

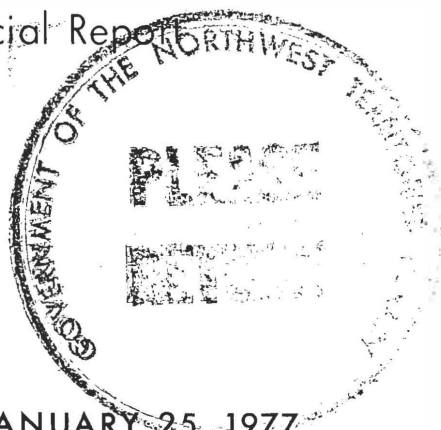


LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
DEBATES

61st Session

8th Assembly

Official Report



TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 1977

Speaker The Honourable David H. Searle, Q.C.

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 1977

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Steen, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Butters, Mr. Fraser, Hon. Arnold McCallum, Mr. Evaluarjuk, Hon. Peter Ernerk, Mr. Pearson, Mr. Pudluk, Hon. David Searle, Hon. Dave Nickerson

ITEM NO. 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. David Searle): Item 2, replies to the Commissioner's Opening Address. Hon. Peter Ernerk.

ITEM NO. 2: REPLIES TO COMMISSIONER'S OPENING ADDRESS

Hon. Peter Ernerk's Reply To Commissioner's Opening Address

HON. PETER ERNERK: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Commissioner, Mr. Deputy Commissioner and Members of the Legislature. Before I go into my department's responsibilities and present to you what I feel is the role of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, I would like to briefly ...

MR. PEARSON: You are not on yet.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not believe we are getting any sound.

HON. PETER ERNERK: Mr. Speaker, I will start over with your permission now that I am in stereo with two microphones.

Constituents' Needs In Keewatin Region

Mr. Speaker, before I go into my department's responsibilities and present to you what I feel is the role of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism I would briefly like to talk about my constituents' needs in the Keewatin region.

Members of this Legislature are no doubt aware of my concern that all communities in my constituency have access to long distance telephone facilities. I am pleased to report that Chesterfield Inlet, as of December 1976, received Anik satellite service and now I feel that the Department of Communications in Ottawa must permit Whale Cove, as the last remaining settlement without such facilities, to join the 20th century society and make available the same service as provided to the other five settlements in my constituency.

The Department of Education must respond in the near future to the needs of the people of the Keewatin region and provide the much needed high school facility for that area. If the young people of this region are to have the opportunity to compete successfully in the labour market they must be able to complete their total education program, that is up to grade 12, and to have it close to their own home grounds.

In speaking of community development the Commissioner in his Opening Address indicated that Baker Lake and Eskimo Point would receive hamlet status during the year 1977. Let me inform you of another type of community development in the Keewatin region, and that is in Baker Lake where through determination the residents of this community have become shareholders in the company that built the new Iglu hotel. I am convinced that the other communities throughout the Northwest Territories will no doubt follow this example of local control.

Very briefly I want to say a few words with respect to our Legislative Assembly. As I look around I see all of the voting Members in this House as elected people. So far we have decided to call ourselves the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, and we now have three elected Members who sit on the Executive Committee of the territorial administration from this Legislature and yet various federal departments look to us as merely advisers to themselves.

On the 22nd of January 1977, we received a beautiful Speaker's chair that indicates progress towards more responsible government. If we are to build our road toward responsible government we must start now. We must become the true representatives of the 40,000 residents who live in the Northwest Territories. The federal government and its departments must begin to accept and recognize our existence and look to us as true representatives of the people.

Having said all that, we the Legislative Assembly, should recommend to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs that the next assistant commissioner should be elected from this Legislature to have the responsibility for local government and public services.

Responsibilities Of The Department Of Economic Development And Tourism

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move on to my departmental responsibilities. The Department of Economic Development and Tourism is concerned with providing incentives and opportunities to enable people to earn a living for themselves or, as a recent headline in the Yellowknifer put it, "people development through economic development". In the North achieving economic development is not simply a matter of manipulating supply and demand, or making loans or even establishing new business, it involves developing the understanding and skills necessary which will allow our people to cope with the modern commercial and industrial working environment and also to adapt the work habits imported from the South to suit northern working conditions and the aspirations of northern people.

Reorganization of the department has recently taken place and this department's responsibility is first to provide services to the business sector, consisting of providing grants, loans, management services and other promotional and advisory services to those people who wish to start, expand and develop their own businesses in the Northwest Territories. The progress made by the people of the territories in this respect is evidenced by the dramatic growth of loans from the Eskimo Loan Fund, the Indian Economic Development Fund and the Small Business Loan Fund. I recently invited a number of organizations to name representatives to form a business advisory group. Its purpose is to foster better relations between the private sector and the government and to allow a freer exchange of information and advice between them.

The Department As An Entrepreneur

Secondly, the department acts as an entrepreneur itself by setting up projects and marketing products from the Northwest Territories where the private sector has not the expertise, or market conditions have not developed sufficiently to make it attractive for local individuals to start and operate a business at a profit. The department operates projects which provides employment, income to the communities and experience in the management and operation of businesses. Most important I think they provide the initial opportunity for private and co-operative organizations in the Northwest Territories to become involved and eventually take over and run businesses which have then become viable.

Thirdly, the department also provides important services to the northern work force through its employment and training division. These are training on-the-job and apprenticeship programs and as well efforts are made to place individuals and relocate workers where jobs are available. During the past year, the department, in conjunction with the Department of Social Development, has organized and implemented the short term employment program which is intended to provide funds with which communities could employ people who would otherwise be unemployed and on welfare during the winter season. It is the intention of this government to further develop and expand this program with the emphasis on having people employed on a permanent type basis wherever possible. I place a particularly strong emphasis on the training aspects of these programs since it is through training people for responsible jobs in the future that the indigenous people of the Northwest Territories will be able to fully control their own lives and futures. Complex and technical jobs require years of training, as well as a sound, basic education. I intend to have the department put a strong priority on the provision of technical and management training opportunities, because these jobs will have high pay-offs to northern society in the long run.

Functions Of Headquarters And Regions

At headquarters in Yellowknife the staff members will concentrate on program management, planning and policy issues, and the marketing of the Northwest Territories' products. These will remain centralized functions of the department. The day-to-day operation divisions will be delegated to the field and regional staff.

As the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs mentioned in his Opening Address or in his Address to this Assembly, the federal cabinet has agreed to introduce the programs of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion into the North. These programs have been active in the provinces for a number of years and we in this government have always felt that we were at a disadvantage in comparison with the provinces by not having them operate in the North.

It is intended to further expand the department's financial services through an ordinance which is to be recommended to this Assembly. This ordinance would permit the Government of the Northwest Territories to make loan guarantees to northern businesses as a supplement to the Small Business Loan Fund. As a result of concerns expressed by the northern business community to our department, there have been changes made to the Small Business Loan Fund. An agreement was reached with the federal government to permit loans for working capital as well as fixed capital investments to be made from the fund and to raise the maximum loan from \$50,000 to \$100,000. I am pleased to report that steps are now being taken with the federal government to arrange for the transfer of the funding and regulations of the Small Business Loan Fund to the Government of the Northwest Territories under the authority of this Legislature. We expect that the transfer will be made during the upcoming fiscal year.

Major Projects, Projects And Marketing Division

Now, major projects within projects and marketing division during 1977 will be the expansion of existing projects, maximizing income and employment opportunities to local residents, increasing sales and establishing new markets for products produced in the Northwest Territories. Continued emphasis will be placed upon greater involvement of people at the settlement level, in all aspects of project operations. This division will promote and encourage the formation of project advisory boards for each economic development project in the Northwest Territories. These boards will have membership from the project and the community and will ensure that both the community and project staff are consulted and involved in the decision making process. As a project approaches viability, the experience gained with the project advisory board should facilitate the establishment of an effective board of directors to ensure the smooth turnover to local ownership.

Plans are being developed to provide assistance to communities in the formation of community arts and craft councils. These councils will be able to represent the needs and desires of the Northwest Territories artists and craftsmen, both in the Northwest Territories and at a national level. These community arts and crafts councils will be encouraged to organize a Northwest Territories arts and crafts council which could then act as the official spokesman for the Northwest Territories artists and craftsmen in dealing with territorial and national governments, agencies, etc.

A manpower policy for the Northwest Territories. This policy, presently in first draft, would outline our Assembly's position with regard to the employment and support of Northwest Territories residents. The policy will concern itself with such things as entitlement to employment; job creation by private industry and/or government; relocation assistance and training of the work force; government priorities and attitudes toward employment.

Under apprenticeship we will be moving toward increasing the amount of theoretical training available for Northwest Territories apprentices within the Northwest Territories, and away from our existing practice of purchasing it from the provinces. Under training positions, Northwest Territories government training positions will make opportunities available to northerners to take training at the professional levels; for example, architectural and engineering.

Revision Of Ordinances Affecting Travel Industry And Parks

Under travel industry and parks one of the major priorities of travel industry and parks will be a complete revision and rewrite of all the ordinances and regulations relating to the travel industry. This will be carried out with full consultation with all concerned groups, particularly the Northwest Territories Travel Industry Association.

As I indicated in my speech last year to the Northwest Territories Travel Industry Association, we will move towards a partnership approach to the industry, especially in the area of promotion, and preliminary steps have already been taken in this direction. In addition, the department will actively promote and assist the formation of associations in the Keewatin and Baffin regions under the general umbrella of the Northwest Territories Travel Association.

Under Hire North the administration of the Hire North project was turned over to the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in January of 1976. The program of training heavy equipment operators in an actual on-the-job highway construction environment was continued. In addition, a usable portion of highway was constructed consisting of 16 miles of finished grade and three miles of rough grade. To date, 111 students have entered the program since it was begun in 1973 and 51 completed their training. Most have found employment

on constructions job; however, with the slowdown on the Mackenzie highway and other construction work, these trained operators may not have employment. It is imperative that an alternate useful road construction program be undertaken. A good example would be the Fort Simpson to Fort Liard highway to connect with the British Columbia portion from Fort Nelson to the Northwest Territories border. A program of this nature would provide employment for graduates of the Hire North training program for at least three years.

A proposal to train office and middle management for the Hire North project is now under consideration by the Hire North steering committee. It is expected that funds will be made available to undertake this phase of the training program commencing April 1, 1977. The Hire North project has been successful in the past and should continue to be successful in the training of northerners to enable them to participate in further development and construction projects in the Northwest Territories. Thank you very much.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Any further replies to the Commissioner's Opening Address?
Mr. Nickerson.

Hon. Dave Nickerson's Reply To Commissioner's Opening Address

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: I am going to make the work of the Interpreter Corps and court reporters a bit easier, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a certain amount of trepidation that I make my first speech as a member of the non-productive sector of society. I have long maintained that many of our economic and hence social woes can be traced directly to the interference of government into the private lives and endeavours of the citizenry. I still maintain that government must curtail its relentless octopus-like growth and I will work towards a lessening of this unnecessary expansion and towards the preservation of individual liberties.

MR. PEARSON: Hear, hear!

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Necessary government functions should be carried out at the most junior level of government possible as it would seem to me that inefficiency is directly proportional to size in these matters. Municipal governments can operate more efficiently than we can and we can operate more efficiently than the federal government. For this reason we must support the devolution of authority and taking power from the senior to the junior levels of government. Efficiency is, of course, not the only reason; the lower the level of government, the closer it is to the people and the less is the likelihood of people being treated in a "we know best" manner which is typical of much of the bureaucracy in the North.

Operation Of The Executive Committee

And now, Mr. Speaker, before I get into a discussion of what I expect to accomplish with the Department of Social Development, I have a few words on the operation of the Executive Committee, our embryonic cabinet. With the good will of all concerned the operation works quite well. On most decisions a consensus is reached acceptable to all Members and during my term of service so far there has not been a major division on which the elected and appointed Members found themselves on opposing sides. I must point out that were the government, the Northwest Territories government, to make a major decision on the direction of Ottawa with which the elected Members were not in agreement I would feel morally obligated to report the matter directly to this House.

It would appear to me that an additional elected Member could easily replace one of the appointed members with no detriment to the effective running of the government. Were this to be done at the present time the thing that bothers

me most is that there might not remain an effective opposition or critical voice in this House and consequently I look to an increase in the number of Members of this Legislature within the near future.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Hear, hear!

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: There would appear to be no reason to me why each elected Member could not have at least two departments reporting to him. The appointed members have several each. We must admit that many senior territorial government employees are southern oriented and if the direction of this House is to be carried out forthrightly and in the manner we wish, we, through an elected Member of the Executive, must have control of personnel. Ministers, of course, have little to do with the routine day-to-day running of a department and while personnel is controlled by federal civil servants the central government, in fact, controls the implementation and matters of priority are similarly controlled by the supply of money and, in my mind, until the Department of Finance is under the wing of an Executive Member directly responsible to this House we will remain in a position of disadvantage vis-a-vis the federal government. Therefore, I would strongly recommend that we make all attempts to have an additional elected Member on the Executive and that this person be given responsibility for the Departments of Finance and Personnel. Mr. Speaker, myself and the Hon. Peter Ernerk conferred with one another well beforehand.

While still on the subject of the organization of the administration of the Government of the Northwest Territories I would refer you to page 34 of the Annual Report of the Government of the Northwest Territories, the illustrated publication entitled Council in Transition. It might better have been entitled "Council in Torment". Although a casual glance might lead one to believe that the duly elected representatives of the people of the territories are gaining in executive authority a more detailed analysis will reveal that more and more of the real power both over major decisions and the daily operations of the government are being concentrated in the office of the Commissioner. For instance, all the regional operations, which with decentralization will become even more important, report directly to the Commissioner. The Executive Committee stands a very good chance of being sidetracked and becoming nothing more than an expensive advisory body. I hope I am wrong in my apprehensions but I would strongly suggest that this Legislature take upon itself the responsibility of reviewing the Executive organization and pressing for a system which guarantees effective participation by its Members as a right and not merely as a revocable privilege.

Responsibilities Of The Department Of Social Development

In taking up my position as Minister of Social Development I find that my job has been greatly simplified by two things. The first is the high calibre of the staff. Under the first class direction of Mr. Ken Torrance, an effective and forward looking team has been developed which I am pleased to say is largely employed in the field rather than at head office. As fifty per cent or so of our field staff are northerners, I hope that we will be able to employ even more local people and have them assume more responsible tasks and take up more supervisory positions.

MR. PEARSON: Hear, Hear!

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: The second is that, in its Social Development Paper adopted a little over a year ago, this Legislature laid down some eminently sensible guidelines which I intend to follow faithfully. As a reminder, I will repeat some of the major points given to me as direction by this House. "Programs are to be devised and implemented without regard to race. The goal of all programs is to promote self-sufficiency. And people must be given authority and control over their own affairs." That is extracted from the Social Development Paper.

And now a few words on what I see as being some of the main areas of attention by the Department of Social Development in the year ahead. The Commissioner, in his Opening Address, referred to our ambitious hospital construction program in Fort Smith and Yellowknife and also to the promised transfer of provincial type health responsibilities from Health and Welfare Canada to ourselves. I consider the orderly transfer of such responsibilities to be a matter of high priority in improving the delivery of northern health services and am somewhat dissatisfied with the slow progress being made. I have been assured by the Hon. Marc Lalonde, Minister of Health and Welfare, that he is committed to the transfer and I look forward to being able to advise this House as to a timetable and procedure to be followed within the near future. We are unable to accept the argument put forward in certain circles that transfer in the territories must await a similar transfer proving successful in the Yukon. We know this to be nothing more than a delaying tactic.

In corrections, we will continue to push for community service sentencing and other measures which will reduce our jail population and hopefully prove more effective but we realize the option of sending convicts to jail must always be open to the courts and we must plan to expand the capacity of our system accordingly. Population growth and more realistic sentencing by territorial courts of late have resulted in a permanent increase in the numbers of prisoners we have to cope with. Of particular concern is the situation with regard to juvenile offenders. Juvenile court judges, in my opinion, do not have a sufficiently wide range of options open to them when dealing with young persons in conflict with the law.

Social Assistance And Welfare

I am pleased to be able to report that we expect to be able to hold the line on social assistance payments for the 1977-78 fiscal year. Were the level of economic activity to be increased from its present dimly low level, I am sure we could reduce expenditures even further.

While we applaud the announcement of the Hon. Warren Allmand that the Department of Regional Economic Expansion program is to be expanded into the Northwest Territories this again is really only a stopgap measure. What we really need is major development of our natural resources, government must unshackle the resource industries so that they can provide the jobs we so urgently need. It is my contention that welfare rates must be compatible with and a little lower than what a recipient could receive through honest work and for that reason I do not recommend any increase at the present time. To further cut down on welfare abuse we need to devise a system which will discriminate between deserving cases which society should be prepared for humanitarian reasons to support and non-deserving cases which we can well do without.

In keeping with the recommendations by the Legislative Assembly, the government has adopted a plan for the eventual control over social assistance and maybe certain other social services by those municipalities which might choose to exercise this option. A hamlet, village or other municipal council would hire the local social worker and be responsible, on behalf of the territorial government, for administering the program in that community. In my opinion, a greater degree of local control would generate a more responsible attitude towards social assistance and allow local communities more flexibility in the use of funds. At present a departmental committee is studying the financial and other difficulties which have to be overcome before such a program can be put into effect.

In order to keep this speech within reasonable time limits, I will brief the House on the other departmental plans and programs at the appropriate time during the budget debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, gentlemen, for your kind attention. And I might hope we will also prove a little more effective.

---Applause

Item 3, questions and returns.

ITEM NO. 3: QUESTIONS AND RETURNS

Are there any returns? No returns. Are there any written questions? I am sorry. Hon. Dave Nickerson.

Return To Question W1-61: Ear And Throat Problems In Rae-Edzo School

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Mr. Speaker, on Monday, January 24, Mr. Whitford asked what health services were doing about ear, nose and throat problems in Rae-Edzo and I have the following reply. The regional director, Northwest Territories region, medical services has replied as follows: We have contacted the physician in Rae-Edzo who stated that he knows of no particular problems in regard to ear, nose and throat problems in Rae-Edzo. They would be happy to have any further information that can be provided. I might suspect there would be a supplementary question to that answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Any written questions? Mr. Stewart.

Question W3-61: Arctic Winter Games

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the following question: In what year will the next Arctic Winter Games be held?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER (Mr. Hodgson): Mr. Speaker, and Members, perhaps we should prepare a short report for Council on the basis of the latest meeting which I understood took place this weekend in the Yukon. I think at this there were some changes, a number of changes made to the directors of the Arctic Winter Games because I am not sure myself when it is being held. It may have been decided at that meeting.

MR. SPEAKER: So the question will be taken as notice. Are there any further written questions? Mr. Lyall.

Question W4-61: Use Of Government Vehicles

MR. LYALL: Mr. Speaker, I understand there was a study done on the use of government vehicles. I wonder if the administration could release that piece, that document to this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Deputy Commissioner Parker.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PARKER: Mr. Speaker, a study was conducted for the information of the Executive on which to base policies to deal with the use of government vehicles. Whether such a report is of value to be released to the House, I would like to have the opportunity to review the report, but my initial impression would be that we would release it. However, I will review it and respond to you.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further written questions?

Item 4, oral questions. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM NO. 4: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 06-61: Check On Health Problems At Rae

MR. WHITFORD: Mr. Speaker, it is very evident that northern health has not been able to get around the Northwest Territories and do their job. So, I would ask the Minister of Social Development if he would ask one of his staff to personally go out to Rae and check the school and the problem and report back to this House.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Dave Nickerson.

Return To Question 06-61: Check On Health Problems At Rae

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: This is something I would very much like to do, but there is a question of jurisdiction involved. The Department of Health and Welfare are at present very jealous of their responsibilities. If we do anything that can be interpreted as butting in on their territory, we are likely to receive a stiff reprimand. I will take this up with my officials and if it is possible, say for instance in the school where we might have some jurisdiction, I will see if it can be done. The question of overlapping jurisdictions in the field of health is a very prickly question at the present time and I would very much prefer to work in conjunction with the Department of Health and Welfare than to move in unilaterally as that might give them reason to believe that we are putting ourselves forward in a position where we were not entitled to.

I think in reply to Mr. Whitford's question, it is a good question in that it outlines the difficulty we are having. As soon as the transfer of health responsibilities takes place and this is an item of fairly high priority on the list of what we want to do in the government, it was referred to both in the Commissioner's speech and my own, but once we resolve this problem we will be in a much better position to look into these matters again. We are concerned with the ear, nose and throat problems in the Northwest Territories and we know for a fact, perhaps not in Rae, but in many other communities in the Northwest Territories, the problem with discharging ears among young children caused largely on account of poor living conditions. We know we have that problem in the Northwest Territories and we have encouraged the Stanton Yellowknife hospital in their hiring of an ear, nose and throat specialist. So, we are aware of the problems in this regard and I am very sorry, but I can not promise to say that I can personally do something about it because it is not really in our jurisdiction.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am aware that the Minister of Social Development will meet with the Minister of Health and I would ask the Minister of Social Development if he would not at this time bring this very serious problem to the attention of the Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Dave Nickerson.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: I will.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further oral questions? Mr. Stewart.

MR. STEWART: I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if I could have unanimous consent to return to Item 3, written questions?

MR. SPEAKER: Unanimous consent is being requested to return to Item 3, written questions. Is it agreed?

---Agreed

REVERT TO ITEM NO. 3: QUESTIONS AND RETURNS

Question W5-61: Commercial Fishery, Great Slave Lake

MR. STEWART: Thank you, as this is a fairly urgent matter. What will be the legal mesh size for commercial fishing on Great Slave Lake in this coming summer?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PARKER: Mr. Speaker, we will table a reply.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Deputy Commissioner Parker. Is there anything further under written questions before we go back to oral questions?

Item 4, oral questions.

Item 5, petitions.

Item 6, reports of standing and special committees.

Item 7, notices of motions. Hon. Dave Nickerson.

ITEM NO. 7: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion 2-61: Deputy Chairman Of Committees Of The Whole

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: I give notice, that subject to receiving the unanimous consent of this House, I will move today a motion appointing a new Deputy Commissioner, I am sorry, Deputy Commissioner Parker, deputy chairman of committees of the whole.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: A Freudian slip.

MR. PEARSON: He forgot his cue cards.

MR. SPEAKER: Any further notices of motions.

Item 8, motions for the production of papers.

Item 9, motions. The only motion I have in my book is Motion 24-60 which has been referred to committee of the whole. Hon. Dave Nickerson.

ITEM NO. 9: MOTIONS

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Would it please be possible, Mr. Speaker, if you could determine whether I have the unanimous consent of the House to move Motion 2-61?

MR. SPEAKER: Unanimous consent of the House being requested to move Motion 2-61, concerning the appointment of a deputy chairman of committees of the whole. Is it agreed?

---Agreed

Proceed, Hon. Dave Nickerson.

Motion 2-61, Deputy Chairman Of Committees Of The Whole

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Mr. Chairman:

WHEREAS at the conclusion of the 60th session Mr. Butters resigned from the post of deputy chairman of committees of the whole;

NOW THEREFORE, I move that Mr. Peter Fraser be appointed deputy chairman of committees of the whole.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there a seconder? Mr. Whitford. Discussion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: The question.

Motion 2-61, Carried

MR. SPEAKER: The question being called. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

---Carried

---Applause

Are there any further motions?

Item 10, tabling of documents.

Item 11, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters.

ITEM NO. 11: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

Is it the wish of the Executive to continue with Bill 3-61, the Appropriation Ordinance? This House will resolve into committee of the whole for further consideration of Bill 3-61, the Appropriation Ordinance with Mr. Stewart in the chair.

---Legislative Assembly resolved into Committee of the Whole for consideration of Bill 3-61, Appropriation Ordinance, 1977-78 with Mr. Stewart in the chair.

PROCEEDINGS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO CONSIDER Bill 3-61, APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE, 1977-78.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): The committee will come to order. To complete the Department of Natural and Cultural Affairs, I would direct your attention to page 5.11 and you will find listed here under the various activities 1522, 1525, the various grants. Now, you have already approved previously the amounts of these grants so it is not necessary to go through this again. However, it was

brought to your attention in case anyone wishes to make any remarks relative to the grants on page 5.11 and these grants are continued on page 5.12 as well. If there are no comments, then this concludes the estimates for the program of Natural and Cultural Affairs.

Now, what other program would you like to proceed with now, Mr. Deputy Commissioner? Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I believe we were talking, or going to be talking about page 5.11.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): I beg your pardon?

MR. WHITFORD: I believe we are talking on page 5.11, are we not?

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Page 5.11 is a breakdown of the grants and we have already voted on the amount of money under the other titles so the money has been voted but it was just pointed out that this is the amount of the grants and if there is any discussion at this time, this is the time to make it. Now have you a point?

Recreation Grants To Communities

MR. WHITFORD: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My concern from the constituents is that on grants to the communities for recreation programs at five dollars per capita, I was wondering if in fact the division of recreation is reviewing these communities to find out the exact count of people in them, if there is a count.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you. Mr. Deputy Commissioner.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PARKER: Mr. Chairman, the matter of the amount of support for recreation on an operations and maintenance basis is under review and I certainly hope that we will be in a position to present to the Assembly new policies by the next Council session. We are very much of the opinion that the five dollars per capita is not adequate but before announcing any change to that, we want to have a good look at what we think we can do from a financial standpoint and also what makes sense as between large centres and small centres.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you. Are there any further comments? If there are no further comments, Mr. Deputy Commissioner, could you advise me of what program you wish to proceed with at this time because that concludes Natural and Cultural Affairs?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PARKER: I recommend to you that we proceed with the Department of Social Development.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Butters.

MR. BUTTERS: Maybe I am out of order but there is one item on page 5.12 that I wish to raise, under activity 1563.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): That was called, but please proceed.

Grants To Hunters' And Trappers' Associations

MR. BUTTERS: You are very kind. The grant of \$500 to each hunters' and trappers' association to assist in administration expenses. I think when that item was first put into the estimates our budget was something in the order of \$150 million, but it has increased \$100 million since then and we are still granting to each of the hunters' and trappers' association a measly \$500 for administrative expenses. This has been raised before by Members of this body. They pointed out that we certainly get value for the taxpayer's dollar for the amount that is turned over to hunters' and trappers' associations. I know that the \$500 is spent very quickly by these organizations and it is nowhere near enough to provide them, to cover their administrative expenses.

Motion To Increase Grants To Hunters' And Trappers' Associations

I know in the case of the Inuvik Hunters' and Trappers' Association they develop many projects with which to increase the amount they have at their disposal and this is worthwhile, excellent, but I do feel that we should recognize the fact that \$500 is insufficient for their requirements and I move that the \$500 be increased to \$2500.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): I have a motion on the floor to increase the amount of the grant. I presume you mean in the future and not in these particular estimates, from \$500 to \$2500, is that correct?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PARKER: Mr. Chairman, the initial amount that was paid to hunters' and trappers' associations was \$400 per year for administrative expenses, so there has been an increase, although admittedly not a major increase. This money is meant to assist them in administrative matters. I think it is fair to say we are reviewing the total amount of money the hunters' and trappers' associations require and perhaps we should be given a chance to report on this. There may well be other areas in which we can be of help to them. I am not sure though that increasing the administrative segment of the grant is the answer.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Fraser.

MR. FRASER: Mr. Chairman, to the motion, it says here "A grant of \$500 for each hunters' and trappers' association to assist in administrative expenses." I would like that broadened a little bit. "Administrative expenses" could mean almost anything. However, there is no set figure. It is just \$500 for each hunters' and trappers' association. There could be 200 trappers in one settlement and there could be about six in another settlement. They each get \$500 for administrative purposes. I think there should be some way to determine the amount set out by the number of trappers you have in the district.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you. Mr. Butters, in view of the points raised, would you like time to consider a motion and the Chair will recognize you any time later on in the estimates to put it forward? The motion the way it was presented may not fit the administration.

MR. BUTTERS: It was very much on the spur of the moment and I accept your wise advice and counsel.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PARKER: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your trying to move along, but if I could just respond to Mr. Fraser's suggestion so that he and Mr. Butters might keep this in mind when they are working on a motion, I see his point that some of the associations may have considerably more members than other associations. However, we are only talking here about the basic administration, some little help in running just the association. As to assistance to hunters and trappers themselves, of course, that is a different matter and there are some further programs to assist them. This is meant here only to assist in the running of their associations or societies.

The Department Of Social Development

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you. I direct your attention to page 9.01, program, Social Development, subject, program memorandum, objectives, total estimates. Would the administration like to make any comments of a general nature to open? Hon. Dave Nickerson.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Mr. Chairman, I would briefly like to make some remarks of a general nature on the Social Development budget. This is very much a hold the line budget. We do not propose any major new expenditures and we are very cognizant of the continued requests by this Legislature to keep unnecessary expenditures to a minimum. You will notice that the budget has a very small increase from \$16.2 million to about \$16.7 million which is only approximately half a million dollars. About half of this amount, one-quarter million dollars, is attributable to increased funds that are to be made available to the Alcohol and Drug Co-ordinating Council for work in combating the serious alcohol problem in the Northwest Territories. This has been done at the direction of this Legislature. I remember very well the debate on the subject last year and it was certainly the consensus of this House that additional funds should be used to help combat the alcohol problem. The balance of the increase is due to increased salaries and increased costs such as oil, electricity and general supplies which are generally beyond our control. No major capital projects are planned for this year. In the health budget there will be a substantial capital requirement but this year in the Social Development part of the department there are no major capital projects.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you. Any comments of a general nature on Social Development? Mr. Butters.

MR. BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, I was going to raise a point which the Honourable Minister heard during his recent visit to the Delta. I congratulate him for his early move into the communities so soon after his appointment to meet with the people and see what problems are on the ground. I know that the many associations and many people that he met with while he was both in the Western Arctic region and in my constituency found his interest most welcome and I feel there was much benefit to be derived from his presence at that time. Certainly he is always welcome to return.

Funding Of Health Service Programs

One thing he did hear when he was in Inuvik was the concern that the desire expressed by this Assembly to take over the federal health programs might be a very great burden in that it is not a revenue making program. It is a deficit program at the present time and I do not have any idea just what it costs the federal government to provide the level of health services that it is presently providing in the Northwest Territories but I think it is somewhere in the area of \$4 million for our Inuvik region alone and I would guess, extrapolating on that basis, it would be something in the order of \$30 million, \$25 million to \$30 million in the territories. What I am saying is that, should we impose on the federal government and have the health care responsibility turned over to us, what guarantee is there, what guarantee do we have that the federal government will continue to fund our territorial jurisdiction to the same level as they have in the past when it was operated under the federal people?

I am wondering if this has not given our senior executives some cause for concern or even pause in their approach to the federal government to obtain and shoulder this responsibility.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Mr. Butters is quite correct in that the budget of the Department of Health and Welfare is quite a substantial one. We understand that there are something like 500 positions which would go with the transfer. A lot of these are, of course, nurses and medical people. There are also a

number of financial people, a number of maintenance people and, of course, senior administrative people. We would assume that the budget would be in the region, as Mr. Butters points out, of \$25 million or \$30 million a year. Our health budget alone, our own health budget is in the region of \$20 million a year, but you can not add the two together. You can not add 30 and 20 and come up with 50 because there is a lot of interbilling. In a lot of cases we will bill Health and Welfare for services that we provide to them. In other instances they will bill us when it is the other way around, so if you add the 20 and 30 together you would probably come up with something like 40, as funny as it might seem.

Provincial-Type Responsibilities Versus Revenue Producing Responsibilities

I do not think, Mr. Chairman, that we can really take the attitude that we do not want to take on further responsibilities because they are deficit responsibilities rather than revenue producing responsibilities. We undoubtedly would dearly love to get some of the revenue producing responsibilities. Natural resources, of course, that is the biggest one. Had we taken the attitude in the past that we do not want other responsibilities, at present we would be doing little, if anything else, other than running the liquor stores. There would be no education, there would be no Territorial Hospital Insurance Services, there would be no Department of Economic Development, there would be practically nothing. So I think our attitude has to be that while we would like the revenue producing areas, at the same time we are anxious to take over all the remaining provincial-type responsibilities regardless of whether they be revenue producing or money spending responsibilities.

When we enter into the more formalized discussions with Health and Welfare Canada over the transfer we will, of course, take up with them and with the Treasury Board negotiations regarding the financing of the operation. We will obviously have to have some kind of commitment on the part of the federal government that they will continue to provide adequate financing for medical care in the Northwest Territories. So far the federal government has been more than generous in this respect and we would hope that they would continue to see health care spending as a matter of high priority in the Northwest Territories. We would probably enter into some kind of formal agreement covering the first maybe three to five years of operation by ourselves covering the dollar amounts or working out some formula which we deem would be adequate. Of course, it is not possible to enter into an agreement for ever and ever and we would have to hope that the federal government, say ten years down the road, would continue to fund us if at that time we do not have our own sufficient revenues. There is no guarantee, but if you look at other examples such as education, they have continued to be very generous with regard to education and in a number of other areas so that we would expect them to continue to recognize the high priority of health care in the Northwest Territories.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Butters.

COPE Submission To Mr. Justice Berger

MR. BUTTERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have another question on the same topic. I know that the native organization that has its headquarters in the constituency in which I live, the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement in its submission to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, suggested to Mr. Justice Berger that such a turnover not take place. I am wondering if the department or the Minister or somebody in the Executive is carrying on a dialogue with these organizations as others may feel the same way with regard to any concerns they may have in this area. I do not think in their report to Mr. Justice Berger there was any specific concern raised except they did not feel that this responsibility should be turned over at this time.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Hon. Dave Nickerson.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: So far we have not received any representation from these various public interest groups. We would be pleased to hear from them as we are pleased to hear from anybody else. We would assume that the people in the areas to be affected are quite willing to see the transfer take place, and indeed their duly elected representatives sitting around the table today have said that is what they want so that is what I would assume public opinion to be. To be quite honest I would expect that if for instance I, or anybody else, went out and knocked on the door of the COPE organization and asked them, they would probably say no, as a matter of principle, for the same reason as, if you asked them if they wanted a Mackenzie Valley highway, they would say no. If you ask them if they want any thing they will say no because it is strictly for political reasons and they have one aim in mind and their aim is to negotiate a land claim settlement to the best of their advantage and they will use every other point as a political tool. So, that would be why I would think that that organization, if they did say that they were not in favour of a transfer at the present time, that would be my assumption, they did not want it because of that reason, they wanted to use every bargaining process possible in their land claim negotiations.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you. Any further comments of a general nature on Social Development, and the total budget for this department is \$16,656,000? Mr. Evaluarjuk.

Rules And Procedures, Regional Social Development Offices

MR. EVALUARJUK: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to ask of the Minister of Social Development if there are different regions, such as the Keewatin? The one office in the Baffin reports to Frobisher and I was wondering if they had different rules and procedures for social assistance in different regions? I have heard complaints about social workers, welfare officers, and I am wondering if there are different rules and procedures for different regions.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Hon. Dave Nickerson.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Mr. Chairman, there are uniform rules and procedures laid out in the Social Assistance Ordinance and the social assistance regulations. These apply universally throughout the Northwest Territories. The organization of the Department of Social Development is such that we have a regional superintendent in each of the regions of the Northwest Territories so that each social worker and welfare worker in the settlements will report directly to the regional superintendent. We have one for instance in Rankin Inlet to which people in the Keewatin report and we have another one in Frobisher Bay to which people in the Baffin region report. Now, notwithstanding what I said previously about universal rules and regulations being laid down, many of the social assistance questions depend on a subjective assessment. One social worker might decide for instance that a certain applicant might be eligible for \$150 a month in social assistance and a second one, relying on the same facts in his or her own mind might decide that the sum should be \$125. This assessment of need is difficult to do and always subjective judgment is required. Similarly, in certain regions the regional superintendent can, because of his own judgment, make social assistance maybe a little easier to get in one region than another. We do not really like to see this happening too much, but we do not mind if it happens a little bit because we realize it is practically impossible to impose a uniform rate over the whole Northwest Territories and have to give the regional superintendents and the field workers a certain amount of discretion.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Any further comments of a general nature? Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD: Mr. Chairman, first I have to apologize to the Minister of Social Development in the sense that he was scheduled to go to Fort Resolution and I was to make the appointment. Unfortunately I got caught up in some other business and forgot to phone. Consequently the Minister was blasted then by the press, or by the media, and of course I sat back and giggled. Nonetheless I apologize for that and perhaps the Minister would accept our apologies. However, I did phone later to get it straightened out and it still did not get to the people so there was another radio report on it. We are really sorry about this.

Money Earned Hunting And Trapping

The concern that I have got is that some of the communities that we have, people there go back to the land to trap or hunt and come back I suppose, in this year it was December, and trade off their fur. Of course, at this time they may have made \$1000 or some of them made \$1200. Now, the explanations that they have given of course is the fact that there are lots of things they had to get that they had not got throughout the year because basically they had charge accounts when they were not employed or were not out in the bush, and when they did go out they did have to buy equipment along with food. So, the question I am asking the Minister of Social Development is this. Is there a need really, to cut off welfare totally just because these people have made that kind of money, even though they have bills to pay with some of that money that they already have in trapping, and also they may not be going back to the land after Christmas for quite some time and they need that money in the community to live until they go back on the land?

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Mr. Chairman, I do not really know if it is the Member for Great Slave North who should do the apologizing for the fiasco at Fort Resolution as I think I am equally to blame. Maybe at this time I should publicly state that should I still be welcome in Fort Resolution I would like to go there sometime and if the settlement council ever offers me an invitation I will be most pleased to go there. Your question about people trapping, coming back, selling a couple of thousand dollars worth of fur, spending this money one way or another, sometimes foolishly and sometimes not foolishly, having no money left within a short period of time and then going to the welfare officer is a problem, it is a problem all over the territories. We know that it happens, a lot of times the people try and hide it and one of the things a lot of the social workers will do when they go into a community is go around the various merchants who deal in fur and find out from them how much fur has been coming in. They do not usually ask for names of individuals but they can get a rough idea of how much money is coming into the community. This can be got around; people have been known to travel for literally hundreds of miles to sell the furs somewhere else so the welfare officer could not catch them. I think the answer to the question is that we must treat each case on its own merits. Sometimes it might be quite true that someone has made a substantial amount of money and has had to pay off old bills or maybe he has spent that money on repairing his house or something like that, and if they went to the welfare worker, the welfare worker might explain the situation to them but say that under the circumstances they would still grant him some welfare.

What I would like to do, if I was a social worker, and it was my choice, and I found that somebody had come in from the bush with a lot of money, blown it all on booze or something like that, I would love to be able to say "You are cut off, right now". Now, fortunately for many people in the Northwest Territories a lot of the welfare workers are not as hard line as I am, but the actual answer to that question is that each case will be dealt with on its own merits.

Welfare Problem At Rae

In Rae we have a little bit of a problem that we do not have maybe in many other communities. Rae is probably the worst place in the Northwest Territories as regards welfare. We put an average of about \$35,000 a month into Rae and I think that is the highest in any of the communities of the Northwest Territories. We only have two people there, one social worker and one welfare worker I believe, and these people are probably overworked and probably they are not able to do as much finding out what goes on and spend as much time with their clients doing counselling work and that sort of thing as is possible in the other settlements. We deliberately overwork the people in Rae, and probably they will come back and ask me for a raise after I have said that, but we do this in a way deliberately because we feel that we could very easily put 12 social workers in Rae. They would find themselves within a period of a few weeks fully employed

and probably requesting more people in there, but I do not think they would really be solving the social problems in Rae because the social problems in Rae are directly linked to the lack of opportunity, lack of employment opportunities. I would much rather see money spent, say by the Department of Economic Development in building houses, or doing something economically useful in Rae and providing the employment and then I feel a lot of the social problems would disappear. That is the reason why in Rae we overwork the social workers and probably do not provide the same level of service that we do in other communities.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD: Mr. Chairman, I was not necessarily meaning just Rae, there was Rae Lakes, Lac la Martre, Snare Lake and Snowdrift that are in need of the social worker quite frequently. I know the burden in Rae alone is enough and that is part of the problem, that the other communities that I know of that have been visited, have not been visited all that much for any length of time. I suppose time is what I am really referring to in that they can only go up on a Monday, stay a few hours and be in the community and that is a kind of concern. As far as the trappers are concerned, and liquor, I can always hide behind the fact that we now have prohibition. So to a degree it is helping in saving the moneys from the trappers and of course paying bills, etc., in the community although of course some do come to Yellowknife.

Criteria For Social Workers' Visits

I was just wondering if in fact the department, through the Minister, was going to be able to set up some kind of a criterion that would enable the persons who are visiting the other communities such as Lac la Martre and Rae Lakes and Snare Lake, if they could have a person come out of Yellowknife to stay a little while to discuss in depth some of the problems because I believe now the social workers from Rae are being drafted back into Yellowknife for a job and we are concerned as to exactly what is going to happen with Rae and Rae Lakes and Snare Lake and Lac la Martre.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Hon. Dave Nickerson.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: The problem in what we call the Yellowknife district, which includes of course Yellowknife itself, Rae, Rae Lakes, Lac la Martre and Snare Lake, but I guess there is no welfare problem in Snare Lake. It is one of the few places in the territories where we do not have that problem. Snowdrift is also included in the Yellowknife district. What we are doing now is making a study of this particular district to see how welfare services or social services can be improved somewhat. I think that your criticism that people go into places such as Lac la Martre and Rae Lakes and spend an hour there and come out again is a very valid one. Although the volume of business does not probably justify having someone there full time, I think it would be a great improvement if we could have somebody go and spend a few days there. People would then know they are in town and be able to come to them. I think that is a suggestion that we have to take very seriously. I am sure that when we have completed the study of the supply of services in this area that will probably be one of the recommendations that people do stay there for a longer period of time.

Looking at it from the social workers' point of view I think that they would appreciate that too. Social workers just hate being called welfare ladies. They think that the advice that they give and the counselling they give are much more important, and a much more important part of their business than the actual handing out of welfare cheques. They find the actual handing out of welfare cheques a rather demeaning part of the business and I am sure that from their professional point of view they would prefer to have more time at these smaller settlements.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Prior to breaking for coffee I would like your direction on a procedural matter. It appears that normally in debate on the estimates there is not much need of having the Legal Advisor present at all times. I was wondering if you would agree with me that as long as she makes herself available on short notice that she does not need to stay here all the time. Is that agreed?

---Agreed

"Available" has more than one meaning, Mr. Minister. This committee stands adjourned for 15 minutes for coffee.

---SHORT RECESS

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): The Chair recognizes a quorum and calls this committee back to order. I had an indication Mr. Lyall wished to speak prior to coffee break.

MR. LYALL: Mr. Chairman, I would like to put a question to the Minister but he has gone somewhere.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): I am sorry. My apologies. I thought the Minister was here. We shall reconnoitre and see if we can find him.

Social Assistance For Pelly Bay

MR. LYALL: Mr. Chairman, I would like to pose a question to the Minister. In view of the fact that your foodstuffs and supplies in Pelly Bay are about three times as much as any other settlement in the Central Arctic, I was wondering if your field staff have asked you for any increase, if there is going to be any increase in social assistance to some of the people in Pelly Bay? This question has arisen a number of times. I think on our September trip with the Commissioner through the Central Arctic this also came up and I would like to know if the field staff have said anything to the administration or whether you have any indication from the people of Pelly Bay that they would like to have the social assistance raised and also up to now the social assistance in Pelly Bay has been going up because of lack of work. This is so in all of the Central Arctic, people are crying for work and it is getting quite evident there is more social assistance needed.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: There were a number of questions there. The first one was have we received any communication from Pelly Bay. The answer to that is yes, we have received a communication from Pelly Bay requesting some form of assistance because of the very high food costs in that particular settlement. My initial reaction was to tell them to move the settlement to Chantrey Inlet where they could get a boat in there but I guess that would be politically unacceptable. The reason we have not yet replied to that letter, and this is only a matter of a few days delay, is, it was less than a week ago that we received the letter, I think. It is my understanding that when the Commissioner was there he promised them some form of subsidy on the air transportation. I do not know whether he promised them that on a continuing basis or on a once only basis. We are endeavouring to find out what promises were made by the Commissioner before we reply to that letter.

The letter did not suggest that we raise welfare rates. It requested a subsidy, a transportation subsidy. I could not agree with the Honourable Member for the Central Arctic more, that what we require in the Central Arctic, as indeed we do in many other areas of the Northwest Territories, is more work. Rather than spend more money on more and more welfare, getting people more and more dependent, I would rather see that money used by the Hon. Peter Ernerk to try to find ways in which that badly needed employment can be brought into being.

I do not know, Mr. Chairman, whether the Commissioner happened to be listening to my remarks, but he might be in a position to be able to give details on what is happening with regard to transportation subsidies into Pelly Bay.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Commissioner.

THE COMMISSIONER: I will have to look at my notes and my records. We keep a very detailed record and have for years of everything that happens in the meetings and we will see what kind of a question was asked at Pelly Bay and what kind of a commitment was made in return. I recall the subject very well. Mr. Lyall was with me at the time and perhaps I could come back to you in a day or two once I have researched it.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Lyall, the Chair recognizes you brought a question up under this section of the estimates and we will leave this open until the answer comes in. Will that satisfy your requirements?

MR. LYALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Questions of a general nature?

Difficulties Faced By Home Owners.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could have a comment from the Minister in terms of the comments I made regarding those people, home owners who are living in various parts of the Northwest Territories and the difficulty they face today in living on fixed incomes in light of the increasing high utility costs and other demands made upon that income? I would like to see the Department of Social Development consider the possibility of looking into that question in order to alleviate the burden that people all over the territories have who own their own homes and who are retired from non-government careers. I indicated at that time that the usual practice, and I think it is accepted by everybody, though not necessarily acceptable, is that government employees who retire usually move out of the territories. That is a generalization I make that does not necessarily hold true in all cases. Nevertheless I think that those people who are living in the North, have lived in the North who own their own homes in the North who are retired and living on these fixed incomes have a difficulty in not only meeting the demands of increased utility costs, but other costs they must incur in trying to sustain a living. I would wonder if the Minister would like to comment as to the possibility of looking into that situation and if he can see the way clear as to any kind of assistance or any form of assistance that these people could receive. I would hope the answer would not be simply yes or no.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: The easy answer is we will refer the matter to the Executive Committee. I will attempt to answer in a little greater detail.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: I expected that would be the answer, Mr. Chairman. Nevertheless, I realize the position that it will likely come there but I would like at this time to get some indication from him as the person responsible for an individual department who would then bring something to the Executive.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you. Hon. Dave Nickerson.

Old Age Pensioners In Fort Smith

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: This question is of special importance to Fort Smith in that His Worship the Mayor there was trying to promote the town as the retirement centre for the Northwest Territories. One thing that we have done in Fort Smith to try and help old age pensioners who are also home owners is to give them some form of relief from local taxes. We have in Smith agreed to provide 50 per cent of the local taxes in respect of old age pensioners who own their own homes and live in their own home. There are certain restrictions placed on this. They have to be also in receipt of the old age pension and the guaranteed income supplement too. That is one area where we have already moved to alleviate some of the problems of these people. I know that this will not probably sound too acceptable, but in cases of dire need when old people find themselves coming to us for welfare on the need side of the audit or the budget that we draw up in respect to any person who applies for assistance we put down another \$60 a month so that an old age pensioner would be receiving an additional \$60 a month through that mechanism. I should maybe qualify that a bit. There are certain restrictions and we use a formula for determining the actual amounts so in some cases it might be something less than \$60 a month. So far we have not got anything specifically other than local tax relief specifically designed for retired home owners. The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is studying a proposal to

assist home ownership in the Northwest Territories. I do not know whether they have a special plan for old age pensioners or not, but this is a problem that has come up time and time again. We should be encouraging home ownership and, in a number of cases, this is beyond the individual's financial capability. So, it is my understanding that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is looking into this matter.

Territorial Supplement To Old Age Pensions

Another problem, or I should not say "another problem", but another proposed solution that has been put forward from time to time is that all old age pensioners in the Northwest Territories should be given a territorial supplement and the figure usually bandied about is about 25 per cent. So, where certain old age pensioners say are getting \$200 a month from old age pension and guaranteed income supplement he would be entitled to another \$50 from us. This would presumably apply to old age pensioners whether or not they were residing in their own home. So, this is something we are looking at, we have not decided one way or the other on this and it is probably something which will arise, or will be referred to the Executive Committee at some time, at which time the Hon. Arnold McCallum will be able to vote on the matter himself.

MR. FRASER: Mr. Chairman ...

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Fraser.

MR. FRASER: I understand that the Minister of Social Assistance said that Fort Smith was now getting this subsidy, the old age pensioners, or is that throughout the territories or in Fort Smith? Perhaps they are thinking of retiring the town.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: As far as I know it is only being done at Fort Smith at the present time.

MR. FRASER: Is Fort Smith the only place that has a problem in meeting their requirements?

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Does it meet their requirements?

MR. FRASER: Is it the only place that has a problem in living and meeting the high cost of utilities?

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: It is the only community where the town council has come to us with this request.

MR. FRASER: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): I can assure you, Mr. Minister, there will be a lot to follow. I thought probably that Fort Smith had been adequately looked after under the museum act because it says "preservation of relics".

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: I would point out, Mr. Chairman, that no commitment has been made to the town of Fort Smith for payments other than those in respect of the 1975 and 1976 fiscal years. We have not given them any guarantee that this is a continuing program.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: I would just like to point out one little item that was brought to my attention this morning, and something that I was aware of previously, but in listening to the Minister and knowing the effort that has been made by this Assembly and also by Social Development, the department ...

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Could you please ask the speaker to speak up a little, I can not hear what he is saying?

MR. LAFFERTY: Can you hear me?

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Yes.

Financial Assistance For Treaty Indian People

MR. LAFFERTY: The question that I have is that it had been brought to my attention in Fort Simpson over the month or so that we do have about ten people or so who are also on old age, or near receiving old age security, or 65 years of age, who are trappers and living out in the country maintaining their traditional ways of life. These people are Indian of whom one woman, Mrs. Emily George and her husband are both of the age of being legally retired and being Indian band members were refused by their own Indian band or chief to get any assistance to purchase a tent living out in the country.

Now, I do know that Mrs. George has sought some assistance from the department, but she told me that she was turned down. I then went and told her to go and see her Indian band people because they were responsible in some areas and have some money, I believe, although I am not certain of that type of thing, but again she was turned down. Subsequently, there were three men in Fort Simpson who bought her a tent so she can have some sort of shelter. This person was also encouraged to move into the senior residents' home in Fort Simpson and these people have no house in Fort Simpson, neither do they have a house out in the country where they live, so all they have to live in is the tent and yet these two old people were refused assistance.

I am wondering if the Minister, or any of his officials, are aware of this type of thing happening to treaty Indian people who are subjected to two types of financial assistance?

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Minister.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: If the question was, was I aware of the circumstances in this particular case, the answer is no, I was not aware. There is very little I can do with regard to a decision taken by the chief and band council and I obviously have no control over their decisions at all. I have found it very difficult to hear, I could not quite understand everything that was said, but is there anything else that the questioner would like me to answer?

MR. LAFFERTY: Mr. Minister, I just wanted to know if you were aware of this type of problem, that some of the Indian treaty people, the older people who are the only people living off the land around the Fort Simpson area, there are about half a dozen treaty Indian people who do live off the land and maintain that traditional way of life and they seem to have a lot of difficulty getting assistance from either the Department of Social Development or from their own band people.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Thank you very much for advising me that this type of situation exists. I am sure that the departmental officials will take that under advisement and find out how much of a problem this is.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Pearson.

Cost Of Providing Supplement To Old Age Pensions

MR. PEARSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make a comment and ask the Minister of Social Development a couple of questions, and one is that we have heard around this table for some years views expressed, primarily by Mr. Butters of Inuvik, who has brought up the question of supplements to old age pensioners time and time again and little, if anything, has been done about this, and I think that it would be a relatively simple matter. We have the jurisdiction, we set the policy, we now have a Minister, a Member of this House, and it would be a relatively simple matter in the next couple of days for his department to determine exactly what it would cost to provide such a program. I mean, there are not great numbers of pensioners in the North, there are some obviously and I do not think a program of subsidization would be that difficult to develop and to fund. I think that it is essential that such a program be established for pensioners.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Hon. Dave Nickerson.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Mr. Chairman, I think wherever I have gone this problem has arisen, the need for additional pensions to be paid. In the provinces such as Alberta they do have supplementary provincial pension schemes, but in Alberta they also have oil and gas revenues which we do not have in the Northwest Territories. The answer that I have given to this question, when it has arisen in various locations in the Northwest Territories is that I would be very pleased to make the money available to pay for this out of the first oil and gas revenues accruing to the Government of the Northwest Territories. If we do not get that source of funding we have to go to the Treasury Board and ask them if they would see fit to provide these moneys. Maybe we should go to them again and ask them again if we could get this money. However, just off the top of my head I would imagine that it would cost possibly half a million dollars a year to ...

MR. PEARSON: Peanuts.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: ... Put this into effect in the Northwest Territories and, as an alternative to going to the Treasury Board and asking for more money, if this committee were to suggest a method of raising half a million dollars a year, perhaps they would like to cut out something else such as recreation programs and then I would be most pleased to push for supplementary pensions rather than something that the committee felt was not of such a high priority and something they would be prepared to let go.

MR. PEARSON: Mr. Chairman, I think it would be a relatively simple matter. The Minister agrees and also suggests a round figure of about half a million dollars, peanuts, it would not be in the best interests of the Northwest Territories to remove any more money from recreation than is already not there, a rather glib statement, and I urge the Minister to get down to the business of determining exactly what it would cost and for this House to then go on record and insist that such a program be established.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Hear, hear!

The Minister's Views On Corrections

MR. PEARSON: Now, what I would like to say, or I would like to ask a couple of questions of the Minister. I was concerned about the comments he made here today in his address, I am concerned about the Minister's attitude on the matter of prisons, on his approach to corrections and I wonder if he has really given the matter any consideration? I realize that it is a new responsibility for the Hon. Dave Nickerson to take on this very heavy burden of Social Development and all its programs and ramifications and I do not wish to criticize the man for his personal views, but I am rather alarmed to hear the Minister say that he approves of the approach by the courts of locking people up in jails and therefore we must get bigger jails to put them in, and more jails. There is a move afoot in the western world today where jails are being discounted as an approach to dealing with offenders of the law.

There is a program underfoot or at least there was to my knowledge across the Northwest Territories of community involvement and the word escapes me and they have a technical word for it and I can not recall it -- diversion, a diversion program. There was a case recently of a young man who broke into my store and demanded to be sent to jail and he demanded this in court and the judge said "Okay, if that is what you want, you are going to jail". That is something that will be of absolutely no benefit to the character in question and will serve society absolutely no benefits whatsoever because it will cost a fortune to keep him there for the three months he was sent there for by the judge.

So, what I am trying to work out in my mind is the Minister's approval of the obvious new trend by the judge in the Northwest Territories as being harsh, of being a "lock them up and throw away the key" attitude. It seems to me that there may be a conflict between the Minister and the philosophy of the department which he now heads. I would like a comment on it.

Time That Executive Members Spend In Regions

The other matter is pertinent to all Executive Members of the Legislative Assembly and that is that I am alarmed by the lack of time that they seem to be spending in the regions. There have been occasions recently when it would have been most appropriate if the Minister of Education had visited the Eastern Arctic. I think the Minister of Social Development, any of these people taking on these responsibilities, as soon as they assume office should travel to all of the regions immediately to make themselves acquainted with what is out there, who lives there, where are those places. They have only ever read about them or heard about them in this Assembly half the time. Go out to the regions and discuss with the regions exactly what is taking place in those areas. I would urge the three of them to get out and see where the people really live, the kind of country they are responsible for, the largest jurisdictions in the world. There is a plane that goes east every week; there is no question about communications. It is not necessary for them to sit in an office and start doing their thing until they understand a little about the total responsibility and just how big this North really is.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Mr. Chairman, I ...

MR. PEARSON: I think I have finished for now.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: To answer the second point first, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Pearson's criticisms are completely without any foundation whatsoever. I have been in office now for about six weeks, two of which were Christmas. During that time, I have travelled to the following communities: Fort Smith, Pine Point, Fort Resolution, Hay River, Enterprise, Fort Providence, Rae, Yellowknife, Detah, Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk, Aklavik and Fort McPherson. Those communities would account for probably at least three-quarters of the population of the Northwest Territories. Shortly before taking office, I was also, of course, in Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove, and Chesterfield Inlet. The only region I have not visited so far is the Baffin region. It is just physically impossible to travel that much in so small a space of time. If you were to travel continuously, you would never be able to sit down in your office and do some actual work or confer with the departmental staff. You know, this type of criticism should not be allowed to go without the firmest rebuke because, as I said before, it is completely without any foundation whatsoever.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you. Would you care to answer the rest of the questions, Hon. Dave Nickerson, or would you like time to cool off while I ask someone else?

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: I thought some of the other Executive Members would like to speak to Mr. Pearson's comments too.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: Mr. Chairman, I certainly would. I have been in all regions, maybe not as often as it would be nice to have been, but I have been in all regions during the time and not in all communities. I have certainly been from Tuktoyaktuk to Pine Point, Fort Resolution in the West and in the East I have been within the Keewatin to at least seven or eight different communities as well as communities in the Frobisher, Baffin region.

MR. PEARSON: Mr. Chairman ...

HON. PETER ERNERK: Mr. Chairman, having been criticized for not visiting any of the communities in the Northwest Territories I would also like to defend myself. When I was first appointed Minister of the Department of Social Development I made a point of going over to Inuvik and talking to the various members of the department. I went to Aklavik and I also went to Fort Smith earlier this summer.

I went to Hay River and had a chat with the Honourable Member from Hay River. I also went to my own constituency, the Keewatin region. However, when I went over to Frobisher Bay some months ago and asked the Honourable Member from Frobisher Bay to spend some time with me I felt at that time that the Honourable Member from Frobisher Bay did not have anything to say to me other than "What the hell are you doing here?"

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PARKER: What were you doing there?

HON. PETER ERNERK: Anyhow, Mr. Chairman, I should say that after the Legislative Assembly session I hope to be visiting each of the four regions in the Northwest Territories.

MR. PEARSON: Hear, hear!

HON. PETER ERNERK: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): I strongly suspect Mr. Pearson is practising for the coming roast.

MR. PEARSON: I feel very strongly. All I can suggest is obviously the Minister of Education must be related to the will-o'-the-wisp because I have never known him to be in Frobisher since he has been in office and he certainly never made his presence known or felt nor have there ever been any discussions in the community with him on the matter he is responsible for. Had there been some discussion, he might have learned something.

HON. ARNOLD McCALLUM: I recall getting a conducted tour around Frobisher with the Honourable Member doing the conducting on a bloody bus. His memory is very short.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): I think there has been enough time wasted practising for the roast.

MR. PEARSON: Methinks they protest too much.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Fraser.

Unemployment Insurance For Seasonal Workers

MR. FRASER: Let us get off the heat now here for a while. I have a question for the Minister which relates to the question that Mr. Lafferty asked him. I have had a couple of complaints in my constituency about people who have worked seasonally all summer for four months and can not draw unemployment insurance and are on social assistance. I just wonder if there is any way we can look into this in Yellowknife and find out why they can not draw unemployment insurance. If they have been working for four months, they should be entitled to some unemployment insurance but they are on social assistance.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Hon. Dave Nickerson.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Unemployment insurance is run by the Unemployment Insurance Commission which, of course, is a branch of the federal government. It is not really our responsibility, but our officers will help in these circumstances. Say for instance, if it is somebody who is unable to write or does not know where to go to find out this type of information, our field officers will help these people. At the last reckoning the nearest Unemployment Insurance Commission office was to my knowledge in Edmonton. I do not know whether that has been changed or not. I am advised, Mr. Chairman, that now the Manpower office in Yellowknife is also an Unemployment Insurance Commission office so that would be the place to go to find out why these people are apparently unable to get unemployment insurance.

MR. FRASER: They have applied for it and completed their term of employment in October and up to January they keep sending them back letters. Nothing has been done so I think we ought to do something.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: As I said before, our field officers are aware of this problem. I personally am aware that I have a number of my constituents coming to me with letters of one kind or another from the Unemployment Insurance Commission and they just do not understand what it says in the letter. Very often it is a simple matter to rectify. Our field officers are required by us to do this, to help people, to assist them and I am sure that as a result of what you have said we will emphasize this to them and make sure that they know their responsibility.

MR. FRASER: In a lot of cases, Mr. Chairman, if your social worker goes around to the different communities instead of just issuing welfare cheques she could maybe ask a few questions. "Have you worked for the last two years?" or "Where have you been working?" and get information from the individual and maybe help him make out a claim for unemployment insurance. It would probably help lower the social assistance.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: It is my understanding they will do this if requested. This is the intent of having people there in the first place.

MR. FRASER: Why if requested? Why do they not do it? If they are social workers, they should have all this information.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: If they are requested by the person who wants it done.

MR. FRASER: They are not interested in finding out if he was employed or not. He has to ask them, is that right? If they are doing their work, if the social workers are doing their work right, they should ask that information right away, ask the guy if he is working or if he is entitled to any other benefits before issuing the welfare cheque.

Sources Of Income Investigated By Social Workers

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: They most certainly do that before they issue welfare. We find out all the sources of income or potential sources in income so the first thing that happens if somebody comes up to the office of the welfare worker or the welfare worker goes out to meet them in the field, is to find out whether or not they are eligible for unemployment insurance. We would much rather spend federal money than our own.

MR. FRASER: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Butters.

MR. BUTTERS: Mr. Chairman, my good friend from across the Arctic has been urging me on to get into the fray on this one, but I have been waiting until we got to the particular item in detail. My understanding is the general comments were being made to the department and it seems we have not got into the detail of social welfare so I will address myself to that particular matter at this time and then once again bring it up when we get further on.

I noted with interest the Minister's comments and his willingness to provide this subsidy. He asked us if we would indicate to him where this money could be found and he would just jump at the chance. Well, the formula was provided this morning in his speech when he condemned these massive, overblown, bloated bureaucracies, one of which he is now a member. I am going to suggest that if you freeze 50 positions you have \$1.75 million, so I will be making a motion in formal session to freeze all positions and go into austerity because I think we should be so doing. The Minister, Mr. Chairman, asked where the money would be found and I am just telling him where the money will be found.

I would like to pursue a matter that my colleague from Mackenzie Great Bear raised and that was this subsidy allowance. I was talking with Hon. David Searle at the moment and I missed the point but it seems to me that Fort Smith, people in Fort Smith, pensioners in Fort Smith are getting what is called a subsidy allowance of \$60 a month. I understand the report was that people in Fort Smith are the only ones who have requested it.

Comparison Of Pensions Between Yukon And N.W.T.

I do not know whether this was the answer or not, but I would like to have from the staff members, Mr. Torrance's department, a comparison between the moneys available to pensioners living in the Yukon under the allowances and federal pensions and supplements available to them, and the moneys available to pensioners living in the Yukon, or rather in the Northwest Territories, with the federal pension supplements and the welfare assistance of \$60 which the Hon. Peter Ernerk mentioned in this House, I think a year ago. So, I would like to see a comparison to see the dollars in pensions that the Northwest Territories can get in comparison to the pensions in the Yukon and if that could be ready for me when we come into the details on pensions.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: We can have that information available almost immediately for British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and in Nova Scotia but I am afraid we do not have the Yukon. We could probably get the Yukon also and we could have this available when this item comes up for detailed discussion.

MR. BUTTERS: I might mention the Yukon is more important because as a territory they labour under the same fiscal restraints as we do and have a legislature very similar to ours and it was as a result of the ability of the Yukon legislature some four years ago to develop supplementary allowances, not an additional \$60 of welfare but, an entitlement of supplementary allowance developed by the Yukon chamber for pensioners living in that territory and I would like to see that comparison.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you. Hon. David Searle.

HON. DAVID SEARLE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to just speak as well about the need for a pension supplement. It seems to me that if you are young and able-bodied you are entitled in this day and age to social assistance or unemployment insurance.

MR. PEARSON: Or both.

HON. DAVID SEARLE: Or both, at levels that are substantially higher than if you are a person who has spent your lifetime building this country, contributed to it at a time when it was truly productive and yet when you become old and of no use any longer we legislators seem to justify the discarding of those people, and by that I mean the legislators in parliament as well as in the provincial houses, and that then justifies paying barely a subsistence allowance to those people. In that we are in, it seems, a socialist country marching gaily down the road following Great Britain into disaster, it seems to me that if that is the path we are on, unfortunately, we should put our priorities at least in the correct order. For my own part I have always believed that we should make sure that our elderly can live out their last few years in a state of respect and dignity.

MR. PEARSON: Hear, hear!

HON. DAVID SEARLE: I do not think that is currently the case in Canada as a whole. I think that if my colleague does some of the things he says he is going to do, which is to scrutinize carefully those who are eligible for social assistance, and make sure that those who only need it get it, there may be some way that enough money can be saved there so that our elderly can be assisted, people who are truly in need.

Lower Number Of Retired Persons

I know certainly in Yellowknife, the North here, and I am not speaking for the settlements, but here at least we do not have probably the same ratio of persons retiring in the territories and staying here as we do in southern Canada. Most people, or a lot of them seem when they come of retirement age seem to move south where the climate is a little better, and I am not talking of native northerners but of white who came here and have spent all of their working years here and therefore I would guess, and it is only a guess, that the statistics might show a lower number of persons retiring, certainly in this area, in the Yellowknife area, here than would be the case per capita elsewhere. I would be interested therefore in a survey being done to determine just how many elderly we have and a determination therefore of what it would actually cost to pay a decent pension supplement ...

MR. PEARSON: Hear, hear!

HON. DAVID SEARLE: ... bearing in mind the higher cost of living in this territory and, at the same time, I would encourage the approach as outlined by the Hon. Dave Nickerson of cutting off the young able-bodied person who did not need it, getting him out, working, whether it be on a salary or on a traditional way of life. The exact means of how this is done of course has to be left up to the Minister and his department, but I think we should start first with a determination of the magnitude, that is the numbers, of pensioners, with a recommendation as to what a decent supplement would be so that we know what the cost would be and then apply our minds to the solution.

MR. PEARSON: Right.

HON. DAVID SEARLE: I would encourage that that sort of examination be done and be done quickly because I am ashamed, I am ashamed at the way we seem to be prepared to let our elderly subsist and I do not think that that is much of a

reward for those people who have made this nation what it is in view of the way we seem to be prepared to watch it go down the tube. They should at least share in the vast expenditure for social services that is being pumped out into this economy of ours.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Thank you, Hon. David Searle. Hon. Dave Nickerson would you are to comment on that at all?

Figures Concerning Old Age Pensioners For Next Session

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: I think that is an excellent suggestion, Mr. Chairman, and I think that most of the information could be obtained fairly readily and we would be able to come up with the figures for the numbers of old age pensioners in the Northwest Territories, and the amount of dollars that might be required to give them supplementary pensions by the time of the next session of this Legislature.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): As a comment from the Chair, I certainly agree strongly with what Hon. David Searle said. However, I would not like to lay the blame for the country the way it is, just to blame it on the old people, I think we have mucked it up.

HON. DAVID SEARLE: That is what I said.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Mr. Evaluarjuk.

MR. EVALUARJUK: Mr. Chairman, I think that as a Member in 1975 when we went to Brabant Lodge we talked about this subject and we agreed something would have to be done about it. The councils in the communities should be made aware of this problem as we have talked about it but social welfare workers seem to do their job without consulting with the people and more able-bodied people are receiving more welfare and the people who are more in need have been refused sometimes. Now, we want the community councils to hear about this and give their views on this.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Have you any comment to make Hon. Dave Nickerson?

HON. DAVE NICKERSON: Perhaps you will recall this afternoon in my speech in reply to the Commissioner's Opening Address I brought this subject up. It is quite true that at Brabant Lodge this body indicated that they wanted real control of social programs at the community level. I personally agree wholeheartedly with this and indeed this is one of my areas of top priority.

The government of the Northwest Territories, at the request of this Legislature, is addressing itself seriously to this problem raised again by Mr. Evaluarjuk. What we will do is to work out a system whereby a municipality, a hamlet, a village or a town, etc., at their option, because we do not want to force this on anyone, can, or will be able to, take on the responsibility for the administration of social assistance programs. As I said in my speech today I felt that were this to be done people would take a much more responsible attitude towards the use of the taxpayers' money for social assistance purposes and it would also allow each municipality that took up this option to use a little bit more flexibility and maybe design the system to reflect the local needs more than is possible at present. This is something we want to do, and want to do very much, and as quickly as possible, but there are a number of technical reasons why we can not do it all at once. It would be very nice to say "we will change the ordinance and it will go into effect tomorrow" but unfortunately we can not do that mainly because of the Canada Assistance Plan Agreement that we and all other provinces have entered into with the federal government. This is the agreement under which funds are advanced from the federal government to ourselves for social assistance and other social service programs. What we have to do is to make sure that the

system we devise is in compliance with the Canada Assistance Plan regulation and so it will probably take some time until we can get all of this worked out in a manner that is acceptable under the Canada Assistance Plan.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): In view of the hour shall I report progress? Is it agreed?

---Agreed

MR. BUTTERS: May my name be first on the list next time around?

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stewart): Your hand is usually up there so fast I am sure you will go first but I will mark you down for first tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Stewart.

Report of the Committee of the Whole of Bill 3-61, Appropriation Ordinance, 1977-78

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been studying Bill 3-61 and wishes to report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Announcements for January 25th. A caucus meeting, 1:00 o'clock p.m., January 26th, that is tomorrow, in the Members lounge, room 303 of the Explorer Hotel. Soup and sandwiches. Are there any further announcements? Orders of the day, Mr. Clerk.

ITEM NO. 12: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Remnant): Orders of the day, 9:00 o'clock a.m., January 26, 1977, at the Explorer Hotel.

1. Prayer
2. Replies to Commissioner's Opening Address
3. Questions and Returns
4. Oral Questions
5. Petitions
6. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
7. Notices of Motions
8. Motions for the Production of Papers
9. Motions
10. Tabling of Documents
11. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters:
Bill 3-61, Matters Arising out of the Visit of the Legislative Assembly to the State of Alaska, Information Items 1-60, 4-60, 8-60, 16-60, Motion 24-60, Recommendation to the Legislature 2-61.
12. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: This House stands adjourned until 9:00 o'clock a.m., January 26, 1977, at the Explorer Hotel.

---ADJOURNMENT

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