Corporation. Even though we will not be able to build as many units that way, it will give us some flexibility. So I am looking at those possibilities, and I will be bringing forward to the House, any ideas along those lines.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Thank you. Mrs. Lawrence.

MRS. LAWRENCE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In Snowdrift, we desperately need houses. There are a lot of elders who are in little shacks. I call them shacks because they are so broken down that we cannot fix them. More of these small HAP units are needed, especially some of these little elders that -- I am repeating myself, I know that, but I just desperately need those units in Snowdrift. Is there any way that we can get at least eight small units like we have in Fort Resolution? That is all we need. We do not need these great big, huge, three bedroom HAP houses. We could make four little units out of even one HAP unit if we really work at it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: The Member knows we have a major problem with financing. I had intended to move ahead with the replacement program this year to replace 100 of the dilapidated northern rentals each year. Because of budget restraints, and because that would cost us some four million dollars a year or so, I did not go ahead with that. Our fire replacement program is totally inadequate right now. The costs are going up so I cannot give the Member a definitive answer. As the summer progresses we will look at the relative needs of each community. If there is any available money we will have to judge each community on its merits, on its relative needs and see what we can do. But at this point in time, we are attempting to treat every community fairly. This is the budget we have, we will see what we can build with this budget and if there is anything left over then we will have to have another look at which communities have the greatest needs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Mrs. Lawrence.

Problem Of Accumulated Arrears

MRS. LAWRENCE: There is still another big, I consider it is a big problem -- the arrears that have accumulated in the past are a hardship for some of these people. I do not believe, when they first started this housing, the program was delivered properly. Wrong information was given, lack of information, lack of co-operation, name it, and because of that, a lot of people went into arrears not knowing, not realizing it. I would like to see some kind of step taken to clear up this mess that was created. A lot of capable people too went into arrears. I know that they are still living in the house and they still have arrears. But there must be some way to deal with it, either by letting them fix up the house, instead of somebody else doing it, and pay them a little. Not pay them but deduct it off their arrears. I feel that there has to be a way of dealing with this.

This happened before our time, even before the last election, so we walked into that mess. We should deal with it and we should not keep pushing it under the rug. It keeps coming back out again. I really feel that some of these individuals are not able to even apply for HAP units, although now they are a little bit more sophisticated, I guess you can say that. They could borrow money from the bank to pay up their arrears but a house is not guaranteed to them. If somebody goes out of their way to pay up their arrears then we should really consider that individual for a HAP unit. Some kind of commitment should be made or something should be worked out, some solution should be worked out so that we can give them that incentive to pay up their arrears and get into a HAP unit. Some of them are living in shacks and are in a rut. They want to pay but they are not too sure they are going to get a house. I would like to see some kind of action taken toward these arrears. Is there anything coming out on that problem yet?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: It will be part of this review we are doing of the rent scales and it is something we are trying to grapple with, because we get different messages from the communities. As Mrs. Lawrence is aware, there are some people who have paid their arrears faithfully every year for a number of years and think it would be unfair if somebody who did not was suddenly forgiven their arrears. Our other problem is that CMHC cost shares in the operations and maintenance of public housing, 75 per cent. If we forgave someone's arrears, we would be 100 per cent responsible for those costs.

Initiation Of Pay-Back Scheme

So, I know the Housing Corporation is looking for ways, but there is no easy answer. What we have tried to do is initiate in some regions a pay-back scheme which is responsible, that somebody could pay it back over a reasonable period of time. That has worked in some areas. I agree that there are some people who do not have the ability to pay it back. They did not understand. What we do not know is how to identify those people who should be given some help and identify those people who actually just have no intention of even trying to pay it back. So we have put that as part of the review of the rental scale. We know it is a problem.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Mrs. Lawrence.

MRS. LAWRENCE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not suggesting that we forgive these arrears. Let the individuals fix their houses or something, instead of the housing authority doing it. Let them do it themselves, but it has to be explained to them and closely supervised, so that their arrears are paid up. Why I am saying there was so much misunderstanding is because the understanding that my parents had, when they got into their house was that they could pay two dollars a month and after a certain number of years they would own the house. With that understanding they moved out of that house that I was born in and my grandfather built that and they cleared everything away. As it turned out, unfortunately they died later on, but it never did happen. I know that for a fact, many people had that understanding when they moved in -- two dollars a month and they can own the building. It did not make sense but that was the understanding they got. So, Mr. Chairman, I am just suggesting that there has got to be a way of dealing with these arrears. People feel threatened, especially in some communities. There are many bad feelings toward individuals, because of these arrears. I just want to deal with it once and for all. There has to be a way of dealing with it. I do not believe that we should let them get away with it, somebody else paying their rent, that is not what I am suggesting.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL BALLANTYNE: I can give assurance to the Member I am aware of the problem. As badly as she does, I would like to come to grips with it, so we are going to be dealing with that in the review of the rental scale. I have a few ideas and I am sure the Member has a few ideas and I am sure we can do something to improve that situation, but it is a priority to do that. Because I know I have heard that, as you have, Mrs. Lawrence, in every community that we have visited.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): General comments. Does the committee agree then we go to the details of the capital estimates?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Thank you. We are on page 3.07. Detail of capital, NWT Housing Corporation, contributions, total headquarters. Mr. MacQuarrie.

MR. MacQUARRIE: Mr. Chairman, rather than starting into the detail with only a short time left, I will make a motion that we report progress.

MR. RICHARD: No quorum.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Erkloo): Okay, we have a quorum. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. All those in favour? Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Erkloo.

ITEM 18: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILL 1-87(1), APPROPRIATION ACT, 1987-88

MR. ERKLOO: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 1-87(1), Appropriation Act, 1987-88, and wishes to report progress.

Motion To Accept Report Of Committee Of The Whole, Carried

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Erkloo. Members have heard the report of the chairman of the committee of the whole. Are you agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Clerk, announcements and orders of the day.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Announcements, Mr. Speaker. There will be a Nunavut caucus meeting after adjournment this evening. There will be a caucus meeting tomorrow morning at 9:30 a.m.

ITEM 20: ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of the day for Tuesday, March 17th, at 1:00 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Oral Questions
6. Written Questions
7. Returns to Written Questions
8. Replies to Opening Address
9. 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: Bills 1-87(1), 7-87(1), 6-87(1), 2-87(1), 17-87(1), 14-87(1), 25-87(1), 29-87(1), 24-87(1), 8-87(1), 30-87(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 Tuesday, March 17th, at 1:00 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

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