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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 1983

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Appaqaq, Mr. Arlooktoo, Hon. George Braden, Hon. Tom Butters, Mr. Curley, Ms Cournoyea, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Kilabuk, Mr. MacQuarrie, Hon. Arnold McCallum, Mr. McLaughlin, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Hon. Dennis Patterson, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Sayine, Mr. Sibbeston, Mrs. Sorensen, Hon. Kane Tologanak, Mr. Wray

ITEM NO. 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Fraser): It is my understanding that the question of a quorum was raised and I feel it is important that the Speaker, Mr. Stewart, review this matter and make a statement on his return to the House.

Orders of the day. Item 2, Members' replies. Item 3, oral questions. Mr. Curley.

ITEM NO. 3: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 53-83(1): Request For Return To Question 44-82(3)

MR. CURLEY: (Translation) Mr. Chairman, this is a question for the Member in charge of the Housing Corporation. In November, 1982 I asked Question 44-82(3) and I would just like to know when he will answer this written question.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. McCallum.

HON. ARNOLD MCCALLUM: Mr. Speaker, I would have to go back into the Hansard records of the November session and ascertain the nature of the question before making a reply. If there has been a question outstanding from the last session and we have made a reply it would be in information items. If there is nothing there in information items I would assure the Member we would have a response to that question before we recess or prorogue this session of the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McCallum. Item 3, oral questions. Mr. Sibbeston.

Question 54-83(1): Minister's Knowledge Of Incident Involving School Principal, Fort Liard

MR. SIBBESTON: Firstly, Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education. I would like to ask the Minister if he is aware of a situation which has arisen in Fort Liard in regard to a principal, Mr. Reed, who has apparently been charged with illegally shooting moose in BC and transporting them into Fort Liard and, consequently, there is quite a local furor and concern about this matter. I want to ask the Minister if he is aware of this and, also, ask him if he is aware of the fact that the principal has, apparently, threatened one of the teacher assistants in the community that if he did not co-operate with him to cover up the incident or say that he was the person responsible for the shooting that he would be fired.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 54-83(1): Minister's Knowledge Of Incident Involving School Principal, Fort Liard

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware of the incident. I am not aware of the alleged threat. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 54-83(1): Minister's Knowledge Of Incident Involving School Principal, Fort Liard

MR. SIBBESTON: In view of this situation, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would consider certainly having the principal removed from the community or else fired. I can say that the chief has insisted that the principal be removed from the community immediately. So I wonder if the Minister would consider complying with the request of the chief and the local leaders in Fort Liard to have the principal removed from the community immediately.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Sibbeston, I am informed that the person was charged in court -- that we cannot ask the Minister to answer in the House. Mr. Sibbeston.

MR. SIBBESTON: Mr. Speaker, if I can just reword my question; in view of the incident and in view of the concern that the principal has caused to the local leaders in Fort Liard, would he consider moving the principal from the community?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously it is a situation that we should be very concerned about. I have just arrived in town this morning and I do not have an up-to-date report on the matter from the superintendent of Education in that area who, I know, has been looking into it. Once I have a full report from him I will be prepared to advise the Member what action we would take as a result of the situation described. Thank you.

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

Question 55-83(1): BC Wildlife Authorities And Fort Liard Leaders Express Concern

MR. SIBBESTON: Sir, a question to the Minister of Renewable Resources now. I want to ask the Minister if he is aware that as a result of this incident that BC wildlife authorities now have expressed concern about this particular incident. They have also cautioned the leaders in Fort Liard that if any incident like this occurs again, among the people presently living in Fort Liard who are hunting and trapping in BC, that the wildlife authorities would enforce the regulations much more strictly than they have been to date. Is he aware that this incident has caused concern to the people and the leaders of Fort Liard? Is he aware also that it has caused the BC government authorities to be concerned about the activities of Dene people who live in the North, who trap and hunt in the BC area?

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

Return To Question 55-83(1): BC Wildlife Authorities And Fort Liard Leaders Express Concern

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am not aware nor have my officials been contacted with regard to that particular incident, nor have we been informed by the British Columbia officials. When we do receive comments from those officials, we will respond as positively as we can in support of the Dene in Fort Liard.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 3, oral questions. Mr. Wray.

Question 56-83(1): Viewing Of "Skins" And "Canada's Shame" By MLAs

MR. WRAY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Renewable Resources. I wonder if he would undertake to have his officials see if they can acquire the two movies, "Skins" and "Canada's Shame" for viewing by the MLAs at some time before this session finishes? Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Wray. Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 56-83(1): Viewing Of "Skins" And "Canada's Shame" By MLAs

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO: Mr. Speaker, I certainly will try to see if we can get those films, if it is possible. They may not be available to us but if they are I will certainly attempt to get those films to show to the MLAs of this House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 3, oral questions. Mrs. Sorensen.

Question 57-83(1): Events At Pre-Constitutional Meetings

MRS. SORENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is for Mr. Braden. Mr. Speaker, the government leader has been attending pre-constitutional meetings in Ottawa and he has just arrived back. CBC news has reported that there has been a change in the agenda for the constitutional conference and that the pre-constitutional meetings have been a success. I wonder if the Minister can give this House a report on the latest events that have transpired.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mrs. Sorensen, I think that would come under item 6, but if the Minister is prepared to answer now, go ahead, Mr. Braden.

Return To Question 57-83(1): Events At Pre-Constitutional Meetings

HON. GEORGE BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. In response to the Member's question, we were able in Ottawa on the first day of our meeting to come to an agreement on an agenda. Basically, the agenda was one that was drafted by the three native organizations and presented to the chairman, Mr. MacGuigan. I would say that the agenda covers off most of the items which have been raised in the numerous preparatory meetings held thus far and, really, was just a modification of other proposed agendas that had been tabled by the federal government. So it was encouraging that we were able to reach agreements on the agenda. In so far as the Northwest Territories was concerned, I was very pleased to see that the repeal of sections 42(1)(e) and (f) of the Canadian constitution has remained on the agenda. I just want to make it clear for this House, Mr. Speaker, that the agenda as agreed to by constitutional ministers, will then be forwarded to the first ministers and we are hoping that the first ministers will accept the agenda as we have proposed it and will not make any changes to it.

On the following day, Mr. Speaker, we got into a great deal of discussion on the various issues that are contained on the agenda and I found that while the discussion was difficult and at times very strained, it was in fact necessary. As my colleague, Mr. Wah-Shee, indicated this morning in an interview, some of the issues have been a major concern to aboriginal people for almost 100 years. So it is not surprising, Mr. Speaker, that tempers flared. There was some hard hitting discussion and exchange which might be characterized by the southern media as being unproductive and that not much is going to transpire out of the First Ministers' Conference.

I would just say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that I will be making a formal report to the caucus and again back to this House sometime in the next week and a half -- I am waiting for my deputy minister to return -- and we will produce a document and schedule which can be examined.

One further thing, Mr. Speaker, I believe that for the first time in the history of Canada we have the leaders of aboriginal peoples actually sitting down with representatives of all 10 provincial governments, two territorial governments and the federal government. Now as little as two or three years ago you would never have seen that happen. While I suspect that the issues are difficult for all to deal with, there still remains within all the participants to this date, and hopefully in the future, a will and determination to spend the kind of time and dollars and devote the kind of thought that will be necessary, over what I believe to be an extended period of time, to resolve the issues in a national context and to see aboriginal rights properly defined and reflected in our national constitution. If Members have other questions I would be pleased to answer them, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, oral questions.

Item 4, written questions.

Item 5, returns. Are there any returns? Item 6, Ministers' statements. Mr. Braden.

ITEM NO. 6: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement On Distribution Of Responsibilities Within Executive Branch

HON. GEORGE BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I have a brief statement to make concerning the distribution of responsibilities within the Executive branch of the government.

The responsibility for two more departments of the Government of the Northwest Territories has been transferred to elected representatives of the people of the Northwest Territories effective March 1st, 1983.

---Applause

Under instructions from the Hon. John Munro, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, to John Parker, Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Departments of Information and Public Works, previously administered by the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner respectively, become the responsibility of elected Members of the NWT Executive Committee. This change is in line with the recent federal cabinet decision that the North should move toward more responsible and politically accountable government. I would just note in closing, Mr. Speaker, that the portfolio responsibilities have been assigned to Mr. McCallum in the case of Public Works, and Mr. Patterson in the case of Information, and I understand that Mr. Munro is making an announcement today in Ottawa on this subject as well. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 6, Ministers' statements.

Item 7, petitions.

Item 8, reports of standing and special committees.

Item 9, tabling of documents. Mr. Nerysoo.

ITEM NO. 9: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Tabled Document 16-83(1), a report entitled, "Metallic Contaminants of Significance to Northwest Territories Residents" prepared for the Science Advisory Board of the Northwest Territories, September, 1982.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Item 9, tabling of documents. Mr. McCallum.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Tabled Document 17-83(1), Policy and Directive on Northern Preference of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McCallum. Item 9, tabling of documents.

Item 10, notices of motion. Item 11, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. McCallum.

ITEM NO. 11: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Notice Of Motion For First Reading Of Bill 19-83(1): Council Ordinance

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, March 4th, 1983, I will move that Bill 19-83(1), An Ordinance to Amend the Council Ordinance, be read for the first time. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that I would be able to get unanimous consent of the House to move first reading today.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McCallum. Did you have a seconder on that?

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Speaker, in all due humility to your office, I do not need a seconder to give notice. When I get to the first reading, I may need a seconder.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McCallum. You are right on the ball. Item 11, notices of motion for the first reading of bills.

Item 12, motions. There being no motions, item 13, first reading of bills. Mr. McCallum.

ITEM NO. 13: FIRST READING OF BILLS

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Speaker, before I move it, may I have the unanimous consent of the House to move first reading of Bill 19-83(1)?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Any nays?

---Agreed

First Reading Of Bill 19-83(1): Council Ordinance

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife North, that Bill 19-83(1), An Ordinance to Amend the Council Ordinance, be read for the first time.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. To the motion. Question being called. All those in favour? Bill 19-83(1) has had first reading.

---Carried

Item 13, first reading of bills.

Item 14, second reading of bills. Item 15, consideration in committee of the whole of bills, recommendations to the Legislature and other matters, with Mr. Sayine in the chair.

ITEM NO. 15: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS, RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGISLATURE AND OTHER MATTERS

The appearance of Bell Canada and NorthwesTel witnesses. Bills 1-83(1), 6-83(1), 7-83(1), 8-83(1), 9-83(1), 10-83(1), 11-83(1), 12-83(1), 13-83(1), 14-83(1), 15-83(1), 16-83(1), 17-83(1), 18-83(1) and 20-83(1).

PROCEEDINGS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO BELL CANADA AND NORTHWESTEL; BILL 1-83(1), APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE, 1983-84

Matters Relating To Bell Canada And NorthwesTel

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): The committee will come to order. We have witnesses from Bell Canada and NorthwesTel and that is for Motion 11-83(1). Does the committee agree that we invite these members in as witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Sergeant-at-Arms.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. McCallum.

Motion To Limit Discussion On Matters Relating To Bell Canada And NorthwesTel To One Hour, Carried

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Chairman, I recognize that you have these witnesses coming into the House. I would like to move a motion at this time that the discussion in committee of the whole on business resulting from the appearance of the witnesses from Bell Canada and NorthwesTel be limited to 2:30 p.m. this afternoon, or in point of fact, one hour, but it be limited to 2:30. May I speak to that particular motion, sir?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): The motion is in order.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Chairman, whilst I have no ulterior motive in terms of limiting the number of questions that may come from discussions resulting from the appearance of the witnesses, and whilst I do not want to degrade their appearance here because I know they have come here at our request and at some expense, there is a considerable amount of business to be done by the committee. I want to assure both the witnesses, as well as Members of this committee, that I am not trying to limit the amount of it, but I believe that the kinds of discussions and kinds of questions can be properly addressed in this committee within the scope of the next 60 minutes or so.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): To the motion. Are you ready for the question? Question being called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I would like to welcome the witnesses from Bell Canada and NorthwesTel. Maybe before we start off, we can have the gentlemen introduce themselves and their positions with their companies.

MR. ST. ONGE: My name is Claude St. Onge. I am vice-president of Bell Canada. My headquarters are in Quebec City.

MR. LEPAGE: My name is Gerry Lepage. I am general manager of Bell Canada, also located in Quebec City and responsible for the portion of my territory which is in the northeast Territories.

MR. DUNBAR: My name is Bill Dunbar. I am the general manager of NorthwesTel with my headquarters in Whitehorse.

MR. OXLEY: My name is Jack Oxley. I am the director of customer services of NorthwesTel and my headquarters are in Whitehorse.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Thank you. Do any of the witnesses have any opening remarks that they would like to start off with?

Presentations By Representatives Of Bell Canada

MR. ST. ONGE: First of all, we would like to thank you very much for your kind invitation, and let me tell you that many accomplishments have been made since we met in Rankin Inlet five years ago. We have invested approximately \$15 million during this period in a modernizing program which was completed at year end 1982. We feel that our communications with the Inuit people have improved greatly during the five years and our restructured organization provides well for the needs of the people. Our actions have either eliminated or greatly reduced the complaints of the Inuit in the areas of billing, wrong numbers, echo noise, poor transmission, difficulties in communicating with the telephone operators and overall unreliable service. Our education and information program conducted by David Audlakiak has been very well received by the population, and has resulted in a better understanding of Bell, as well as eliminating the mystique of using the telephone. Certainly one of the benefits of modernization, which must be greatly appreciated by the Inuit, is not having to pronounce the word "zenith" any more, and having to say "over".

Our presence in the North is also beneficial to the local population, since our people attempt to integrate and participate in community life. One contribution of note has been on occasion the use of our aircraft to carry out mercy flights. Again, it is with pleasure that we are here and now Mr. Lepage, our general manager responsible for the northern operation, will cover briefly and in more detail our activities, after which we will be happy to answer any questions you may have. The presentation of Mr. Lepage shall not last more than 10 to 15 minutes. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Thank you. Go ahead, Mr. Lepage.

Modernization Program Over Past Five Years

MR. LEPAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Over the past five years we have undertaken a very expansive modernization program. In the period of 1978 to 1980 we replaced our older NJ-92 switching machines by a more reliable step by step equipment in five locations; Cape Dorset, Pond Inlet, Sanikiluaq, Clyde River and Hall Beach. In the 1980 to 1982 timeframe, we developed especially for the environment of the North a new digital switching machine and have introduced this machine to replace eight other older NJ-92s. Consequently, at the end of 1982, locations such as Broughton Island, Arctic Bay, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Grise Fiord, Lake Harbour, Repulse Bay and Whale Cove are now served by modern technology, the new digital DMS-10 SDO machine, as we call it. In 1981 we added a new exchange and put in another DMS-10 at Little Cornwallis Island. All of these new switching machines, which are the nerve centres of any of the communications, have provided for a more reliable service, fewer wrong numbers, a better grade of transmission, easy-to-get dial tone, and fewer general phones that do not work.

We also replaced in the last five years the HF radio stations that we had left, in conjunction with Telesat; nine new earth satellite stations such that, today, all of the 22 exchanges in our territory are now served by satellite to permit long distance communications. Over that period, we have also increased by a factor of three times the number of satellite circuits permitting communications to the outside world, such that the difficulty with obtaining circuits of years ago as measured by blockage -- as we call it -- at levels of 20 per cent, are now all below our objectives of three per cent, and in most instances around one per cent.

We have introduced over the period direct distance dialing and automatic number identification, which has permitted basically the abolition of having to communicate through an operator for most communications. In other words, all you need to know is how to dial. It has also eliminated one of the big problems of the past, errors in billing or fraud in billing, because this is done automatically now, it is not one person saying that it is another person. All of this has been removed, and we do know that in the past this was a great aggravation to many of our customers. This new technology has also permitted -- for probably just a few, but it is a by-product of new technology -- it has also permitted direct distance dialing overseas, just as many communities of the South have. We have also instituted what we call TOPS, traffic operator precision systems, which permit more of the dialing to be done by the client and reducing the communications required with the operator, which makes it easier for the people to operate, and it is faster.

Standard Service Codes

We have also, over this period, introduced service codes. People requiring directory assistance or information no longer have to call zenith; they just dial 411. If they have problems with their service and repair is required, through their neighbour's telephone they can dial 611; there is no longer the problem of getting at the right location. If they have to communicate with our commercial office to talk about service or billing, they can dial the standard telephone code used worldwide, 811. So these are standard codes that are now in operation in the North.

We also, with this, provide from our Frobisher Bay office service in the language of the people, should they require it. We have Inuktitut-speaking personnel in Frobisher, even some who speak the Keewatin dialect, and we feel that we are able to meet all of the needs that the people may have from us. Over this period, we also replaced the echo suppressors in our satellite circuits, to make communication via satellite a little bit easier than it was originally. This has greatly improved transmission, and certainly the cutoff in noise has been drastically reduced. Our trilingual directory, which is very accurate, has been well received by the people, gives all of the people their requirements in their language, and provides the equivalent service as we give in the South.

We have put in recorded announcements machines in all of our switching machines to permit an announcement for situations such as where there is no such number or the number has been disconnected. In the past, the customer might have received a busy signal or not heard anything and wondered, "Is the phone not working?" In these instances, we have recorded announcements -- bilingual, in English and in Inuktitut -- telling the customer that there is no such service at such a number, and to call or to refer to the directory.

Over this period we have also provided a considerable amount of training...

MR. SIBBESTON: Mr. Chairman, point of order.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Point of order, Mr. Sibbeston?

MR. SIBBESTON: Point of order. We only have an hour, and I am just wondering how long the gentleman intended to carry on, because if we restrict ourselves to the hour we may end up with you having talked to us but us not having had a chance to question you. How long do you intend to continue? I wonder if we could just get into the questions and dealing with some of the concerns we have, and maybe you could circulate your talk to Members.

MR. LEPAGE: I am just about completed, Mr. Chairman. Basically I was arriving at the end of our list. We are quite happy, if you prefer, to answer questions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Okay. Go ahead, Mr. Lepage.

MR. LEPAGE: Maybe to finish off -- it is just to talk about our organization and our personnel. We do conduct courses for our Inuit workers, which represent 28 per cent of our personnel operating in our territory and we are always looking to increase that percentage as we can find capable people who wish to work for us and have the background to learn the job per se. So, Mr. Chairman, basically that is my message in terms of our accomplishments over the past five years.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Thank you, Mr. Lepage. Mr. Dunbar, any opening remarks?

Presentation By Representative Of NorthwesTel

MR. DUNBAR: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Honourable Members, this is the first opportunity I have had since I became general manager of NorthwesTel to meet with the committee of the whole. I am very pleased to be here today to outline for you the progress in telecommunication services that NorthwesTel has made in the Northwest Territories and expects to accomplish during 1983.

More than two decades ago our predecessor company, Canadian National Telecommunications, obtained the responsibility for providing all telecommunications services for the western half of the Northwest Territories. Since that time, the telecommunications needs of this territory have changed dramatically, and so have the facilities provided by NorthwesTel.

One of the most significant changes was the incorporation of NorthwesTel in July 1978, and the establishment of its headquarters in Whitehorse, Yukon, thereby becoming a northern company, recognizing a desire of both territorial governments to have companies that serve only the North headquartered there. NorthwesTel's mandate is to provide its customers good quality telecommunications service at as low a possible cost while providing a fair return to our stockholders, and to that end it is my opinion that NorthwesTel is meeting that responsibility. Telecommunications services in this part of our operations have expanded from three local telephone companies of the early 1960s to complete telecommunications services to every community, with the exception of Baychimo, Colville Lake, Jean Marie River, Nahanni Butte and Trout Lake, all of which are identified in the Northern Communications Assistance Program, or NCAP.

Achievements Of 1981-82

I would now like to highlight for you some of the achievements we have made during 1981-82, and our objectives we have committed ourselves to for 1983. Our highlights for 1981-82 are, first, the replacement of the Hay River telephone toll exchange with a new digital electronic switching system; this switch has expanded and improved the long distance telephone service in the western Northwest Territories, and was installed at a cost of approximately two million dollars. Another major project was the installation of a radio system to the town of Fort Smith, replacing the open wire pole line. We have also replaced the local telephone exchange with a new 1300 line digital exchange. Both of these projects have improved the quality of service to the community along with providing for future expansion. Our investment in these two projects is approximately \$3.2 million.

The company also upgraded the microwave system between Hay River and Fort Providence, doubling the capacity of the system and requiring the construction of two new microwave repeater stations. A new digital exchange was installed at Coppermine, replacing the electromechanical exchange and adding additional long distance facilities. Telecommunications services were installed at the communities of Lac la Martre and Rae Lakes under the NCAP program, and this was the first time local and long distance telephone service have been available in these two villages. Additional long distance and cable distribution facilities were added to various communities depending on their individual requirements.

Plans For 1983

Now our plans for 1983. One of the company's top priorities has been the upgrading of local telephone exchange service in many of our smaller communities we serve. Over the past two years, existing electromechanical exchanges in Tuktoyaktuk, Fort Smith and Coppermine were replaced with modern electronic exchanges. New exchange installations are also planned in 1983 for the communities of Spence Bay, Pelly Bay, Gjoa Haven, Paulatuk and Arctic Red. These exchanges will cost approximately half a million dollars, and it is part of a continuing program with which we intend to replace all of the electromechanical exchanges in the future.

Other telephone services such as automatic number identification, touch tone, zero-plus dialing, direct distance dialing, were introduced to several communities in the Northwest Territories in 1982, and these programs will continue through 1983 as they are required. The company has also committed funds to provide individual satellite earth stations to the communities of Gjoa Haven, Pelly Bay and Spence Bay to improve the long distance communications to those communities. However, this project cannot proceed until the necessary licensing is received, pending a decision from the Minister of Communications on whether or not NorthwesTel may own its own satellite earth stations.

Preparations are under way at this time to expand the long distance trunking to Cambridge Bay, increasing the facilities from seven circuits to 14, and this will be done by the end of April. The company will also construct a living quarters and workshop at Tuktoyaktuk to accommodate a new permanent technical position to service the community and the oil companies in the Beaufort Sea area.

Other projects in 1983 include the continuing expansion of underground cable and duct work systems in Yellowknife; the expansion of cable plant and long distance facilities as required in a number of communities, including Coppermine, Fort Smith, Hay River, Norman Wells, Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk; the relocation of a microwave site south of Inuvik to improve long distance and data communications serving the Mackenzie Delta; and the replacement of the radio equipment to improve the long distance communication facilities to Fort McPherson and Paulatuk.

Closing Of Toll Operations In Hay River

There has also been a great deal of concern in recent weeks over the company's announcement of its plans to close its toll operations centre at Hay River. The company made this decision with great regret, but like all companies in Canada during these difficult economic times NorthwesTel must adjust its operations to meet a changing environment. Mobile radio traffic has not increased as we had predicted three years ago, but instead has been declining at the rate of approximately 20 per cent per month over the past year. As a result, the size of the operator team in Hay River has become too small to be cost effective. The company has a responsibility to maximize efficiency while providing good quality of service to its customers, and thus it was decided to relocate the mobile radio traffic.

The Hay River telecommunications centre is NorthwesTel's major operation in the Northwest Territories, and will continue to be for many years to come. NorthwesTel has no plan to phase out Hay River as a technical centre for telecommunications activities for the western Northwest Territories. However, I stress that the company will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that its operations continue to be efficient and cost effective, in the interest of both its shareholder and its subscribing public.

Interconnection Of Subscriber Owned Terminal Equipment

I would now like to turn to another aspect of telecommunications development that will have a significant impact on NorthwesTel and its customers in the near future, and that is the interconnection of subscriber owned terminal equipment. A Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission decision handed down in November of 1982 will allow NorthwesTel customers to own their own telephones and switchboards and to connect them to the company's network. NorthwesTel will file a set of revised rates and tariffs with the CRTC by September 1st of this year, and some time after that date the CRTC will approve terminal interconnect.

A number of specifications regarding terminal interconnect have already been outlined by the CRTC. Briefly, they stipulate that: NorthwesTel is required to unbundle its exchange service rates, separating network access from terminal equipment rentals. NorthwesTel must continue to own inside wiring on subscriber premises for single line subscribers, although multi-line customers may own their own inside wiring. Customers may have the choice of purchasing or continuing to rent their terminal equipment. The company may sell to the subscribers in-place telephones; however, party line subscribers must continue to lease terminal equipment from the company for technical reasons.

In closing, Canadians enjoy one of the most sophisticated and efficient telecommunications systems in the world, and I hope that I have been able to impress upon you today that the services provided by NorthwesTel are no exception to that fact. The company's continuing investment in modern technology, as I have outlined for you, will continue to enhance the services to its customers and ensure that the people of the Northwest Territories enjoy the same telecommunications service as our southern neighbours. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Thank you, Mr. Dunbar. Now, do the Members want to ask their questions? In view of the time that we have left maybe we will allow Members to have two questions and then later on come back, if we have time. Mr. Sibbeston.

Quality Of Service In Fort Simpson

MR. SIBBESTON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Dunbar a number of questions. Firstly, I would like to state a concern. I do not know if Mr. Dunbar is aware of a letter that Wolverine Air Ltd., Fort Simpson, has written to the CRTC complaining about the telephone service to his

company in Fort Simpson. I appreciate that maybe Mr. Dunbar thinks his company is doing a great job in the western part of the North. While this may be true in other parts of the North, in Simpson there is widespread concern about the level and quality of service provided by NorthwTel. I can tell you, Mr. Dunbar, that the service that you are presently providing to Simpson is not very satisfactory and I will just refer to the letter of Wolverine Air which perhaps is not necessarily indicative of all companies' feeling toward NorthwTel in Simpson but it is certainly one company that is not very satisfied.

Mr. Les Dvorak who is the president of the company, wrote to the CRTC on February the 2nd, 1983. He just basically outlined his problems saying that: "From the time we began our operations at the new airport, which was in 1981, we have been plagued with constant telephone problems." He goes on to say that: "We have called upon NorthwTel to alleviate us of our problems, Hay River office and Whitehorse so many times that we are to the point of giving up and having our customers conclude that, in fact, we cannot be relied upon to provide the service that is so essential to the communities that are isolated, where quick response is sometimes the difference between life and death." He points out that there have been a number of instances where customers like the hospital have been trying to call his company but were not able to get through on the telephone service and have had to have the RCMP look around town for them. All this time they are waiting at their office by the telephone but the telephone system simply does not work.

So that is one customer in Simpson that is not very happy and I am personally aware that there are other people. I have had my telephone interrupted three or four times in the last year, where telephone service just one day ends and there is no explanation as to why the telephone does not work. It usually takes two or three days to get the telephone working again. I am aware of other people in the community that have had this problem. In my case, being a Member of the Assembly, I expend about \$2000 a year at least on long distance calls and I am certainly concerned about the level of service that I am getting. I am just wondering Mr. Dunbar, if you could see what the company could do about providing improved telephone services to the community of Fort Simpson.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR: Mr. Sibbeston, I am aware of the letter you are speaking of and as a result of that letter there has been a thorough investigation. I guess the answer to it is we basically had a technical problem with the subscribers at the airport inasmuch as we had to put in special conditioning equipment that was not there. Actually we owe the gentleman from Wolverine Air a vote of thanks for drawing it to our attention and we have replied to him and are installing the proper equipment that should solve the problem to the airport.

As far as the other problems at Fort Simpson are concerned, we have stationed at that location two technical people that look after that area. What I will do is that I will return and make a full investigation as to the actual type of troubles in service, that we are getting in the local service there. I can get back to you and tell you what action has been taken.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Sibbeston.

MR. SIBBESTON: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if Mr. Dunbar would also say what he could do for those communities of Trout Lake, Jean Marie River and Nahanni Butte. These little communities are presently serviced by mobile phone and I am wondering if there is a chance that they could get the system upgraded so that they could have telephones like other communities in the North.

Since this is my second question I wonder if Mr. Dunbar could elaborate on the plans for third party billing. At the moment, if you attempt to make a third party call after office hours you are told that it is not possible because, I think, the operators check to see if there is any answer or if you are properly authorized to charge a call to a particular number. Is there any plan to deal with this situation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR: On your first question on the three communities you mentioned, Mr. Sibbeston, I mentioned that they were part of the NCAP program and they are included in that program and we are having discussions with the Department of Communications to see what can be done. Some of the basic problems that we have at some of those locations -- I am not too sure -- I know that a number of them that I mentioned do not have local commercial power, making it quite difficult

for us to put a telephone exchange in. That is one of the stumbling blocks. However, at Trout Lake with the pipeline being built we will be installing a new microwave repeater station in the Redknife Hills area and possibly as a result of that, I am hoping we will be able to include the service to that community for sure. The other ones, we will look into and if there are any changes we will advise you.

Third Number Billing

As far as the third number billing, the policy is and basically stems from the problem of fraud calls, people illegally using numbers, which is very simple to do. All you have to do is look in the phone book and see a number of some business and you charge it to that number. Fraud right across Canada has been quite high. The policy right now is that unless we can get some clarification from pay phones we will not extend calls. My recommendation to people that have that need is to obtain a long distance card which will solve that problem for you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Fraser.

Compensation For Business Losses During Outage

MR. FRASER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask NorthwTel a very important question. About a month ago, due to an accident, NorthwTel lines were cut in an area which was quite populated with businessmen. I understand that the company that did the damage paid quite a price to have it restored again. Consequently, we were out of telephones for about six days and there were two charter companies that were cut off for about six days. I wonder if NorthwTel is prepared to compensate these people or if they have some way of billing the company that did the damage and consider compensating these people for the loss of business in that particular area. I realize that it is not the fault of the NorthwTel if the lines were cut down, it was the fault of a construction company; but there should be some way of billing them and maybe compensating the businessmen who lost a fair amount of business because of this breakage in the line. I wonder if there is any way they could be compensated, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR: Mr. Chairman, the policy of our company and just about all telephone companies is that we cannot be held responsible for loss of business during an outage and our tariffs protect us on that. Granted, we do go back to claim the actual cost of restoration from the person that does the damage; in other words, we do not charge him for any loss of business ourselves during that time. The only suggestion that I would have is that there may possibly be an opportunity for the companies, through the courts or through some other method, but not through our company. It would be very, very difficult for us to have some sort of compensation arrangement like that. It would be very costly and very difficult to administer and control.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Appaqaq.

MR. APPAQAQ: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The motion that was just forwarded in favour -- and can you hear? Can you hear me?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Okay.

Communication Difficulties In Sanikiluaq

MR. APPAQAQ: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am sorry about the technical problem. I do have a lot of questions and comments to make.

The Bell Canada officials have mentioned the problem that we have over at Sanikiluaq and Belcher Islands. It is really good to use this telephone. There are a lot of advantages as well as disadvantages using Bell telephones. I have been informed that the Bell telephone workers over in the Baffin region around Frobisher Bay have often been told about their work, that it is not satisfactory to some of the northern people in my area. Most of the time they do not have enough knowledge -- usually the problem lies in approaching the office and most of the time, they do not understand each other. Most of the time when they are informed about some problems that a customer has, it is not understood. I have been informed of this and I have experienced it myself. They never believe a person. It is true that Bell Canada over at Frobisher Bay has Inuit employees, but most of the time they cannot understand the dialect and the problems.

Some of the residents of Sanikiluaq have been asking to have telephones installed in their homes -- those people who are employed -- and when the Bell Canada worker comes in, they never know who they should get in touch with in order to install the phones in some of these homes in Sanikiluaq. I have been told by residents of Sanikiluaq that during summer months most of the hunters are usually out camping, and when they are going to be out for a certain length of time, weeks or days, they usually inform Bell Canada of this in Frobisher Bay in order to have their phone disconnected while they are out of town. When they have had their phone disconnected during all that time, they are still being assessed the monthly rate for the telephone. When upon their return they ask to have their phone reinstalled, they are refused.

Also, there was a concern raised that the phone invoices take a long time to come by mail. Sometimes they are delayed for a whole month. Even after the payment is along the way to the offices or headquarters in Frobisher, when they have already paid in advance, or even when the payment is on the way, then they are informed that they have debits and this creates a lot of conflict. They are told again and again to pay their bill, even when they have paid it in advance. I know this to be true because I myself have experienced it as well as other people. I think Bell Canada has to be informed how long it takes to process invoices by mail services. I have heard this all through the Baffin region, that it takes a long time in order for the invoices that have already been paid to get to the headquarters.

Since we are given a very short time I would just like to ask the officials from Bell Canada to investigate or look into this matter seriously, as it is of concern to the Sanikiluaq people -- well, get one of your employees to look into this matter. I thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Lepage.

MR. LEPAGE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Excuse me for the difficulty in communications but I guess that is part of the world we live in. I believe I understood...

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: We have the same problem.

Frobisher Bay Manager To Visit Sanikiluaq

MR. LEPAGE: ...so we understand each other. In this series of questions, if I understood them correctly, basically they break down into three. The main one, if I understood correctly, is a problem of communications and understanding between people in Sanikiluaq when they communicate with our office or our business office in Frobisher. It seems that some of your people are experiencing difficulties at basically making themselves understood in respect of their problems and getting sympathy for their problems. I do not really have an answer for you here except to say that I am concerned about it. We do staff Frobisher Bay with the idea of being able to communicate in the language of the people. We recognize, however, that that can also be a problem

at times. We have a local manager in Frobisher, by the name of David Audlakiak who does travel and visit the territory and I would be most happy to have him put Sanikiluaq very high on the next list of his travels, to spend time with the people there, to better understand, maybe, what we are missing and certainly it would be our objective to correct these items. This is tied into the basic communications problem, Mr. Chairman.

Tied into specific problems, one mentioned was a repair problem taking more than a month to repair. All I can say is that it is certainly not our regular time; what happened on that particular one I do not know. I would certainly, myself, ask questions as to what might have caused it but that is certainly not our average by any means. It would have to be an unusual item and I can assure you that any customer receiving that type of service has every right to be bitter. I would encourage you if it should happen in the future, as your directory indicates, if you are unsatisfied, call the general manager and I am sure we can find the root of such a problem. That has to be an exception in my mind.

Tied into the payment problem and the processing of payments, I think that one, as well, may tie in to a communication problem. This is why I would propose -- because I would like to see the people of Sanikiluaq satisfied with their services -- to send our representatives there and meet with the various people, first, to find out the things that are aggravating them and, possibly, explain any of the confusion that may exist because we feel certain that we can give you the service that you need and you deserve from our central force with the people visiting you, operating out of Frobisher. So, Mr. Chairman, all I can say is that I will have someone give special attention to Sanikiluaq.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Thank you. Mr. McCallum.

Removal Of Services To Yukon From Hay River

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Chairman, I guess we are going to take turns going east and west. I, obviously, cannot speak with any kind of authority about Bell Canada and I am not too sure if I can speak with any kind of authority about NorthwesTel; however, I would like to make a couple of comments and possibly pose two questions to Mr. Dunbar, if I may, concerning NorthwesTel.

I have a great concern about the move of NorthwesTel to remove personnel and to remove the kind of service that, I think, was in vogue in the past number of years out of the Northwest Territories and into the Yukon. I cannot understand why, when my telephone goes out of service, I have to phone the Yukon to place an order for repair. When my telephone is out of service I have a difficult time getting in touch with Yukon because I do not have a telephone. I am not too sure, Mr. Dunbar; I do not mean to get into an argument with you whether it is safe to say that your system is amongst the best in the world, or it compares favourably with others. It has been my experience in the last while that it has not and I am not going to go into the difficulties that we have had in my constituency in Fort Smith. I think that there have been things done to improve it.

However, I really am concerned about this business of trying to get repair service and the time that is required to get that repair service by phoning the Yukon who, in turn, then relay the order back down into Yellowknife or Fort Smith to get that service repaired. I know that there may be many circumstances that lead to that, but it seems rather inconceivable to me that in order to get my phone fixed in Fort Smith that I have to phone the Yukon office and then have the Yukon office get in touch with somebody in Fort Smith to get the work done. It would seem to me that it would have been better to get somebody stationed locally to do it.

Personnel And Subscribers In Yukon And NWT

I have two particular questions, Mr. Chairman, that I would like to ask of Mr. Dunbar and his associate regarding NorthwesTel. First, how many employees do you now have stationed in the Yukon to do the work for the people in the Territories, as opposed to, let us say, the number of personnel that you would have had stationed seven or eight years ago in your Hay River part of the business? Secondly, I would like to get some idea as to the number of subscribers and communities being serviced in the Yukon as opposed to the number of subscribers and communities being serviced by your company in the Northwest Territories.

I ask those questions, Mr. Chairman, because it seems to me that the service that we have been accustomed to in the past in the Northwest Territories has been taken away by reducing the number of people who were involved with NorthwesTel in Hay River in the past, to what is there now and

what you propose to have in the coming year. It seems to be that within the Western Arctic you must have as many people as you would have in the Yukon and here you are providing a service for them, for the Northwest Territories, out of the Yukon Territory.

I am not too sure whether Mr. Dunbar or his associate would have those kinds of figures on hand but if they do I would appreciate hearing them because I really believe that, notwithstanding your comments about the capability of the system to respond to people in the Western Arctic, I am not too sure that that is occurring. I make that statement in relation to the total Western Arctic rather than specifically for my constituency in Fort Smith.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

Number And Location Of Employees

MR. DUNBAR: I guess the specific question that I am hearing is the number and location of the employees. The second question is the number of telephone exchanges or number of communities in the two areas. Is that it?

As far as the employees are concerned, I think what you have to look at when you compare employees is the operational staff that we have to service the areas. If you compare the operational staff, it is broken down as follows: In the Northwest Territories, there are 89, plus 11 agents; in BC there are 31; in the Yukon, there are 84 -- making a total of 204 people. There is also one agent in the Yukon, making a total of 12 agents. These are the operational people. Now, if you consider the number of people located in Edmonton and Toronto before NorthwesTel formed its headquarters and relocated to Whitehorse, that is another 123 people. So there were 123 people as a result of the establishment of NorthwesTel and the relocation of the headquarters.

Our construction forces are broken down as follows: In the Northwest Territories we have 18; in BC we have 12; and in the Yukon we have a total of 49. The number of the construction forces prior to our move to Whitehorse also used to be headquartered in Edmonton.

As far as toll operations are concerned the Yukon has 59, BC has 30 and presently Hay River has 25, but that will be reduced sometime in August. Like all telephone companies, the technology has enabled us to centralize into larger team size and make more efficient use of it. The size of NorthwesTel's operation only requires or only can support one of the new electronic-type toll operations. It is too small a company to have a number of toll operations centres. They are just not cost effective. The reason that Whitehorse is being chosen is that the equipment was installed there in 1976 and we have been able to add the additional traffic from the Northwest Territories without any additional cost in the plant. That is the breakdown of the staff, Mr. McCallum.

As far as the actual communities and exchanges are concerned, if you want me to tie up that, I can read them all off to you but it may be of more advantage to give you the list after.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. McCallum?

MR. DUNBAR: Okay. Northwest Territories main station count as at September 1982 -- there were 13,000 in the Northwest Territories; and in the Yukon and BC there were 13,888. In the Northwest Territories there were 13,106.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. McCallum.

Centralization In Whitehorse Does Not Make Sense

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Just one final comment, Mr. Chairman, if I may through you to Mr. Dunbar. I find it rather inconceivable that if you service approximately the same number of subscribers in the Western Arctic as you service in BC and the Yukon -- why do we in the western part of the Northwest Territories have to have our service through the Yukon? I really do not understand it. I can understand, to some degree, the economies of scale involved with it, but why you centralize in Whitehorse things that concern the Northwest Territories, I find very difficult to comprehend. It is my opinion, based on approximately 20 years in the Western Arctic that it just does not make sense to service a comparable number of subscribers of the Northwest Territories in the Yukon. I suggest to you that of what you had in place in total personnel in Hay River, within the next few years, there will be nobody left in the Territories to service people in the Territories. I will give you a good example. In Fort Smith, in my own constituency, when I went there, we had, that I can recall, three to four to five people. Now you have one person there on a part-time basis that I know of.

MR. DUNBAR: If I may, Mr. Chairman. The number of people we have at Fort Smith is two. To the best of my knowledge, when I was in Hay River in 1971 to 1974, the number of people you had in Fort Smith was one. There was an outside planning individual that was added there and has continued to be maintained there. So there are two technical people at Fort Smith. I think you may be getting confused because Alberta Government Telephones used to have some people there and they were not ours -- they were there to look at a tropo scattering system to Uranium City and Fort Chip.

As far as the repair centre is concerned, the method that we are using right now for repair is a centralized repair mode. That was basically established so we had a central dispatch and a central record and a central record-keeping device to enable us to computerize. That is actually happening right now and hopefully by the end of this year we will have the service order and the repair order completely computerized and that will give us the ability to put more control at the local level and have a much better flow as far as your service orders and repair are concerned. This is basically our objective right now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): If I may remind Members, it is now 2:30 p.m. We had agreed by motion to go on to 2:30 p.m. but there have been only four Members who have asked questions. We have seven more. What is the committee's wish? Mr. Curley.

MR. CURLEY: I move that we continue after coffee break until some Members have had a chance to ask questions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Do you wish to continue until 3:00? Do you wish to make a motion, Mr. Curley?

Motion To Continue Discussion Of Matters Relating To Bell Canada And NorthwesTel, Carried

MR. CURLEY: My motion is that we continue on after coffee to complete the present list that we have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): After coffee. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Question being called. All those in favour? Okay. Motion carried.

---Carried

The witnesses are invited for coffee.

---SHORT RECESS

The committee will come back to order. Mr. Tologanak.

HON. KANE TOLOGANAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have some questions and some comments on the services of NorthwesTel in my region of the Central Arctic, better known as Kitikmeot region.

In the last couple of years we have been writing letters and inviting NorthwesTel to explain some of the services that they were providing in the Central Arctic. There have been many surveys that have been done by our government staff in the Central Arctic in Cambridge Bay. We have quite a bit of difficulty with the services that have been provided, especially long distance. Myself being from Coppermine, I remember the Locker Point exchange when your facilities at Locker Point do go down, normally they have to charter a small plane from Norman Wells and get their repair crew from Yellowknife, and that would take days. It really depended on the weather conditions of the Coppermine area and the Locker Point area. When that happens, we do not have any communications whatsoever, except within the community in Coppermine, but regarding the problems, I am happy to see, after so much correspondence and communication between NorthwesTel and our people in the Kitikmeot region, that services are going to be improved next year. Just a note on Locker Point, I remember when they were still using the old radio tubes in the station in Locker Point. I wonder if that is still happening or not?

So I am happy to see that NorthwesTel is addressing the concerns the people had and I hope they will write letters to the regional staff at Cambridge Bay as well as the regional council that represents that region and those specific communities of Spence Bay and Cambridge Bay. I have to

tell you that we did support the application of earth stations when the application went to Ottawa, and we have been waiting since December for an answer from the Department of Communications concerning NorthwesTel's application. We have not heard until today what you have said, how the DOC was responding to the applications.

Unlisted Numbers And Third Party Calls

Aside from that, since I moved to Yellowknife to do my work, I have received the services of the Yellowknife offices very well, but as time goes on you find that you have to get an unlisted telephone number in getting the services that you require, because of my work, and my family as well. But in the last month, I requested another unlisted number, but we have been finding out in the last two weeks that the operator is giving our number out to people who request it. That to me sounds like there is some breakdown either administratively or the policies are not being followed in regard to unlisted numbers.

Regarding third party calls, I have been receiving charges of calls that were never authorized by ourselves, or the operator did not know who calls our house, and ever since Christmas and New Years my phone bill has been up 100 per cent over what we regularly pay, and third party calls have cost me over \$200. Talking about bills and just adding to what Mr. McCallum was saying earlier, since the bills have to come from Whitehorse it will take much longer than it used to when we used to send our payment to Edmonton. Now with Whitehorse sometimes I receive two bills, and by the time the first bill gets around, and the second bill, I may be receiving a disconnection notice or having my name put in arrears. I know NorthwesTel was saying, "Oh, that is a postal responsibility and the transportation in between Whitehorse and the Northwest Territories." This is where we have problems and I have problems keeping up with NorthwesTel's services.

Local Employees Usually Transients

A comment in regard to local employees in the communities. I have been observing that the employees may be local, but they are transient members of the community who invariably get the work. They are working for somebody else. Most of the time it is just somebody from MOT who is doing services, and these people are very, very transient. Perhaps NorthwesTel can look also and get some advice from Bell Canada in hiring local people and having somebody permanent in the community who knows the people, who knows the community, who knows the system, rather than hiring these transient people all the time. I have yet to see a local person in Coppermine work for NorthwesTel.

I would like to get some more information especially in regard to the Central Arctic. I know you mentioned it in your brief to us, but I would like to know the services, the times and dates of when some of these improvements are going to be made so that I can report back to my people, and in regard to the policies of unlisted numbers and third-party calls that that can be strengthened or perhaps something should be done to tell the employees that these policies are not being adhered to in some cases. I hope NorthwesTel will, without too much cost, change my number again so that I can get back to our private life at home. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR: I guess for the first point, I would like to overcome any misunderstanding I may have left the honourable Member with, and that is at Coppermine in December we actually replaced the telephone exchange that is there with a new digital exchange. The radio system with the repeater at Locker Point is still in service. However, the number of long distance trunks that are available from the community has been expanded about threefold from what it was about a year ago. We have no immediate plans to replace the Locker Point radio system. Even though we do recognize the shortcomings, there is no technical, economical, viable alternative right now. However, if a positive decision is given by the Minister to enable us to own our own earth stations, that would give us an alternative.

On the point of third number billing, you mentioned and I would suspect that you have a lot of fraud calls on your account that are placed there by other people that you have not authorized, which indicates one of the reasons why it has been necessary for the company to insist on verification on the third number billing. You are basically pointing out why we had to take that step, and if you require the third number billing, I would suggest that arrangements be made. We will have somebody contact you and provide you with a long distance card. To deal with the unlisted number problem, after this meeting we will have somebody contact you and get that squared away. Our operators are not even supposed to get the actual unlisted number at directory assistance, so there has been a definite administrative problem there and we will fix that one up.

As far as the local agents are concerned, I will agree at Coppermine we basically use the MOT people that are there, and that is basically because of their knowledge and expertise in the telecommunications field, and therefore they can do some diagnostics for us and assist us. We are not averse to using local people. For example at Pelly Bay and Gjoa Haven, both the people there are local people. That can be looked at further.

Service To Pelly Bay, Spence Bay And Gjoa Haven

As far as the earth station problem is concerned, for those three communities and the long distance service, I recognize that the service to those three communities of Pelly, Spence and Gjoa is definitely substandard. It is not the level that we would like or that the communities actually require. Because I know there is an investigation being done right now by the Minister of Communications, and he has to report to the cabinet within the next one or two months on the ownership of earth stations, I am hoping that we will have a positive response from him which would enable us to proceed with the operation. However, until I actually have something from the Minister, there is nothing else I can do.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Tologanak.

HON. KANE TOLOGANAK: Mr. Chairman, I also wanted to get some of the plans for the improvement of services, the dates when these improvements are going to be made. He did mention in his opening brief that some services are going to be provided and I would like to get a little more detail. I could try a little bit later after the meeting so I can get some specific dates when the improvements are to be made. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mrs. Sorensen.

Deterioration Of Service

MRS. SORENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My questions are directed at NorthwesTel as well. I have some sympathy for the comments that Mr. McCallum was making. Over the past 13 years I have experienced the service of NorthwesTel and I have seen some improvement but not the kind of improvement that we had expected with the move to create a head office in the North. In fact, recently I think the service has deteriorated somewhat and I am wondering if that has anything to do with the move to digital electronic service. I do not know whether that had anything to do with it. Mr. Dunbar, I realize that you, as a corporation, are looking at cost effectiveness, but I do not think that cost effectiveness should be at the expense of at least the minimum of service. In particular, what we are experiencing, at least in Yellowknife, are extremely poor circuits from time to time but frequently enough that we would notice it. We are experiencing -- and I know in my own case I am on long distance a fair amount of time and I am often cut off and have to re-dial or go through the operator again.

I often make telephone calls where I will dial and there will be no ring at the other end. I do not know what happens to the circuit but it is often enough that it is a source of extreme irritation. In fact, this weekend my own telephone line was out of service for three days. I believe it had something to do with moisture in the lines but it is something that we have complained about over the past three years and every year around this time we begin to have the same problems with the phone going in and out of service over the springtime.

Credit Card Calls

There is a particular problem that is a source of great irritation, not only to myself but to all of us who hold credit cards and that is the fact that we have to go through the operator and go through a long series of telling the operator all the numbers rather than being able to dial 0 and then the area code and the long distance number and simply give the number of the credit card call to the operator. From time to time the operator will tell me that I can dial the way that I can do in the South, zero plus. I try it and, of course, she comes back on or he comes back on and I go through the whole process again, and being a person that is on the long distance phone a great deal it is an extreme source of irritation and a terrible waste of time because not only do we have to repeat all those numbers but if the line is busy at the other end we have to go through the whole process again or, if we are cut off we have to go through the whole process again. The other point, as well, is that time is lost waiting for the operator because it still is taking a fair number of rings on many occasions -- not all, but on many occasions -- to get the operator.

So I am wondering, what are the problems with the operator-assisted long distance credit card calls that make up the difference from the system in the South? What are the problems that are facing Northwestel that requires that we have to take that much time? Why is it taking so long for the operator to answer in the first instance and why even when I direct dial does the operator come on the line and ask me for my number? I thought that direct dial services meant that you could avoid coming into contact with the operator, and yet when I make direct dial long distance calls I have to still give my telephone number to the operator. Can you comment on those three questions, please? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

Equipment To Permit Zero Plus Dialing

MR. DUNBAR: I guess the first question, Mr. Chairman, would be the zero plus problem that you have. The 920 office is capable of zero plus dialing right now. We are presently examining the 873 office to add the equipment that will permit the zero plus dialing on that equipment. Once we have determined the actual costs to add that equipment and whether or not it is cost effective, it will be provided. At that time we will be able to inform you as to when it will be available.

Regarding zero and one or the direct distance dialing where you have an operator intercept you when you direct distance dial a call -- all numbers in Yellowknife have an automatic number identification and therefore you should be going directly through without having the operator intercept, unless you happen to be calling from the centrex system that the territorial government has -- and we are arranging to have the equipment installed in that. I do not have the exact time but it will be sometime this year so that the calls placed from the territorial and federal government centrex systems will be able to go through without having the operator intercept it.

Operator answer time, or the objective that we strive for is between seven and nine seconds, average answer time for our calls. My examination of the report that I receive on a weekly basis indicates that we tend to fall down there. There will be certain periods during the day when we will not achieve that due to something that happens in a community that we have not foreseen. We are endeavouring to take steps to try to overcome that problem; one of the things that we have just been able to do is hire part-time operators which will enable us to assist in that area.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mrs. Sorensen.

Cost Effective At Expense Of Full Service

MRS. SORENSEN: The response you gave to the zero plus problem that I am having is that when it became cost effective to introduce it to the 873 numbers you would do it and it is already introduced to the 920 numbers. I guess I would like you to explain what "cost effective" means, and if it is not cost effective to 873 numbers, then perhaps you should be charging those people who are using 873 numbers lower monthly rates because they are not getting full service, and therefore are not getting what is considered now minimum service in Canada.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR: First of all, to say that zero plus is minimum service in Canada -- it may be the minimum service you get in Montreal and Toronto and Vancouver and those locations, but I will assure you that zero plus dialing is not the minimum you get in every exchange in Canada, especially in communities the size that we serve.

What I am saying by cost effectiveness is -- it depends -- if it is going to cost me half a million dollars to install the equipment in this exchange, to put it in, it therefore would not be cost effective. We have not finished the actual examination as to how much it will cost. If it is cost effective, it will be put in. It has to be an actual saving to us. There has to be some rationale for the spending of capital.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Wray. Mr. Wray.

MR. WRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I suppose I should start off by saying we in the East have probably one of the best telephone systems that is possible for our location and for the distance between our communities. I think it is very rare if we wait any longer than 48 hours for a telephone to be repaired, and it is certainly no longer to have a new telephone installed. I think that is a credit to Bell Canada and to the system that they have installed. I also think that their local training program whereby they have a person in each community almost has been moderately successful. There is still some improvement to be made, but I know that that is in the works.

Direct Distance Dialing Equipment Inadequate

After having said that, though, there are a couple of problems as every system is not perfect. I think one of the major problems that we have experienced, particularly in Baker Lake, Coral Harbour and Rankin Inlet, is since the introduction of the direct distance exchange, we have had major problems with our ability to use that exchange. I know for a fact that the equipment installed in Chesterfield Inlet is brand new and you can dial Scotland from Chesterfield Inlet and reach it in 40 seconds, whereas in Baker Lake there has not been one day since that system was installed that we have not experienced trouble with the system. The equipment is, I gather, not new equipment, but second-hand equipment, and there is major trouble with that system in other settlements. So I would hope that Bell Canada would address that problem because when you hear people saying that they would rather go back to the operator-assisted route because of the trouble they are having with direct distance, then it says to me there are some problems.

Problems With Frobisher Bay Office

I think the other issue that we have problems with -- and I know Bell have again attempted to deal with it -- is the one dealing with your accounts receivable department in Frobisher Bay. There have been many comments made that the people who do collect your money in Frobisher Bay are sometimes rather hard-nosed about it -- rude, to be quite blunt. People have experienced phone calls at 7:00 a.m. in the morning asking for money in the Keewatin. In many instances, the money is in the mail system and it is just a matter of time before it reaches Montreal and then Frobisher Bay. Now, you have tried to address the problem by installing local collection agents in the larger communities. However, in a month that person might work 30, 40, 50 hours collecting the money for Bell, and at the same time is subjected to a lot of pressure by people who have had their phone cut off, or who are unhappy or whose bill is not right. In return, you are only paying them around \$140 a month to provide that service. I would hope that that might be an area which you could address, because it does appear to be a major concern to a lot of people. I know personally that many times we receive the infamous blue slip telling us that our account is overdue and that our phone might be cut off before we have even received our telephone bill. So that makes it very hard to pay a bill when you have never received it, or when it comes a week behind the blue slip. So I just wonder if perhaps you could give me a response to those areas of concern, but I do want to say that I think generally speaking you have one of the best telephone communications systems I have seen anywhere.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Lepage.

Technical Problem Located And Corrected

MR. LEPAGE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The first question tied into the problems of service in the Baker Lake region -- I am well aware. It has been a problem linked with our modernization, as you have explained it. We believe we have finally located the problem. On Friday of the past week, our technical experts flew up to Frobisher Bay with a modification to these special trunks which were giving us problems. Unfortunately, they were not able to get into Baker Lake on the weekend. However, before I left Quebec City yesterday morning, my manager informed me that the modification had been completed at midnight the night before, which would have been on the 28th of February, and so far it worked. We will continue monitoring it, and we hope we have found the bug that has caused problems in those locations. Certainly, if we have not with this past visit, I can assure you we will very, very soon. Again, the information that I have is that we have finally located and corrected the problem.

Question number two, ties into the accounts receivable from Frobisher Bay, and that we are perceived as being maybe just a little too aggressive or pushy. All I can say is I will certainly review it with my people there. I think it is a nature of maybe the era we are in -- the past year, right across the country, not only the Territories that you people are concerned with but in the South, the amount of losses associated with the telephone billing has grown by leaps and bounds. Consequently, this means that you pay more attention to it; however, it is possible when you are dealing with human beings that more attention, in some instances, could end up being pushy. Should we have offended someone in this way, it is certainly not our intention. I will definitely review procedures with our people in Frobisher. By the same token, there is no doubt a close follow-up of billing has to come, but I think that it can be done on a cordial basis. Calling at 7:00 a.m., as you have mentioned in one example, certainly should not have occurred. I do not know what would have happened in that case. So let me assure you, Mr. Chairman, I will look at that matter and see whether our people have become just a little too aggressive in the pursuing of trying to protect the billing that is due us.

As for the third part of your statement -- pay for the agents we use in the community -- I guess once again you have suggested that maybe we are paying them too low. Let me just say that we will look at it. I will not grant that we are or we are not, but we will review it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Nerysoo.

Service To Industry At Expense Of Community

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My questions will be directed to Mr. Dunbar. It has to do with a concern with regard to service and response to queries from my constituents. My constituency includes Aklavik, Fort McPherson and Arctic Red River. Aklavik, in particular, over the past few months has had significant problems with their exchange and the ability of NorthwTel to respond to concerns and issues with regard to their facilities and the service that they are providing. I am not quite sure what the NorthwTel policy is, but the people seem to be ignored because of the service that NorthwTel is trying to provide to industry, as opposed to communities. I think that it is necessary for NorthwTel to recognize that NorthwTel would not be there if it had not been initially for the support and the needs of the community.

As I earlier indicated, there is some problem with facilities in basically all the communities. It has to do at times with weather changes, and I am wondering whether or not Mr. Dunbar is aware of that situation, and whether or not NorthwTel has responded to some of the questions or the concerns that those communities have had.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR: Mr. Chairman, as far as community service is concerned, the communities of Aklavik, Arctic Red River and Fort McPherson I believe are the ones you are addressing. I will just carry on with those anyhow, Mr. Chairman. The number of trips that we actually did in 1982 for those communities as compared to industry -- we tend to favour industry because the revenues that are generated by industry do help support the overall system, and do assist in keeping the rates in check. Also industry activity has certainly improved the type of communications facilities that are available in the Mackenzie Delta because without the industry activity there, those improved communications facilities would not be available, based on the volume of traffic and the revenue that is generated from the smaller communities.

As to service trips, we had 30 trips in 1982 into Aklavik; Arctic Red River had 13; Fort McPherson had 15; and Tuktoyaktuk had 40. Tuk had more than the others but it is also the largest of the communities, I believe. Now that is not saying that there have not been problems in those communities. The exchange at Aklavik has had some problems which we are addressing. The radio network into Fort McPherson is not satisfactory and we recognize that, and that is why in this year's capital plan we have a program with which we intend to replace it. That should solve some problems for Fort McPherson. Arctic Red River is getting a new telephone exchange this year, so that should solve some of their problems, although I do not feel Arctic Red has experienced any significant difficulties that I am aware of.

We plan to actually station a technician at Tuk this year, after we build the accommodation. So we will be concentrating more on the other communities. I do not perceive that they are being picked on because of the number of trips to the various communities, but maybe the perception will change with the permanent man in Tuk. I hope that answers your questions. If you want some more detail about specific things, I will definitely come back and tell you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Kilabuk.

Telephone Payment Problems In Baffin Region

MR. KILABUK: (Translation) Mr. Chairman, I am going to make a very short comment, not particularly for myself because I have not experienced too many problems, but I will just base it on what I have heard from my constituents. There are two main questions that I will ask you, and of course what I am concerned with most is the problem that you have raised, that the Bell telephone employees at Frobisher are not very courteous in their work. I just wanted to mention the people who have had their phone disconnected even after they have paid their bills, and if they want their phone installed, they usually are asked to put in a credit of \$100. This has been a real problem over in the Baffin region. I am sure it is really bothersome to some of the Inuit people. If Bell Canada could just hold on and wait for the payment -- I do not know exactly how many days they have to wait. Perhaps you could inform me about that. In the other remote settlements where they have a very poor delivery of mail, could they not at least wait 60 days for payment? I do not know how Bell Canada's procedures work, but could you just wait in certain areas where it takes a long time? These are just some of the problems that I have heard, which are the major problems in my constituency that I have been informed of.

I just want to ask you what you think of my suggestion. Would it not be possible to have a Bell Canada employee based with the hamlet council? Maybe it would be possible to meet with the hamlet councils to see what their ideas are on this. If you are trying to better your communication, this is probably one of the best ideas that I can think of, because communication is sometimes a very major problem. If you try and base a Bell Canada employee in some of the areas doing some of the major communities -- I do not know how you will react to these suggestions, but I thank you for listening to me.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Lepage.

MR. LEPAGE: Mr. Chairman. A series of questions. Number one, if I understood it correctly, a lack of courtesy from some of our personnel operating out of Frobisher Bay. I suspect that once again it ties in primarily to billing -- in other words, discussion as to whether payment has been made or not, disconnects which supposedly would occur while the payment is in the mail.

It is difficult for me to answer these specific questions. I can see that some of these things will occur or can occur. Our information would indicate that in at least 95 per cent of the cases, the existing billing system works. Most of the people are able to manage and pay their bills on time, even with the slow mail process that can occur, plus the fact that we have agents

in most of the communities. They are tied directly in with our office in Frobisher and it would seem to me that it should take very, very special circumstances for these difficulties to occur. However, we will take them under advice and we will look into the matter. There is no doubt any administration can improve and if we can improve here, we will attempt to do so.

As to the recommendation for improving communications by visiting and meeting with the hamlet council, most certainly we are pleased to do so. We have done it in the past and we will do it more. I have mentioned before we have an Inuit manager whose responsibilities are primarily that -- visiting the Territories and making us better understood and attempting to clear up some of these communication problems. So as far as the suggestion of Bell meeting with the hamlet councils and getting some of their ideas, we totally endorse this. We have done it in the past; maybe in the communities you have mentioned we have not done it as well as we should, but we will attempt to do better. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Curley.

\$200 Deposit For Telephone Installation In Keewatin Region

MR. CURLEY: (Translation) Mr. Chairman, I will be speaking in Inuktitut for a while. Regarding the Bell Canada system, I would like to thank Mr. St. Onge and Mr. Lepage and also the representatives from NorthwTel, Mr. Dunbar and Mr. Oxley. I am not quite informed about NorthwTel but we have Bell Canada in our area and we do not have very many concerns about their facilities. Also communications in the communities are improving in our area compared to some years ago. In the Keewatin, where I come from, the telephone system as we can see it is improving a lot and also there is some training in the Bell Canada system for younger people. I would like that to continue and I support very much that Bell Canada is training a lot of young people. Also they visit some communities and have quite good success communicating and we would like that to continue.

However, we have some concerns in the area about the installation of telephones. When people or residents apply for an installation perhaps Bell Canada would make some comments as to why we have to put a down payment of approximately \$200 before the installation. Bell Canada has said that we have to make a down payment before we get our phone. If an individual is not going to pay the down payment it is going to be very hard to get a telephone, so there are cases where interest will keep piling up and we do not like this idea.

In Frobisher Bay, I do not think they have to make a deposit but in the Keewatin region it seems to be too much to have to pay a \$200 deposit before we get our telephone. Also it is sometimes hard for Bell Canada to get the deposit, but nowadays if the community is running perfectly they are not going to make difficulties. So we would like Bell Canada to implement a good system. Also, I have known that a person pays a down payment, but in Frobisher Bay Bell Canada cut their telephone off after the individual had paid. If they want another telephone they have to put down a deposit again and it is quite complicated to have communications to and from Frobisher Bay and there is a problem there.

There are some advantages to Bell Canada. I know a person by the name John Tatty, who refused completely to use a telephone. He was not satisfied with Bell Canada but his wife would pay the deposit to the headquarters in Frobisher Bay and the same day they cut off their telephone. They had to ask for another deposit. So I would like to ask if Bell Canada could consider implementing a better system.

I have another comment regarding the Keewatin region. I can give you my relative's number, 645-2651. CBC has the telephone number 2885. I think there are some mistakes in the computer. They got different numbers last year. This person had a charge of \$4000. They were keeping in touch with Frobisher Bay headquarters and they were trying to say that CBC needed their bill adjusted and they had to pay another down payment of \$200. So they finally received their telephone this autumn. I would not want to receive a bill like that because the computer made a mistake. It seems to me like getting some money out of nowhere so Bell Canada can take advantage of that. Because of the way the system is run they had tried to talk to Bell Canada headquarters in Frobisher and they were not treated with much courtesy. I would like you to look into the matter.

I have no other concerns, Mr. Chairman, but I really support Bell Canada and sometimes my bill is high, but I am satisfied with that; but I would have to pay \$200 for a deposit to get another installation. I could have other comments but I would like to hear from you first. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Lepage.

Deposit Requested Only In Particular Cases

MR. LEPAGE: Mr. Chairman, I must apologize but with my earphone I am not sure that I picked everything up but I will treat the matter that I heard. If I have missed the essence or other parts of the question I would appreciate hearing them again. If I understood it correctly the main point of contention is having to pay \$200 down payment before installation of the service or for a reconnect after a service may have been disconnected. If I understood it correctly, the feeling is that in Frobisher this was not the case, while this occurred in the Keewatin.

The policies tied into down payments are no different in Frobisher than in the Keewatin or anywhere in the total territory. Certainly we do not generally ask for a deposit of \$200. I do not know what the particulars of this case are, however it is conceivable that a \$200 deposit could be demanded under special circumstances. This is at the discretion of our people who are dealing with the case tied into the history of the subscriber and whether there have been major collection problems in the past. Should any individual anywhere in our territory feel that any policy applied to them is unjust, I can assure you if you phone the manager in Frobisher and are not satisfied, there is also a number in the directory where you can phone us in Quebec City. We would look into any of the individual cases, but there is definitely not a \$200 deposit required in Keewatin and Frobisher -- definitely not.

If I understood, there was another problem in communication with our office in Frobisher. We know that in the past until we hired an Inuit person who could speak the Keewatin dialect, this was a major problem. We had hoped and we thought that the problem was resolved. Since we only have one person, it could be that on occasion she is not there and a problem occurs. I can only add once again that I would have my people, through my manager in Frobisher, visit the territory and discuss with the various councils and the people, and review any of these problems with the objective of trying to correct them. That is all I have, Mr. Chairman. I do not know if I missed the essence of the comment because my earphone was working very badly.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Curley.

Customer Relations Could Be Improved

MR. CURLEY: Just so that Mr. St. Onge and Mr. Lepage get the correct story, although I wish to accept your statement that there is no policy that requires your customers to deposit an amount of \$200 for installation, I can assure you that is the fact. That is the case in Keewatin and in particular in Rankin Inlet. I can assure you even one of the business guys who is a freight operator had his telephone cut while he was on business. When he took all of his family on his long freighter for the summer business and summer fisheries, while he was out his telephone had been cut off. When he came back, he went in immediately to pay for it and tried to get it installed. It was demanded that he had to pay \$200 to install it. That was the case. I had one young man sitting out in the gallery there, and he assured me that he paid a \$200 deposit before a telephone could be installed.

I know friends of mine who have been asked to deposit \$200 first before their telephones are installed. This particular friend of mine is John Tatty. His present phone number is 645-2556. For almost two years he boycotted installing a telephone, in spite of a heavy demand from his friends to have his phone installed because he is a valuable member of the community. But he did not because the day his wife paid the phone bill to the local outlet, that same day Bell Canada disconnected his phone, in spite of the information that the bill was paid the same day -- they would not believe it. So he had to give another \$200 to get his phone hooked up again. So that is routinely the story at Rankin Inlet. Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, our Inuit people are not always able to speak and communicate like you and me could and know what the procedure for appeal is. So that is the case.

The other problem that I indicated to you was that telephones were mixed up, possibly because of the computer or some billing arrangement with the present numbers. The previous number of a family was 645-2681, and that particular phone somehow was receiving all the CBC charges last year, the CBC number is 645-2885. The amount eventually added up to somewhere around \$4000. So your people went after the family and in spite of their protests and explanations, they cut off the telephone. Even the CBC manager has made statements to CBC that they were in fact their own charges which were charged to the number I mentioned. But they cut it off and when they cut it off, they required the \$200 deposit before they can install the phone.

So Mr. Chairman, I am not making a story, I am just stating those reasons I think you can improve the customer relations. Other than that, I think you are doing a fine job which I mentioned earlier. Your young people that are being trained to become telephone installers throughout the region are enthusiastic. I encourage you to continue that and develop that further. As for myself, I am one of your biggest customers. I think you should be pleased with me.

---Laughter

I have no other problem except to bring to you this concern; because I think Rankin Inlet is one of the biggest centres there, it is about time you have a full-time person in there for administrative purposes.

For NorthwesTel, I only have one problem. I am from the East where we do business in a courteous fashion. Since I have been here, I probably place up to 20 long distance calls a day to my friends and my business colleagues, and very seldom do I receive a courteous reply from your operators. In fact, I have only had five times where an operator says "Thank you." Maybe that is one that you could develop up here because we need more courteous response to our dealings. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. St. Onge.

MR. ST. ONGE: Thank you very much for bringing up these specific cases. We will look into it. We will call the people. We will investigate. The problem of bills has been coming up two or three times today by different Members. I can assure you one thing, we are going to have an overall review of the Northwest Territories, as to our policies and procedures which we have established, and see if the economic situation has rendered our people a little bit tougher. As to you as a good customer of Bell, I would encourage you to continue this good habit of calling long distance, because actually we are losing about \$10 million in the North, so if we had more people like you helping us, covering up this deficit, we would be overly pleased. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar, do you have a comment?

MR. DUNBAR: Your comment on our operators' politeness -- we normally try to encourage our operators to be polite and it is not very often we get criticized for their behaviour, but we will definitely review it because they normally are that way. So thank you very much for drawing it to my attention.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Butters.

Various Difficulties With NorthwesTel

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, I will try and be brief. I think that many Members who are served by NorthwesTel appreciate Mr. McCallum's comments and our inability to understand how we could have lost the system to the Yukon when almost 50 per cent of the service and the customers are on this side of the mountains. It is an aggravation and I think will remain an aggravation with us for a long time. Secondly, I believe that the bulk of your revenues are derived from your customers on the Northwest Territories side of the mountains and that also irks us.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Dunbar if some of the statements I will make are fair comment. NorthwesTel is not a member of the TransCanada Telephone System and is therefore not able to pass on advantages of membership to customers within its region. With the third party long distance calls soon to be disallowed, it would appear that there is no evidence from NorthwesTel that a reliable telephone credit card system is in place.

Now, there are general complaints from communities that NorthwesTel's service is infrequent and possibly poor in quality. There is a perception that some of the corporate giants currently carrying on exploration in the Canadian northwest receive better service or more speedy service than does the ordinary customer in the communities. I wonder if that is a false perception, or whether it is valid to some degree?

Is it or is it not a fact that NorthwesTel does not, at the present time, have or attempt to have any liaison with Bell Canada, in view of the fact that they both operate systems within the same territorial jurisdiction? It would appear also that there is little or no co-operation between NorthwesTel and CNCP Telecommunications. Is this a perception or is there any truth to that statement? There have been difficulties in the past in getting current technical and equipment

information from various NorthwesTel managers. I wonder if your managers do not have the information or whether they are able to appeal to someone in NorthwesTel who has the necessary expertise and can so advise their questioners.

There is a perception, too, that in the area of data communications data transmissions have had to be slowed down significantly from the normal rate in order to be reliable. The standard rate of transmission, I understand, in southern Canada is 2400 baud, while in the Northwest Territories transmissions have had to be slowed to 1200. Invoices from NorthwesTel are received from 10 to 15 days after they are produced yet subscribers are expected to prepare payments in time to be received and posted by NorthwesTel staff previous to the next invoice date. Payments are posted in the Whitehorse office even though they can be received in Yellowknife and other communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

NorthwesTel Derives Most Of Its Revenue From Alaska

MR. DUNBAR: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Butters, you made quite a list and you fired them pretty fast, and I do not know if I have kept up with you or not. I guess your first comment was that the bulk of the revenues that NorthwesTel receives comes from the Northwest Territories. The answer is no, it does not. The bulk of the revenues and the biggest customer that NorthwesTel has is the Alaskan communication system and the revenue that derives has been used by NorthwesTel to actually help and develop this communications network in the Northwest Territories. The areas that NorthwesTel serves, I find, are actually unique inasmuch as they complement one another. We have the Yukon, which has different economic base and revenue peaks and activity peaks at different times from the Northwest Territories. The Northwest Territories has its own unique revenue base as does northern British Columbia and invariably, if I look over the history of my company and the revenues I will find that one will be in a slump -- as the Northwest Territories is coming out of -- while the others were high. The Yukon now is going down and the Northwest Territories is high. They keep shifting back and forth. However, the mainstay in the backbone and the profitability of our company have basically been the communications that we have been carrying for the Alaskans. So that benefit has helped the people of the Northwest Territories, along with people of the Yukon and the people of northern British Columbia.

TransCanada Telephone System

As far as the TransCanada Telephone System is concerned, we are not a member of the TransCanada Telephone System. I do not know if we could become a member of the TransCanada Telephone System. However, even if we could I do not know what advantages there would be to the people of this community for us to become a member. It is a fairly expensive club to join and the actual number of telephone subscribers which the NorthwesTel serves is approximately 25,000, which in terms of most of the big TransCanada Telephone members, those are just the small communities that they serve and that is all of ours. Although we are the second largest telephone company in Canada compared to Bell when it comes to territory, we are one of the smallest when it comes to the number of telephone subscribers. So right now I am not aware of any value that would accrue to our subscribers if NorthwesTel was a member of the TransCanada Telephone System.

Third Number Billing And Long Distance Cards

The disallowance of the third number billing, as far as NorthwesTel policy is right now, is only to disallow third number billing from pay phones that cannot be verified. That means if the call is verified and it is assured that that call can be charged by that individual then it will be done. However, I do believe that it is the intention to expand that to all third number billings -- that they will be disallowed if they cannot be verified. That is because of the significant amount of fraud that is happening right across the telephone system in Canada, not just in NorthwesTel. As a matter of fact, one of the Members mentioned earlier that he had that problem.

As far as our long distance card service is concerned it is exactly the same service that is being provided by all telephone companies. The numbering system and everything is identical and it is recognized by any telephone company in Canada, the United States and even overseas. So I do not perceive that there should be a problem to have a long distance card. If you wish one you just have to contact your business office and they will issue you a long distance card.

As far as the corporate giants receiving more attention is concerned. Yes, the bigger customers usually do receive more attention just like the territorial government receives considerable attention from NorthwesTel. We have put considerable effort into the larger customers; however, not at the expense of the other customers. The operations in the Beaufort, like at Tuktoyaktuk, the activities that took place there have enabled us to upgrade the radio facilities there, the mobile radio and also the telephone exchange at Tuk. The revenues that are being derived from those companies are flowing back into this company, therefore enabling us to keep our rates down. If we did not have those revenues coming in we would not, and I repeat, we would not be able to maintain the level of service or the rates that we presently charge.

Relationship Between Bell Canada, NorthwesTel and CNCP Telecommunications

Is there any liaison with Bell Canada, between NorthwesTel and Bell? Not really. The main reason is we do not interconnect with Bell east to west. The interconnection is actually done through the TransCanada Telephone System. Our liaison is basically between ourselves and Alberta Government Telephones and also BC Tel, who are both members of the TransCanada Telephone System. In our presentations and representations to TransCanada, basically who represents us in TransCanada is Alberta Government Telephones. The necessity of having communication between us is one of those things that is nice to do but whether or not there is any value or benefit come from it, is hard to say. That is a judgment situation.

What is our relationship with CNCP? The only relationship we have with CNCP is that we have an agreement with them to carry their traffic and our traffic, such as telex, broad band and some private wires facilities, from NorthwesTel's operating territory to their operating territory. Similarly, we have the same arrangement with the TransCanada members. We have no special relationship with CNCP and the only place we ever come back together is back at the corporation, inasmuch as our owner also owns 50 per cent of CNCP.

Managers' expertise. Our managers, to the best of my knowledge, have no problem contacting people at various levels within my organization or other organizations to obtain the required expertise to do their job or get the support they need. I am not aware of any significant problem in that area.

Data transmission. The bulk of the transmission on our facilities is capable of 2400 baud; however, there may be some of the locations that you have to drop the speed. But I cannot, at this time, identify or know of any community that you cannot continually operate 2400 baud over the telephone switch network in our territory.

Delay in the bill. I guess we all have delay problems in as far as getting bills out, inasmuch as Canada Post does create some problems in delay and it has been increasing. We do attempt to build the delay into our operation and we will be examining it with the installation of our new computer that is going in; however, it is not one of the things that will happen immediately. We are looking at the possibility of being able to input the billing information -- in other words, if a person pays their bill at Yellowknife or Hay River or Inuvik, the business offices will be able to input that information and it will be transferred to the billing file which would update it immediately. That is one of the things that is being examined but it is not at the top of the list of things that are going to happen right away. I think, Mr. Chairman, that just about covers all the issues raised by Mr. Butters. If there is anything further, I would be pleased to get back to him.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Thank you. We will now take 15 minutes for coffee.

--SHORT RECESS

The committee will come back to order. Ms Cournoyea.

Telephone Concerns In Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Holman Island Areas

MS COURNOYEA: Mr. Chairman, in the area of Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour and Holman Island, in particular Paulatuk, is there a schedule for the upgrading of NorthwesTel facilities? A second concern is that when the services are out of order for a significant length of time -- one week, two weeks -- the company does not seem to automatically adjust their monthly billing to take into consideration that the service was not operating for a week or two weeks. Is there any way that this can be automatically done, instead of people calling in and complaining about it and wasting everyone's time in trying to get their telephone bill adjusted?

In terms of the lines that go into a place like Paulatuk, when you are trying to phone there, there are often long periods of time that you really do not know whether there are no circuits or whether it is really just out of order. In trying to get communication to those communities, you can sit on the phone for hours, and then only after a while if you insist that the operator finds out for you, it is said that it is out of order and it is not that there are no circuits. So we have a long period of time to wait and the recording that comes on is not really truthful to you, in terms of telling you right away whether there are no circuits or it is out of order. So it is a slow process of trying to get through to find out what is really going on and you waste your time trying to make telephone calls, if in fact it is out of order.

Another thing, I spend a lot of time on the telephone and I get very tired of hearing the same person say "I am sorry, there are no circuits now." Why do you not change that at least once every two weeks, put a different person and a different tone because sometimes in one day you get the same recording and you listen to it 10 or 15 times and it gets very boring. If you are going to have someone recording that, maybe a less phony delivery would make it more acceptable to a person like me because it does not sound like the person is sorry at all. So those are the concerns I have in those particular areas. Maybe you can give me some kind of plan of action that will be set in place that will overcome the concerns that I have just expressed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR: Mr. Chairman, first of all if I may, I would like to correct a statement I made to Mr. Butters. One of the things I did ask from my supervisors when we had the break was whether or not we had a problem with some data transmission between Fort Smith and Yellowknife and also between Fort Smith and Cambridge Bay. The circuits there have to be handled at 1200 baud. We are going to do some more tests and we are actually doing tests on the Cambridge Bay system now. We will be doing tests on the Fort Smith system because we have done some upgrading to find out whether or not we can get it up to 2400.

To get to the question of Ms Cournoyea on the timing of the radio system into Paulatuk. I believe that is imminent, it is either happening now or next week, that the new radio system is going to Paulatuk. The telephone exchange for Paulatuk is scheduled for the third quarter of this year, so it would be sometime more than likely for a July or August time frame.

The out of order concern for a community. Our policy is now if the community is down for a week we automatically rebate the community, after a week it is automatically done. However, on individual outages the person has to make representation; so if an individual's phone was out, they would have to make individual representation. Our system really does not permit us to monitor every subscriber for that.

The outage as far as trying to get into a location and you are not sure if you are just getting enough circuits or the community is actually out. If you are dealing with the operator, our normal policy is that once a community is out, and we know it is out, it is normally identified on the operator's screen and she can actually tell that there is a community outage, so she should know when a customer calls in. However, when you are direct distance dialing that does not happen. We do not change our tapes for that because it is a common tape for all communities. If there are insufficient circuits or something like that or there is an outage, we do not have a separate route for that community's trunks if you are direct distance dialing.

Your comment on the voice that we use on our tapes, I know we have just recently been replacing a lot of our recordings. We can take it under advisement -- whether we can change it that often is another question. It is quite costly to change tapes because they are usually located in each individual exchange.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Ms Cournoyea.

MS COURNOYEA: Mr. Chairman, I would caution the representatives that perhaps NorthwTel really in fact automatically gives a rebate on the service when it is out, but in some communities it is not being done. Perhaps if that is a policy, it can be stressed more.

On the identification on the screen -- in terms of dialing a community like Paulatuk, the operator from Whitehorse would dial the number and the recording would come on. The only way that you would find out is if you are insistent that the Whitehorse operator call the Hay River operator. For some reason it is not registering on the screen in Whitehorse because in almost all locations, I have had to request specifically to the operator that she get in contact with the Hay River operator to identify whether it is out of order or there are just no circuits. So it is not really as clear as you have stated. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR: Thank you for the comments. I do stand corrected on Paulatuk. I think there is a little different routing and we will look into the administrative procedure to make sure that it is handled.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Arlooktoo.

Problems With Billing Procedures In South Baffin

MR. ARLOOKTOO: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make a brief comment. I am directing this toward the Bell Canada representatives. This is with regard to the bill collectors. Sometimes they are taken care of by the co-op people. Whenever there is a notice of disconnection, I think it would be a lot better if those people who take care of the bills are notified before they send notices to people in the community. There are quite a few people whose phones have been disconnected in this matter. It would be a lot better if the individual is informed personally by the Bell representatives instead of sending a letter which takes longer than the phone call. It would be a lot better this way if the person himself is informed through the telephone.

For the Baffin South people who have been away for about a month now while we are off at this session if when we get back we find that our phones have been disconnected, it would be very disconcerting. I think it would be helpful if you could consider that the Baffin region MLAs are away for a certain period of time in some sessions; if you could look into this matter regarding the MLAs that are away from home for quite a while during their sessional meetings. The reason why I brought this up is because I would like you to consider about the local people who take care of the bills while most of us are away for a certain period of time.

I did not know about this \$200 down payment every time your phone is disconnected, but now that I know, I would like this to be looked into with the local people who are taking care of the phone bills. I know personally a few people who have had to put down a \$300 down payment before they get their phone installed again. So I would like this to be looked into more, for I know that we would have to pay quite a bit if they are disconnected. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Lepage.

MR. LEPAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once again, I guess what we have heard are primarily questions tied into billing procedures. I believe one of the main concerns, especially for MLAs in the Baffin South region who are away at times -- and if I understood it correctly because of their being absent, it is possible that the billing is not taken care of and then it can result in a disconnect. It was requested that we consider trying to inform, through our agents or through discussions with the MLAs, to find some way of avoiding this. We will take it under advisement and certainly we will look at trying to find a solution to this type of problem. The comment about suggesting that we advise the billing agents about disconnect is a valid one. I believe this is a regular procedure, but since it was mentioned, it appears that we must be remiss at times and we will review it once again.

The mention was also made of the \$200 down payment tied in after a disconnect, before service would be restored. As I have mentioned before, we will look into a general review of our billing system per se. I would just like to emphasize, however, that since it has been mentioned it must happen, but at least 95 per cent of our billing goes through without any questions. So it is a matter of fine tuning that five per cent portion where we seem to be missing the boat. So yes, we take under advisement the recommendations and we will look into this.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): That concludes all our questions. If there are no further questions, I would like to thank the witnesses from Bell Canada and NorthwTel.

---Applause

Bill 1-83(1), Appropriation Ordinance, 1983-84

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): We will now go into Bill 1-83(1), Department of Finance, page 5.01. Mr. Butters, would you like to bring in your witnesses?

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Yes, please.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Department Of Finance

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): We were on page 5.01. General comments and questions. Are there any general comments or questions from Members? Mr. Wray.

MR. WRAY: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask the Minister if he could before tomorrow, give me the amounts of money that have been collected in taxes and grants in lieu of taxes for my constituency, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, I assume the Member is referring to property taxes, which are the responsibility of the Department of Local Government. I will see if I can act on his behalf to obtain that information and approach Mr. Wah-Shee for it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mrs. Sorensen.

MRS. SORENSEN: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could go through the areas which the tax expert whom he has hired is looking at. Generally what are the terms of reference of the tax expert and the areas that he is looking at with respect to the possible position of the territorial government? In addition, I guess too the fact that he will be looking at the implications of the federal decision to tax northern benefits to a specific level in two areas -- housing and travel; but what other areas is the tax expert looking at?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, I do not have the terms of reference with me at the moment, but he has been directed to look at the taxation regime which was announced by Mr. Munro in December, imposed on the people of the Northwest Territories. To accomplish that end, he has visited the Territories with his research assistant and consulted with a number of people in a number of fields regarding that regime and perceived impacts. He will be required to develop for us a report of the impacts resulting from that regime, and suggest alternative approaches that we might make to the federal government to ameliorate or reduce any untoward effects of the proposed taxation regime.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mrs. Sorensen.

Territorial Tax Credit

MRS. SORENSEN: So part of his terms of reference does include the possibility of alternatives. Would those alternatives include the possibility of a territorial tax credit and/or a lowering of the territorial tax rate from the present 43 per cent of federal tax?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: The tax credit is obviously an option. It was a recommendation of the Executive Committee to Mr. Munro and his committee of four Ministers prior to the time the decision was made, when it became apparent that the first recommendation we made with regard to a tax deduction would probably not be accepted. So yes, a tax credit is an alternative.

With regard to reducing the tax currently paid to the Government of Canada by NWT residents, I would suggest that an arrangement will have to be worked out with the federal government to do that. Whether or not he will be making such a recommendation, I am not sure. I would say the tax credit is probably a more obvious option.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mrs. Sorensen.

MRS. SORENSEN: I am not clear, Mr. Minister. Were you saying that the Executive Committee had recommended a territorial tax credit or a federal tax credit?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: It would appear that the remaining option at the present time would be a territorial tax credit because the tax credit arrangement which we proposed originally was not accepted by the federal government, so it would appear that they may have rejected that already. I must caution the Member, if it is an option we would still have to find out from the federal government where the funds would be coming from to provide such a credit.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mrs. Sorensen.

Motion To Have Terms Of Reference Of Tax Expert On Northern Allowances Include Taxation Of Hunters And Trappers

MRS. SORENSEN: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has not included in his description of the terms of reference of the tax expert, the concern of this Legislature with respect to the taxation of the NWT trappers earnings and, therefore, I have a committee motion that refers to this: I move that the committee recommend that the Minister of Finance extend the terms of reference of the tax expert to include information which will assist the Minister in convincing the federal government to include in the present remission order on the taxation of northern allowances, the taxation of NWT trappers earnings; and further, that the tax expert prepare for the Minister, information that would assist the Minister in convincing the federal government to establish a special schedule on the federal tax form for hunters and trappers, similar to the schedule for farmers and fishermen.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Butters.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: I was going to respond last night but my hand was not recognized. The terms of reference may not have specifically referred to that matter. An approach was made to Professor Bird to see whether he could handle such an examination and as a result of our request he indicated that this subject was outside of his tax policy expertise and that we would be better represented by obtaining the services of a tax accountant with experience in this area. On the basis of that statement we have contacted a local accounting firm and requested that background information be developed to identifying similar circumstances of hunters and trappers in relation to other types of taxpayers, for example farmers and fishermen, to ensure that all revenues of tax interpretation and administration are reasonable. So there is something going ahead on that even though Professor Bird may not have the expertise in that particular area.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): To the motion. Mrs. Sorensen, the motion is in order. Go ahead.

MRS. SORENSEN: Mr. Chairman, there may not be the need for this motion. I wonder if I could have a bit more information. You have approached a local accountant -- have you made an agreement with that accountant yet and what are the terms of reference to that agreement?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, the local individual has been approached but no agreement has yet been made. The firm is currently investigating what such an examination might consist of and require, but there are no grounds to think that that individual might not be interested in pursuing the initiative.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mrs. Sorensen.

MRS. SORENSEN: Mr. Minister, could we have a commitment from you that before the end of this session you will report to us on your plan of action with respect to both these areas? We require information to present to the federal government, reasons why we wish a remission order on the taxation of trappers taxes and the need for a special schedule on the federal form. Would you give us an undertaking that before the end of this session you will report to us on your activities in this area and what exactly you plan to do?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, we have already presented our position to the federal government with regard to the taxation of northern allowances and they are well aware of that position. What we are doing now is responding to a new taxation regime and that response will not be available to the House within the next two weeks. If we recess and meet again in a couple of months I would be very hopeful that the report would be available at that time, and on the report becoming available, I see no reason why it could not be provided to Members.

On the second matter, I think that we can report on the progress made on that score and whether or not we have a firm commitment from the local expert to pursue the object with regard to a special dispensation for northern trappers, along the lines of fishermen and farmers. So I would agree on the latter but I cannot say when the other report will be available.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): To the motion. Mrs. Sorensen.

MRS. SORENSEN: I am sorry; you misunderstood me, Mr. Minister. I was asking for a report from you on the plan of action with respect to the hunters and trappers taxation. I am calling for a remission on the present order for back taxes on the hunters and trappers earnings and I am asking for a report on that by the end of this session, with the plan of action from you.

Position Of Federal Government On Taxation Of Hunters And Trappers

HON. TOM BUTTERS: I can give you information on what we have done. We have approached Revenue Canada orally and in writing on a number of occasions and the upshot would appear to be that Revenue Canada has determined in response to both requests made from this government and from Mr. Munro that there would be no moratorium in the case of the 49 reassessments. I can give you some kind of report as to what has been done, what the federal decision is and what we may have to consider. The federal decision is quite clear cut. Mr. Bussieres has indicated that he does not intend -- I guess I can quote what he said: "The question of my department's involvement in this matter has been the subject of a careful study by my senior officials. Income has been taxed in accordance with the provisions of the Income Tax Act and the reassessments therefore cannot be reversed. I read with interest your comments in support of a recommendation for remission of tax under the Financial Administration Act, but I have to state that the circumstances do not meet the policy condition under which my department would recommend a remission which have to do with unintended consequences of the law of evidence that a taxpayer had been misinformed by the department." So that basically is the position of the Department of National Revenue and the position which we would have to address.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mrs. Sorensen.

MRS. SORENSEN: Mr. Minister, I see both the taxation of northern benefits and the problems that this government and the people of the NWT have been facing, as equally important to the taxation of the northern trappers. So on the basis that this government has gone out and hired a tax expert to try to convince the federal government to either change its decision with respect to the taxation of northern allowances or modify them in some way or to find an alternative -- to have the government go out and do that in light of the fact that the federal government has made the decision and has said that it is not going to turn back on that decision, I see it as equally important, even in light of the fact that the federal government has made a pronouncement on the taxation of trappers, that we at least undertake to do the same thing for the hunters and trappers of the Northwest Territories. We should hire some expertise if we do not have any in-house and we should apply the same kind of pressure through the information that we gather to try to either reverse the decision that has been made by the federal government, or find an alternative.

I think that is part of the role of this government. I would ask the Minister to put equal emphasis on the hunters and trappers taxation problem as he is obviously now, and quite rightly so, putting on the taxation of northern benefits. That is all that I am trying to ascertain through this motion or with the Minister's compliance, through a report on the strategy by the end of this session at which point I would withdraw this motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, the process of hiring an expert to look at northern allowances did not occur until a decision was made on the taxation regime in December. The decision that was made by Mr. Bussières has only come to my attention in the last two days and I have just read it to the House. As I mentioned, we have and are seeking to get local expertise now to address this problem. A decision has been made by the federal government and we are moving to address it, but whether or not we will have a report for the Member before this session is completed, I cannot say. We have not at the present time signed on our local expert, and it will take a while to develop that agreement. However, we are looking at getting somebody to do that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): To the motion. Ms Cournoyea.

Hunters And Trappers Should Receive Equal Treatment To Other Northerners

MS COURNOYEA: Mr. Chairman, I would like to support the motion that Mrs. Sorensen has brought forward. I realize that there is a letter from Mr. Bussières, and I believe at one time in the same context as northern benefits, there was a decision made that they would be taxed, and a valiant fight and effort went forth to try to make a correction on that.

I am not satisfied that the hunters and trappers have been given equal importance in trying to resolve the situation that they are presently in. I cannot understand why there are 49 -- if that is all we have -- why the federal government can make a decision of such magnitude to create a moratorium on northern benefits, and the people that are the trappers are not even given consideration. I cannot see where the argument which has been brought forward is fair or reasonable, in view of the fact of the decision that has been taken on northern benefits. This issue has been in existence for quite some time and all the Members that operate within the government services have been quite aware of the situation. So it is not something that has just been brought to light and is a concern of a week ago or a couple of days ago. The concern was that we had not acted very strenuously when the issue first came up -- that things would be allowed to become entrenched within the bureaucracy because of the decisions that were made at the various levels from the regional office to Ottawa. The fear that I had was that these decisions would become more and more entrenched as time is allowed to pass.

I would like to support this motion because it is saying that the hunters and trappers should be allowed to have the same treatment as people who are involved with the issue of northern benefits. I urge that it is not a light matter and it is not something which is an issue that will go away. It creates problems within the community. Some people have received their taxation notice and others have not, and there are hard feelings that are being created at a community level in regard to this situation. Some of the hunters and trappers feel that they have been unfairly picked on individually. So I would like to say that in this motion at least, there is the concern and the issue is to give them equal status in the northern benefit issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): To the motion. Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Just to assure the Member, that there have been many representations to the federal government on this matter over the last 10 or 12 months. I would also point out to the Member that the case we are looking at, and we have been approaching the federal government on, is not the taxation of all trappers, who number between 3000 and 4000, but 49 people who filed an income tax return or form. The problem is that they are being reassessed, that the return was faulty, so they have been taxed. We do not know the identity of these people but they did file, and on reassessment the government has felt that their claim or their return has been incorrect in terms of their statement of income. My understanding is that where objections have been raised by those individuals, action has been stopped. I am informed that the Edmonton taxation office has been instructed to be very, very flexible in the case where supportive documents cannot be provided for past years, that they look at each case and be understanding of the situation. However, I repeat that the individuals have all filed returns.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mrs. Sorensen.

MRS. SORENSEN: Mr. Minister, I would point out that there were a number of northerners who had paid tax on northern allowances who received rebates from the government over the past couple of years with respect to their cash allowances, which amounted in some cases to several thousands of dollars. I know that some of my constituents did receive money back. The government can and does make allowances. It has a lot to do with pressure, and it has a lot to do with the support of legislatures and picketing -- union people and various things like that. And so I would say that there still is an opportunity for this government to make its views known, and in a stronger way.

I was going to withdraw the motion but I think I am going to leave it, even though you say that the present tax expert does not have the particular expertise that you may want, certainly there could be a subcontract as a part of that whole package that you will be dealing with. The reason that I am not going to withdraw it is because I see this issue as being equally important as the northern taxation of benefits issue. I think that a statement should be made in this Legislature, with respect to that. So I am going to leave it as it is, with the understanding that I do not mean that the tax expert that you have hired should be the particular one who does the work, you should certainly have the freedom to choose whoever you feel could do the work for you, if you do not have that person in-house.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

Motion To Have Terms Of Reference Of Tax Expert On Northern Allowances Include Taxation Of Hunters And Trappers, Carried

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

---Carried

Any more general comments? Questions? Will we go on to administration? Mr. MacQuarrie.

MR. MacQUARRIE: With respect to the question of the taxation of northern allowances, could I have a little clarification? I thought at one point that without question this government was going to continue making efforts to persuade the federal government to change its decision in that regard, but when you talked about the terms of reference of the tax expert and so on, it seems that you may have backed away from that, and that it is a question now of providing alternatives, which I agree ought to be done too. Personally, I do not like to see you -- if that is what is happening -- back away from that initial position that we do believe that in the interests of a sound northern development policy there should be a comprehensive deduction for people who live in the North, and that part of your study should be directed toward amassing the evidence that will persuade the government that that is the case. Could you just clarify for me precisely what is happening?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, I mentioned I do not have the terms of reference for Professor Bird with me, but they are very flexible. If alterations can be made, fine, that would be the way we go. Certainly there is nothing to suggest that if there are other options that might be advanced to the federal government for consideration, those options too would not be looked at. We are attempting to be flexible in all regards in our approach.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. MacQuarrie.

MR. MacQUARRIE: I think that is a political matter in a sense, we should not just leave it to a tax expert to determine whether or not that should be one of the alternatives. My point of view is that it is a political decision. I believe there is good reason for pressing the government to change it. They do seem very determined not to change it, but that government may not be around for any great length of time, and even the honourable Minister who is responsible for that decision may not be around for any great length of time, so I would just like to see that pursued.

Approaches To Federal Government Re Changes To Northern Taxation Policy

I had the impression that our government was going to take a lead role among all groups that are interested in changing this, particularly mining groups and so on. Can you just tell me what other activities are going on in that regard, or have we put all our eggs in the one basket and asked the tax expert to save us, in a sense? Or are there other activities, are we convening meetings with these other groups that are concerned? Are we pointing directions and leading the way?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Initially, some months ago, a year and a half ago, there were unilateral approaches by governments and the mining industry, and I do not know if the business community or any other segments of the northern community made respective approaches, but at that time the

mining industry made its own approach and we went through the Department of Finance and made our representations through these channels. This time I have attempted to bring together a diverse group of individuals representing probably the totality of interests in the Northwest Territories and to see whether or not we can agree on a uniform approach.

I was not present at the meeting at which Professor Bird met with this group, but I understand that he took away from it the opinion that there was a general opinion and a general support to do something to change or amend or reverse what would appear to be a very non-productive and unfair regime. So there have been many groups involved, including the mining industry, the chamber of commerce, native organizations, experts from the fiscal field in the Northwest Territories and the unions. We have attempted to receive as much practical and down-to-earth expertise and comment as is available to us, and we are trying to make a joint approach of all those interested parties.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. MacQuarrie.

MR. MACQUARRIE: Do I understand that that joint approach will continue, that there are definite plans for continuing it? Is it not just something that has happened until now and will be dropped?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: It will continue, Mr. Chairman, I guess as long as the elements of that group feel that their best interests are being supported in this direction. They have asked that the territorial government act as the lead agency, collect the various representations that have been made to Mr. LaLonde and other federal ministers, and act in the co-ordinating and leading role. We are doing that and continuing to do that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Any more general comments and questions? Will we move on to administration?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Total O And M, Administration, Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Total O And M, administration, \$1,759,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

Total O And M, Treasury

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Treasury, \$2,477,000. Mrs. Sorensen.

MRS. SORENSEN: Mr. Chairman, I have a question on treasury. With respect to the cash flow, Mr. Minister, what is our situation now? We heard over the past couple of years that we had a very high cash flow, and now it is my understanding that we have drawn down on our cash and that we are no longer in that situation. What does that mean to our government and to the possibility of implementing any new programs out of that cash flow?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: On our cash flow and our current cash position, I might ask Mr. Nelson to respond, but my reading of our current situation would be that there is no flexibility within our cash reserve now to permit any new programs. I think in my opening statement I made that quite clear, that if there are new programs to be developed with the funds of this government then offsets will have to be indicated in other programs where deductions can be made or savings can be made, but I will ask Mr. Nelson to respond to the general question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Nelson.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Chairman, over the last year our cash position in the government has been drawn down significantly, but we are still hopeful of ending this fiscal year in a fairly strong position. However from last year, for example, our cash has been reduced significantly because

of reduced taxation revenues and other revenues for the government. We do not have any significant problems in that area at the moment, although our investment people are looking very carefully on a day to day basis at our cash position.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Treasury, \$2,477,000. Mr. MacQuarrie.

Inventory Control In The Territorial Government

MR. MacQUARRIE: I notice that this mentions briefly that one of the functions is an asset inventory. I was going to raise the matter under Government Services and regrettably was away at the time, but just how tight is the inventory control of the Government of the Northwest Territories? I know there is the type where from time to time managers are asked to indicate what assets there are in any given department, but do we have continuing inventory with write-offs and so on? Do we have the kind of system where, you know, a particular typewriter is known, it was bought at such and such a time, delivered here for this purpose, lent there but retrieved back at such and such a time? Just how close is that inventory control? I have heard it said that it is not particularly close at all.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, I believe the question should have been put in Government Services and the Member was away when Government Services was considered. Our warehouses all have controls through the revolving funds, but to respond to the specific question, our inventory control is weak. I have discussed this with the deputy minister of the Government Services department, who seeks ways to tighten up inventory control responsibilities and identification of the individual responsibilities for controlling inventory within their own purview, but we have to cover some ground on that one.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. MacQuarrie.

MR. MacQUARRIE: And is there an action plan and a deadline with respect to the report back on that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: I do not know that I can say there is a deadline, except as soon as possible. There is a number of shortcomings in that overall area and the deputy minister of the department is aware of it and is taking steps to get systems in place as quickly as possible. I am not sure how long that will take but he is aware of it and steps are being made to improve our controls.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. MacQuarrie.

MR. MacQUARRIE: I guess what I meant in asking the question was that it was not a casual statement to the deputy minister but rather is there a very definite program to bring about tighter inventory control?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Oh, it was not a casual statement. I was quite concerned about it when we discussed the matter. The two departments of Finance and Government Services are working on procedures and something will be put in place in that area because it requires action very soon.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Treasury, \$2,477,000. Mrs. Sorensen.

Submission On New And Alternative Revenues

MRS. SORENSEN: Mr. Minister, what happened to that comprehensive submission on new and alternative revenues? Has that been tabled in the House?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: No, it has not been tabled in the House. It has been studied and examined for final implementation. It has not been referred to the Executive Committee yet either. I think one of the reasons for that situation is that a number of these taxation elements or proposals

that we are looking at will be complementary to the formula financing arrangement and will develop discretionary funding for us and not just reduce the total of the transfer grant. So I think that you will probably find that the proposals go ahead together as progress is being made on implementing our formula financing.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mrs. Sorensen.

MRS. SORENSEN: Is this the submission that has been put together for us by the infamous Gary Foster who appears, certainly, to have been around and had a very interesting letter in last weeks newspaper?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Yes, I recollect the interesting letter. The submission was put together by the treasury division at the request of Mr. Nielsen and Mr. Nelson and the Executive Committee but Mr. Foster is one of the architects of the proposal that has been put forward.

Total O And M, Treasury, Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Treasury, \$2,477,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

Total O And M, Comptrollership

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Comptrollership, \$2,656,000. Mr. Curley.

MR. CURLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to be correct in reading the preamble and this statement here. The third one states that during 1982-83 emphasis was placed on further development of financial systems. Does that mean that financial information service that you have invested quite a bit in already? Do you mean to tell us that you will be further spending and expanding that? If so, exactly how is it going to contribute to places other than Yellowknife?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: I would like to ask Mr. Nielsen to address that question because the systems refer to total government systems and not a special computerized system.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Nielsen.

MR. NIELSEN: Mr. Chairman, it is common in people's minds to confuse the word "system" automatically with computerized systems, and that is something that we have been attempting to, I suppose, work on within government. The word "systems" refers to procedures, manual systems, any types of direction that can be provided or, let us say, any kind of structure that can be put into place to improve the manner by which the financial affairs of the government are handled. Part of that would relate to the financial information system, perhaps, refining parts of it that have already been implemented, some of the manual procedures that are complementary to the system and partially just other types of systems within the government which will improve its accounting.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Curley.

MR. CURLEY: Thank you. May I ask the Minister or his deputy, what benefits are we receiving from the FIS? I notice that there is very little information provided as to what benefits we are actually receiving from such an expensive machine or computer system. Experts have told us that that kind of set-up would be beneficial for major companies that have over a billion dollar budget. Are we really getting our moneys worth for the kind of FIS that we have and how come not enough information is provided to us if it means so much to the government in this presentation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Butters.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, it is our expectation that the whole spectrum of effects and service provided by the financial information system will be discussed at the end of March under the aegis of the standing committee on finance and public accounts. The comprehensive report of the Auditor General has been tabled in this House and referred to Mrs. Sorensen's committee for discussion at that time, so that our expectation is that there will be quite a detailed examination of the whole process and progress of that particular system.

I would just point out too that because I am going to ask Mr. Nielsen to respond to some of the benefits that are now accruing to this government with the implementation of the system, that the Auditor General, following completion of his comprehensive audit, was recently quite complimentary at the manner in which the implementation had taken place and the service of information which it was providing to this government.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Nielsen.

Benefits Accrued From Financial Information System

MR. NIELSEN: Mr. Chairman, as was pointed out by Mr. Butters, there will be a much more comprehensive response to that type of question when the standing committee on finance makes its review, but I think it is legitimate at this time to identify some of the overall benefits to this government because they are of interest to the total Legislative Assembly. The major reason for the change to the type of system was not strictly for information, it was also to provide a manner of speedy processing across government and to take into consideration regional operations.

So the first thing I would like to mention is that every region now has a complete and independently functioning financial information system which provides a computerized processing for payments to suppliers within that region. The major benefit there has been to northern suppliers, that they are now getting paid much more rapidly and additionally, at much less cost because previously those cheques had to be prepared independently and manually. In fact, the way the process used to work was those cheques were manually prepared in the region and all of the information then submitted to headquarters where it was then put into a computer.

The second major area of improvement has been in the processing of accounts receivable. Previously the accounts receivable of the government were handled by about four separate systems and it was practically impossible to get one monthly statement identifying what accounts receivable were outstanding, and the ages of those accounts receivable. That information is now being prepared monthly. There has been a substantial improvement in the level of the outstanding accounts receivable across the Northwest Territories, including Government of Canada accounts, and those accounts are being monitored and improved with every report that is issued.

There are a number of other internal reports which have improved things like travel advances outstanding to the employees of the government. There has been a dramatic decline in the number of those advances. The list is really quite endless in terms of numbers of improvements being made, including management information going regularly to the Executive offices. Each Minister now gets a monthly report on his desk, usually within 10 days of the end of the month, identifying the projected budget year to date and actual expenditures. Action can be taken promptly by each of those managers to reduce expenses.

Those are just a few of the types of improvements made in the system, and while it is quite difficult and perhaps impossible to put a dollar value to those benefits, it is quite clear to those of us who operate that system and work with it on a regular basis that there are probably, behind the scenes, million dollar savings occurring over the course of a few years.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Comptrollership, \$2,656,000. Mr. MacQuarrie.

Auditor General's Report

MR. MACQUARRIE: I would just like to note that I had wanted the Auditor General's report to be discussed at this session and I had agreed not to table it myself and attempt to have it moved into committee of the whole for discussion on the understanding that, through discussions with the chairman of the standing committee on finance, I would be able to fully participate in analysis and discussion during the time when the standing committee is reviewing it.

So I will not go into it at all now other than to say that the Auditor General does write in a very circumspect way and therefore people may interpret it as they wish. The Minister made an interpretation a short time ago with respect to the Auditor General being very complimentary as to the method of implementation and the benefits to this government, and I would simply say that this time he did not entirely say that so I look forward to a further review.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Comptrollership. Mrs. Sorensen.

MRS. SORENSEN: Mr. Chairman, just for the information of the Members, the finance committee will be sitting as a public accounts committee on the 29th, 30th and 31st of March.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: That is advertising!

MRS. SORENSEN: The deputy auditor general and his staff who did the comprehensive audit on the financial information system will be in attendance. As well, the standing committee on public accounts has hired the services of a parliamentary researcher to help us with the questions and with the research that is necessary. The meetings will be open to the public and to the press. A transcript will be kept of the proceedings on a daily basis, and witnesses will be called from the territorial government and from other areas if they are required.

Also, a standing invitation to any MLA who is not on the standing committee on public accounts is made automatically to attend if they wish to do so, and to participate openly and freely in the finance committee and public accounts committee meetings. A letter will be coming out shortly to all Members advising them of the dates and the times of this meeting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Total 0 And M, Comptrollership, Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Comptrollership, \$2,656,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

Total 0 And M, Debt Financing Cost, Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Debt financing cost \$1,700,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

0 And M, Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Page 5.01, 0 and M, \$8,592,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

Financial Management Secretariat

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): We will now go to the Financial Management Secretariat, page 4.01. General comments. Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, I would just ask if the committee might excuse Mr. Nelson, comptroller general for the Department of Finance. Mr. Nielsen and I will answer questions with regard to the secretariat. I have no opening remarks. I think it is a group of the hardest-working people in this government...

AN HON. MEMBER: Ohhhhhhhhh!

AN HON. MEMBER: Ahem! Ahem!

---Laughter

HON. TOM BUTTERS: ...and my association with them has led me to have much respect and appreciation of the very fine work that they do on behalf of the Executive Committee and the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Thank you, Mr. Nelson. Do the Members have any questions or general comments? Mrs. Sorensen.

MRS. SORENSEN: The discussion of a Financial Management Secretariat would not be complete unless I asked my basic question, and that is: When will the complete accountability based budgeting system be implemented? Will it be implemented before the end of my term, which is up October 31st?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Mr. Minister.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: I was going to say, "With an awful lot of luck", and I assure the Member that we are working on it. We have identified people who will do it. We have identified funds to put it in place and I, with the Member, would like to see it a reality before my term concludes as well. So it is moving. I think the Member is aware now, with her discussions with the Auditor General, that it is not something that is in place in every jurisdiction in Canada, including the Government of Canada. We will be working with the two jurisdictions who are furthest ahead on this process, Ontario and Nova Scotia I believe, to put our system in place. There are very few models today, currently in Canada in existence, that we might copy. We are proceeding on it and we have identified people to do the job.

Total O And M, Financial Management Secretariat, Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Any questions and general comments? Page 4.02, Financial Management Secretariat, \$770,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): That completes Financial Management Secretariat. I would like to thank Mr. Minister and Mr. Nielsen.

HON. TOM BUTTERS: Thank you very much, sir, on behalf of my colleagues and myself.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): What is the committee's wish? The next department is Executive, page 2.01. Mr. McCallum.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: I move to report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Sayine): Report progress? All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. We will report progress.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Sayine.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF MATTERS RELATING TO BELL CANADA AND NORTHWESTEL;
BILL 1-83(1), APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE, 1983-84

MR. SAYINE: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering matters relating to NorthwesTel and Bell Canada and wish to report this matter concluded, and also your committee has been considering Bill 1-83(1) and wish to report progress.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Sayine. Are there any announcements from the floor? Mr. Clerk, announcements and orders, please.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the standing committee on finance and public accounts at 9:30 tomorrow morning in the caucus room.

ITEM NO. 16: ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of the day, Thursday, March 3rd, 1:00 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Members' Replies
3. Oral Questions
4. Written Questions

5. Returns
6. Ministers' Statements
7. Petitions
8. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
9. Tabling of Documents
10. Notices of Motion
11. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
12. Motions
13. First Reading of Bills
14. Second Reading of Bills
15. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills, Recommendations to the Legislature and Other Matters: Appearance of Fisheries and Oceans Representatives; Bills 1-83(1), 3-83(1), 4-83(1), 5-83(1), 6-83(1), 7-83(1), 8-83(1), 9-83(1), 10-83(1), 11-83(1), 12-83(1), 13-83(1), 14-83(1), 15-83(1), 16-83(1), 17-83(1), 18-83(1), 20-83(1)
16. Orders of the Day

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This House stands adjourned until Thursday, March 3rd, at 1:00 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

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