



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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## **HANSARD**

**Tuesday, March 12, 2002**

Pages 547 – 596

**The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

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(Weledeh)

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(Hay River North)

**Mr. Charles Dent**

(Frame Lake)

**Mrs. Jane Groenewegen**

(Hay River South)

**Mr. David Krutko**

(Mackenzie Delta)

**Mr. Leon Lafferty**

(North Slave)

**Ms. Sandy Lee**

(Range Lake)

**Mr. Michael McLeod**

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(Tu Nedhe)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

**Tuesday, March 12, 2002**

**Members Present**

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Jake Ootes, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

-- Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Please be seated. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

**Point of Order**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order under section 23(h) and (i) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, yesterday when we were discussing in committee of the whole and when I reviewed Hansard, I noticed on page 1229 that Ms. Lee had said and I will quote this piece, "...but it is the Minister who put this into the supplementary appropriation and the headline on Friday said \$500,000 for the payout. That came out of the public document which is supp 3." First of all, Mr. Speaker, she is wrong. Supp 3 talks about \$695,000 or so, not \$500,000.

It goes on to say, "if it is true, as he has been saying, that he knows his obligation under this contract and that he was not to do anything that would reveal it, for him to have put it into a supplementary appropriation is a ground for questioning his conduct."

Mr. Speaker, the Member is very aware that I have a statutory obligation as Minister of Finance to put into the supp anything that is going to require additional spending. That appropriation is put in there because the Department of the Executive does not have the money to handle it.

Mr. Speaker, in this statement she is clearly imputing a motive to me and second, is questioning my integrity. Mr. Speaker, clearly, I think the rules of this House are very simple, straightforward and clearly understood. This is not allowed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. We have a point of order. Is there any debate on this point of order? To the point of order. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to the point of order I await your decision on this point. For you to consider in your deliberation, I would request that you look into the fact that from my point of view, I believe it was a point of debate and in fact I asked a question to the Minister about whether or not there were any other occasions where personal and private separation packages were discussed in Supplementary No. 3. If the Minister would just answer that he would know it was just a back and forth question that is appropriate for the matter at hand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Any further debate on this point of order? I will take this under advisement and report

back to the House. Mr. Handley, perhaps for the record you could clarify the page number you were referring to. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I am referring to page 1229 of the unedited Hansard from yesterday.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. We have that number, page 1229. The Chair once again will ask for any further debate on this point of order. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out that as all the Members know in this House, as the Minister of Finance I have a statutory obligation to, where there is additional money to a department's appropriation, I have to put it into the supplementary appropriation. That is the only way we can operate.

The amount of money that was placed there, first of all, is \$696,000 not the \$500,000 that Ms. Lee is referring to. That does not come out of the supp, that does not appear in the supp document. Second, there is no other way to do it. For her to suggest that somehow I am manipulating the system I think is incredulous. I quote, "...for him to put it into a supplementary appropriation is ground for questioning his conduct." She is questioning my conduct as Minister of Finance. I have an obligation to do this. I have done what is proper. The Executive does not have the money in its regular appropriation to handle the \$696,000. It had to go into here as a supp.

Mr. Speaker, clearly, Rules 23(h) and (i) which state "cannot make allegations against another Member of the House, officer, or witness or imputes false or hidden motives to another Member" have been violated in this case, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Any further debate on this point of order? No further debate. I shall reserve a decision on this matter until I have had a chance to review these relevant sections and comments that were made. The honourable Member for Range Lake, you have a point of order.

**Point of Order**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a point of order also arising out of the committee of the whole debate yesterday evening. I realize that I have raised a point of order already, but there is another one that I noticed when I had a chance to review the transcript and this is the first opportunity in which I could raise this point.

Mr. Speaker, my point of order is on the same rule previously mentioned, Rule 23(h) which says "makes allegations against another Member, House officer or witness" and subsection 23 (m) which says "introduces any matter in debate that offends the practices and precedents of the Assembly."

Mr. Speaker, the offending statement is found on page 1227 of the unedited Hansard, halfway down the page.

-- Interjection

-- Laughter

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Bell said "She has found the leak."

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you review the statement, because for me it is clearly a statement that a Member in this House has stated that I was somehow involved in leaking some information out of this House. I find that Mrs. Groenewegen's statement is evidence of another Member alleging misconduct by myself, and I ask for your ruling on this point. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Chair is not clear as to who you are alleging has made these comments. Is it Mr. Bell or Mrs. Groenewegen? Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that there might be some unclarity as to who is to share the most of the misconduct if you find it to be. I appreciate that, but I will have to leave that to you to decide. The evidence that I have here is Mrs. Groenewegen said what Mr. Bell said.

I have it in print and I have to use it as evidence of what is uttered in this House. The utterance is that Mr. Bell, the honourable Member for Yellowknife South is clearly quoted here as saying, "she has found the leak." I do not want to go to the interpretation, but I read this to be that Mrs. Groenewegen has found me to be leaking information outside of this House, and she has quoted Mr. Bell as saying that.

This is clear evidence to me. It is written. Mrs. Groenewegen has repeated what Mr. Bell said. There is enough evidence here to suggest that there is one Member of this House alleging misconduct and improper conduct by another colleague. I think that this is clearly contrary to the rules of the House. It goes against the respect that we ought to have in this House. I ask for your ruling. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Ms. Lee, I am going to disallow the point of order. The Chair is really not concerned with what has been going on in the back there. There does not appear to be a point of order based on what the Chair sees here. I shall disallow this. Do we have any further points of order? Okay, then let us get on with the business of the House. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

## ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

### Minister's Statement 36-14(5): Youth Entrepreneur Funding

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories is reaping many benefits from the increase in resource investment and development. We want to ensure that our young people are able to take advantage of the business opportunities this development brings. To that end, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development will target at least \$50,000 for business assistance to young entrepreneurs in the next fiscal year.

This is an opportune time to encourage our young people to take advantage of the business opportunities now available in the Northwest Territories. During the past year our economic growth has doubled that of Alberta's. We expect even higher rates of growth this year. For example, retail sales are increasing by \$240,000 every month, restaurant and caterer sales are growing by almost \$100,000 every month and we are seeking growth in other sectors such as tourism.

I recently spoke about these opportunities to a Nexlore conference for young entrepreneurs. I will deliver the same message early next month at a conference hosted by the Deh Cho Business Development Centre for young people interested in starting their own businesses.

Young people face a major challenge in finding work. They often cannot get a job unless they have experience and they cannot get experience unless they have a job. At the same time, young people are traditionally the most innovative group in society. Young people often come up with many of the new ideas and start some of our most successful businesses.

Mr. Speaker, this funding will not be another new business program. All assistance will be channelled through our existing business programs and regular business criteria will apply. The funding will be targeted at young adults under the age of 30 and will complement the initiatives being undertaken by the Minister of Youth and through Maximizing Northern Employment. The department will announce more details on how the funding can be accessed in the next couple of weeks.

I believe this funding will produce some new and innovative ideas and business opportunities in many of our communities. These could include "starter" businesses such as catering, coffee shops, janitorial, painting, landscaping, web design, computer consulting and maintenance. Tourism business opportunities could include bed and breakfast operations, adventure and eco-tourism ventures.

Mr. Speaker, the future of the Northwest Territories lies with our youth. If our economy is going to continue to prosper, we need to add value to resource development. Our young people need and deserve to be at the forefront of these opportunities. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister for Finance, Mr. Handley.

### Minister's Statement 37-14(5): 2001 Census Population Counts

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Today, Statistics Canada released population counts for the 2001 census, including results for the Northwest Territories and our communities. In our view, the census numbers are wrong and do not accurately reflect the population of the Northwest Territories.

The census is done by the federal government every five years and provides critical information about the Northwest Territories and our communities. This information is important to our government and to communities to help design programs and services for residents of the Northwest Territories. I would like to thank all residents of the Northwest Territories for their

cooperation with the census specifically and more generally with surveys that are done in our communities.

One of the purposes for which the census results are used is to help establish population levels that are a significant aspect of the formula funding arrangement between the territorial government and the federal government. However, it is important to note that these are not the numbers that will be used in our funding formula. In addition to the census population, Statistics Canada also completes studies that estimate the number of people missed by the census. This estimate of missed people and the census count is what is used to determine our funding levels.

Even though these numbers are not the final population estimates, the results released this morning from the 2001 census do cause significant concern for our government. Statistics Canada reports that, based on census counts, the Northwest Territories population declined by 5.8 percent between 1996 and 2001. This result is contrary to other indicators for the Northwest Territories. Although there was a period where some out-migration was apparent in 1997 and 1998, the increased activity related to diamond mining, in addition to natural gas activity in the Beaufort-Delta and Deh Cho areas, would seem to suggest the Northwest Territories is not a place in population decline. These indicators, along with concerns raised by the GNWT at the time of the census collection, cause me to have some serious doubts about the accuracy of the population counts from the census.

I have directed the Bureau of Statistics to request that Statistics Canada conduct a detailed review of census operations in all communities in the Northwest Territories. This review should help identify areas where this census may have had deficiencies. Further, my department will be closely monitoring Statistics Canada's work on the coverage studies to ensure that an accurate estimate of the people missed by the census is developed for use in our funding arrangements. Finally, we plan to complete our new population counts in selected communities to help assess the quality of these counts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

### ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Member's Statement on Non-Portfolio Ministerial Travel Policy

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier tabled two revisions to the Ministerial Administrative Procedures Manual. One dealt with telephone procedures and those additions are ones that will be most welcome. The other was a revised travel policy for Ministers that will come into effect on April 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

Mr. Speaker, the existing policy is called the home travel policy and it allows Ministers to travel to their constituency and back 32 times per year. The new policy is called non-portfolio ministerial travel and opens the door much more widely to travel. Mr. Speaker, the new policy adds eight return trips per year and no longer limits the travel to a Minister's home constituency. Forty trips per year, and that is on top of any travel paid for by their constituency budgets and on top of any travel they do for their ministerial responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, what really concerns me is the conditions that apply to the eight additional trips, or perhaps I should characterize it as lack of conditions. These trips do not have to relate to the Minister's portfolio. They can be for any reason. The new policy tells us why, right in the first sentence, "Ministers are on duty all the time."

Mr. Speaker, any travel is therefore parliamentary or government-related because they are always on duty. Mr. Speaker, these eight new trips are clearly not just for home travel. The conditions make that fairly evident. Half may be used for a spouse or children and they do not have to include the Minister's constituency as a stop.

On top of that, Mr. Speaker, two trips can be made anywhere in Canada, or one trip with their spouse. Under this new policy, remember, no reason need be given, for a Minister is always on duty. Meanwhile, Regular Members, Mr. Speaker, many of whom are here in Yellowknife for 150 days per year and, by the way, that may be nearly as many days as some Members of Cabinet, have a very different set of rules under which to work. Between sessional and committee travel, Regular Members do not get nearly 40 trips per year, and those trips can only be between their home constituency and the place of the meeting.

Mr. Speaker, from this I draw the conclusion that even though we have a consensus system that treats all Members much more equally than most Assemblies in Canada, we clearly have some in this House who are more equal than others. Mr. Speaker, I also think the public will be concerned by the lack of conditions...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Dent, your time for your Member's statement has ended. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I also think the public will be concerned by the lack of conditions that are set out for travel anywhere in Canada. A Minister will be able to take their spouse anywhere in Canada now, for no reason. I am sure none of the current Members would ever do so, but there is really nothing that is stopping this from being used to replace the old vacation travel assistance plan the government took away from all employees some years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I think we have to re-examine this policy and I will be following up on this in question period today. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

#### Member's Statement on Inuvik Boot Lake Arctic Winter Games Participants

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to speak on an issue on the lighter side and

wish participants of the 2002 Arctic Winter Games the best of luck as they travel to Iqaluit and Nuuk to take part in their activities. I would like to congratulate those who are travelling from my constituency; Ms. Theresa Ross, going as mission staff; Sam Anderson in speed skating; Karen Polakoff, the speed skating coach; Katy Smith, Inuit games; Melanie Poowotak is badminton; Darryl Day is basketball; Tamara Hansen, Inuit games; Mike Muller is the badminton coach; Shaylene Allen is cross country skiing; Jason Baxter, dog sledding; Mike Baxter, dog sledding coach; Leah Sulyma, ice hockey; Mike Gravel, ice hockey coach; Moses Ipana, ice hockey; and Pat Tingmiak in snow shoeing.

I would like to wish them all the best and hope they have memories that will remain with them for a lifetime. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

#### **Member's Statement on High Cost of Northern Air Fares**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our economic prospects are in great shape with employment activity, tax revenues and investment in the Northwest Territories at record levels. We do indeed have something to celebrate and be thankful for.

We are challenged though, in terms of managing this rapid, even frantic pace of development. One of the consequences on us all, Mr. Speaker, is the pressure on our cost of living. That is my concern today and it is the concern of a lot of other Northerners. Why, oh why, Mr. Speaker, does it cost so much to fly?

We are fortunate to have our major airlines providing overall superb service to us as northern-owned enterprises competing with each other for our business. They do their part, probably more than their part, as good corporate and community citizens. They have had their share of hits in the last few months with high fuel costs, decreased passenger loads and increased security costs in this post-terrorism world.

It seems, Mr. Speaker, that competition among our two northern-owned airlines is not doing much to serve this market, at least in terms of curbing increases to air fares. The high cost of air fare remains one of our key cost drivers. It is one of the big problems people point to when they consider making the Northwest Territories their home. It is a significant barrier to realizing real growth in our tourism industry. It is one of the things we wish we could change and help make living and working up here more manageable.

Mr. Speaker, a quick survey of air fares on principal routes tells the story. Today, a full fare return flight from Yellowknife to Edmonton is \$1,708.50. In 1997, five years ago, it was \$1,180. That is an increase, in five years, of 70 percent. If we go back 10 years, Mr. Speaker, the cost was \$830. That is over 100 percent increase in 10 years.

Let us compare that to the consumer price index for Yellowknife. Since 1995, on all goods and services, Mr. Speaker, 6.5 percent. Over a 10-year period, 11 percent. I understand economies of scale and high overhead costs as

well as anyone, Mr. Speaker, but we are so far off the dial that it defies logic.

Mr. Speaker, I am told this has driven one of the North's diamond mines to subsidize their own program. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, colleagues. As I said, this increase in air fares has driven one of the North's diamond mines to subsidize their own program. It is limited to their own employees and contractors, but this system gets their people from Yellowknife to Edmonton and back for \$300. Who can blame them, Mr. Speaker, when you compare \$300 to \$1,700?

Our complacency in not addressing high air costs is hurting us, Mr. Speaker. We lose the chance to capture a few more permanent citizens and satisfy tourists. What do we need to do in terms of innovation, creativity, maybe even some old-fashion risk taking as airlines, as governments, perhaps even as passengers, to help reduce air fares? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

#### **Member's Statement on Public Housing and Income Support Harmonization Initiative**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak on a problem that has come up several times in this House, the new initiative that is in place to harmonize income support and housing. Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to go home this weekend and I think the majority of the concerns I heard were raised around this subject from people who are on income support and our elders.

Many of our elders were left with the impression that they were told they would be better off in public housing than if they had their own place. They would not have to take care of their rent, their power and there would be no rent to pay. Mr. Speaker, through this harmonization program, a couple of years after many elders moved into public housing they are now being told that the rules are changing, that they will have to pay, though right now they do not. The rent will be based on anything over \$500.

Mr. Speaker, many of our seniors and elders in our communities have earned their pensions. They have earned their way, they have paid their way, they paid their taxes and they have lived to a point in time where we should allow them to enjoy their pensions and the remaining time that they have with us.

What do we do here? Implement a regime that I see as just another form of a claw back to take money away from our seniors and people in need in our communities. Mr. Speaker, another area of concern was with regard to the initiative that we have under income support. If you are on income support and you find employment, you cannot get back on income support

for two months after you apply. You have to wait two months until you can be reassessed and back on.

With seasonal employment in the Northwest Territories, where the majority of the work takes place in the summer or in the winter between December and March, those are the two periods of time that you will have to work. If you received employment in those two times of the year, you will not be able to get back on income support for four months out of that year, which means you will have to pay for the rent based on that notion for four months of the year because you will not be classified as an income support client.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask this government to seriously consider what this harmonization program is really going to do to people in our communities, our elders and people who presently are on income support.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Krutko, your time for your Member's statement has ended. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it is also important that we look at the economics of our communities, the economic opportunities that arrive in our small communities. There is no real economic base in a lot of our communities. Those people who have jobs in our communities basically have jobs either with government or with people in the private sector where there are very few of those jobs to go around. You can probably look at the number of people we have in our communities with good paying jobs, the majority of them are government employees.

There is a large portion of our population who have a hard time accessing work in our communities where we do not have a strong economic base. If anything, this government should look at developing our economic base in our communities so that people can have jobs that are meaningful, not just part-time work here and there. Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister responsible for the harmonization program questions on this matter. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Member's Statement on Adequate Resources for Devolved Social Envelope Programs and Services**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to discuss devolution. Mr. Speaker, in the Northwest Territories, devolution has been happening since the creation of this government. Slowly, the federal government has been transferring the responsibilities for areas such as the social programs to the Northwest Territories government. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, social program responsibilities are not seen as too romantic. It is problematic and for that reason I believe the federal government has no problem transferring that responsibility to the Northwest Territories.

We have argued time and time again that they continuously have not provided adequate financial resources to coincide with the responsibilities that have been transferred. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, as a government, the Northwest Territories is practicing that same method of devolution. We also devolve a lot of responsibilities to regions and communities. Those responsibilities are responsibilities that the federal government has devolved. Again, Mr. Speaker, we argue in the House, as Members representing individual communities and regions, that there are not enough financial resources to go with those responsibilities. Health boards are a good example.

Now, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is talking about devolving more responsibilities in the areas of housing, in the form of harmonization and partnership agreements. Those are not done yet. There have been major concerns raised to us as Members in the communities regarding the harmonization. I am wondering if it is consistent with the mandate of the Housing Corporation. I wonder if the universal partnership agreement will have sufficient resources if communities agree that is the process they want to take. I will be asking the Minister of the Housing Corporation questions on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

#### **Member's Statement on Government Support for Commercial Fishermen**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that affects a large number of my constituents, that being our fishermen. Mr. Speaker, for many decades fishermen have eked out a living for themselves on Great Slave Lake. Fishing is an honourable, traditional lifestyle for a large number of our residents. Mr. Speaker, commercial fishing in the Northwest Territories is a longstanding, viable industry and I believe that our government should firmly support our fishermen.

Mr. Speaker, our fishermen are strong contributors to our northern economy. I am a little disillusioned when I do some research and discover certain areas where I believe that fishermen have been under-funded or not funded in the same manner as other harvesters, that being hunters and trappers.

I want to make it perfectly clear, Mr. Speaker, that I do support our government's effort in providing financial support to trappers. I would like to see a more equitable funding arrangement for fishermen in the same manner as trappers. Mr. Speaker, in my research I discovered that in November of 2000 the former Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development stated in this House that in the year 2000, RWED spent \$2.5 million in support of harvesters. Of this funding, the Minister stated that roughly \$1.8 million went directly to trappers.

Documents recently supplied to me by RWED, Mr. Speaker, with regard to harvesters' contributions for the years 2000, 2001 and 2002 indicate that \$1,704,000 is earmarked for the hunters and trappers program and only \$390,000 has been allocated to fishermen's programs.

Mr. Speaker, my reaction to this is one of concern. I did note, Mr. Speaker, that of the current RWED funding to hunters and

trappers there are contributions to disaster compensation for hunters and trappers. In addition, RWED pays the WCB premiums and claim costs for hunters and trappers if they are injured while hunting or trapping. Mr. Speaker, neither of these programs are provided for fishermen. The apparent inequities are very disconcerting to fishermen.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the NWT Fishermen's Federation will be hosting a two-day conference May 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> in Hay River. Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is imperative for our government to lead by example and to that end I strongly encourage the Minister of RWED to consider attending this very worthwhile conference. At the appropriate time, I will have further questions for the Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

#### **Member's Statement on Public Housing Evictions**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the most important accomplishments in one's life is that of being able to provide a home for our families. Mr. Speaker, our home is where we nurture our children, where we provide guidance to them as they grow, a place that provides protection, a place that helps strengthen family values and a place that gives hope.

Mr. Speaker, I have received numerous concerns from a number of my constituents in Fort Providence who have either been evicted, are about to be evicted or notified that they will be evicted from public housing. The reasons for eviction vary from rental arrears to problem tenants.

Mr. Speaker, what is happening to these people is unacceptable and is bordering on cultural discrimination. Mr. Speaker, all these people being evicted are Dene or Metis. These people make Fort Providence their home. This is where their families have lived for many generations. They are not about to move outside the community to find alternate housing. They are being forced to become a homeless statistic.

Mr. Speaker, I have to raise the question, what option do these people have upon being evicted from public housing? Is it to move in with family members and add to the overcrowding that already exists, or is it to put them out on the streets in the dead of winter?

Mr. Speaker, I find this matter to be very serious as it affects not only the life of the tenant who has signed an agreement with the NWT Housing Corporation, but each family member in the whole community. I find this even more appalling when part of the NWT Housing Corporation's mandate is to assist communities to assume the role of providing housing to residents of the Northwest Territories and not that of throwing people out on the street.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, it is also the responsibility of the NWT Housing Corporation to ensure aboriginal satisfaction that traditional knowledge and values are respected in the corporation decision making process. This, Mr. Speaker, does not appear to be a real consideration for the NWT Housing

Corporation, when we know that many of these aboriginal people who are being evicted for non-payment of rent take the position that treaties with Canada give them the right to a home, that being a small benefit for the lands and resources that have been wrongly expropriated by Canada. Now, Mr. Speaker, we as a government want to expropriate their homes as well.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. McLeod, your time for your Member's statement is ended. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. McLeod, you may conclude.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the NWT Housing Corporation has developed a policy that directs them to provide counselling services to the tenants. This counselling includes issues dealing with all aspects of being a tenant. I understand this counselling service is provided on a very limited basis, if at all.

Mr. Speaker, to be fair to the housing staff in the communities I recognize the work load they are under and influence that family members can have on those administering public housing in the communities, but more importantly I recognize the negative impact and emotional trauma eviction has on those tenants and their families when they are faced with eviction or are evicted.

Mr. Speaker, if problems exist I would ask that the NWT Housing Corporation, through an independent review, visit communities like Fort Providence and identify housing problems that exist in the community to determine and identify solutions that are beneficial to the tenants and to this government. Mr. Speaker, what we need is more housing in the communities and not more evictions. This is supported by the 2000 housing survey conducted by the NWT Housing Corporation that confirms that Fort Providence has 101 or 40 percent of households in core need.

Mr. Speaker, now that we are responsible for social housing should we not be using legislation and policies developed from that legislation to better serve the people who comprise our small aboriginal communities and not compound the problems faced by people in those communities? Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister later on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. Honourable Members I would just like to draw your attention to the rules on Members' statements, that they are on one subject for two-and-a-half minutes. Unanimous consent is sometimes sought to conclude a statement, not to continue for an additional two-and-a-half minutes. It takes away time from other honourable Members who wish to make their important statements as well. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

### Member's Statement on Bison Management Plan Quotas

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since being elected, we as Ordinary MLAs have been standing up in this House and asking to be treated fairly across the Northwest Territories for everything from health care to a roof over the heads of our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, after looking at a proposed bison management plan for the area between Fort Providence and Rae-Edzo, the people in Rae-Edzo feel that there is an unfairness in this plan. Mr. Speaker, the bison are roaming further north and the communities of Rae and Wha Ti want more involvement in the plan. Mr. Speaker, because of this they have a concern about the quotas they see in the plan and they feel that it is not fair to them. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the appropriate Minister on this. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

### Member's Statement on Funding for the Legal Aid Program

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight once again the issue of a lack of funding in the legal aid program. Mr. Speaker, I asked questions in this regard to the Minister of Justice yesterday and I must say that the answers the Minister gave leave a lot to be desired.

Mr. Speaker, if the Minister would only take a moment to inquire, he would learn that there is a huge backlog, more than 100 people, waiting for financial assistance in order to obtain legal assistance. Many of these people, Mr. Speaker, are in need of legal assistance desperately in order to obtain spousal and child support payments. They have to wait for months to get into court and months more to have their cases heard and judged on.

Mr. Speaker, I know from previous experience that most of these applicants get no more than two or three hours of legal service approved at each time. This is especially disconcerting given the fact that the government and the Legislature seem to have no problem spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on legal fees in all sorts of cases when it comes to our own rights, our own reputation and our own integrity. I know that we have a much larger limit than two or three hours of legal service when our own jeopardy is in question.

Mr. Speaker, those who need the help of legal assistance for their livelihood seem to get very, very little attention. It is time, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Justice stands up for those who really need to fight for them, and I ask the Minister to put more attention and energy into obtaining more money and resources from his Cabinet colleagues for our legal aid program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

### Member's Statement on Statistics Canada 2001 Census Population Counts

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My Member's statement today comes on the heels of Stats Canada information released showing that our population count, by their estimates, is down in the Northwest Territories by almost six percent. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, this is a concern to all of us in this House and should be a concern to all our constituents, given that this obviously means, if they are correct, we will see a reduction in transfer payments which will mean less money for programs and services for all residents of the Northwest Territories.

I did ask questions of the Minister of Finance a short time ago in relation to our raised projections for liquor tax and I had questions about whether it meant that we had higher employment rates in the Northwest Territories and people had more disposable income, or if in fact it meant that more people had moved to the Northwest Territories. He did speculate on this that he believed that likely it was in fact both, and in quoting him, Mr. Speaker, he said that there are more people here, whether they are staying here full time or just on work assignments here.

I think that raises another issue, Mr. Speaker. I think maybe it is time for us to take look at the fly-in/fly-out work force. It is possible that we have a larger problem than we had first estimated. I know the Minister of Finance has directed his Bureau of Statistics to conduct a detailed review of census operations in all communities to, in fact, determine if some mistakes were made. I think that is a good idea, but I think it also makes sense for him to have a look and set out a process to analyze whether in fact we do have people working here, but not making this their primary residence.

I think he could analyze the number of tax filers in the Northwest Territories over the last few years to see if, in fact, it would bear out the kinds of trends that the Bureau of Statistics is showing. I hope the Minister will in fact take that up and I will have questions for him further to this Member's statement. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

### Member's Statement on Nahendeh Arctic Winter Games Participants

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand up here today as the MLA for Nahendeh to congratulate all the members of the team that made the Arctic Winter Games. I know that a lot of hard work went into it by every individual athlete and all those who have tried out. It takes a lot of time and energy to put these try-outs together. I would like to commend the organizers in the Northwest Territories, Sport North and all the sports associations and all the volunteers in all the communities that have put this together.

Of the team that is going to Iqaluit in Nunavut and Nuuk in Greenland, there are some of my constituents that have made the team. I would like to congratulate them. I would like to congratulate Colin Stipdonk who has been doing some speed skating, along with Francis Isiah Tanche. We have Liam

Hardisty, Deidre Vileneuve and Andrew Wright for indoor soccer, along with Jessie Loutit. For women's ice hockey is Kerri-Ann Loutit and their mother, Connie Loutit, will be involved in coaching the ice hockey. As well, Kenny Jacobson will be coaching ice hockey, and Chris Stipdonk will be playing badminton for Team NWT. We have a couple of people from Fort Simpson, Paul Stipdonk and Shane Thompson, who will be involved with the mission staff.

This is the contingent from Nahendeh and I would like to congratulate them, the eight athletes, the two coaches and the staff who are going to be going over there. I would like to also wish the whole NWT team luck and success in their sports and have a good time. Mahsi.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### **Member's Statement on Youth Entrepreneur Funding**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to rise today to congratulate the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development on the new program he announced to encourage youth to become involved in entrepreneurial activities. Mr. Speaker, I relate to this very much because I believe that many of our youth do have a natural entrepreneurial spirit. I remember as a child playing Monopoly and thinking it was just the greatest thing in the world and it was not long until that translated into playing Monopoly in real life, starting at a very young age. I think at 20 years of age I started buying real estate.

I just think we need to recognize our youth and create the opportunities that they need to display this entrepreneurial spirit and get started in small ways. It may not seem like a lot of money having been devoted here at \$50,000 but it is amazing, through hard work and sweat equity and pouring whatever earnings they do have back into their businesses how these small beginnings and these seed amounts can actually turn into some very valuable and substantive businesses which contribute to the northern economy.

I would just like to thank the Minister for his foresight in this particular initiative and encourage young people to become aware of this and access this program. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

#### **ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **Return to Question 60-14(5): Diamonds Allocated to Northwest Territories Business**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Dent on February 25, 2002, regarding the percentage of production that BHP Billiton now provides to diamond polishing firms in the Northwest Territories.

BHP Billiton is not obliged by any legislation or agreement to provide a percentage of production to diamond polishing firms in the Northwest Territories. However, BHP Billiton has indicated they will provide up to 10 percent of diamond rough production value for local manufacturing.

The Ekati mine production for 2001 equalled \$527 million US. This converts to approximately \$850 million Canadian. In 2001 the full allocation available to the three territorial diamond manufacturers was valued at approximately \$85 million dollars Canadian, or 10 percent of Ekati's production.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

##### **Return to Question 124-14(5): Affirmative Action Policy and Employment Equity**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Dent on March 4, 2002, with respect to the distinction between the affirmative action policy and employment equity.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to moving from an affirmative action policy to an employment equity approach. While both affirmative action and employment equity have an end goal of attaining a representative public service, there is a significant difference in the two approaches.

Under affirmative action hiring priority is given to those covered under the policy; indigenous aboriginal people, indigenous non-aboriginal people, disabled people and, for non-traditional and management positions, women. The hiring priority is applied to all competitions regardless of the current representation levels in the region, department or occupation.

Employment equity is based on the philosophy that employers will hire a representative work force because it makes good business and operational sense to do so. This approach will apply not just to hiring, but also to the development and promotion of individuals within the public service. Employment equity consists of specific efforts directed at specific groups of individuals or occupations. This will include programs like succession planning and graduate employment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

#### **ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are three people I would like to introduce in the gallery, Mr. Speaker. Genevieve Harvey, Maryse Perraud and Carmen Roberge. They are with the language services of the Department of [Education, Culture and Employment](#). Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Welcome. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS****Question 193-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Premier and it relates to the Ministerial Administrative Procedure Manual and the policy on ministerial travel that he tabled yesterday. The new policy proposes that eight return trips per year will be added and the policy is no longer limited to home travel. Can the Premier advise this House why the government felt it necessary to change the policy?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Return to Question 193-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The new administrative procedures for ministerial travel have been based on the model used by Members of Parliament. We felt that would provide flexibility, fairness and consistency. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 193-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier advises we are following the federal policy, but he does not tell me why it is necessary to follow it here in the Northwest Territories. What was lacking in the existing policy that this policy adds that is essential?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 193-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, the staff drafted the revisions and are responsible for applying and adhering to the procedures and are probably the best people to ask the questions of. I am not an expert in these policies. I have a sense that Members will only get frustrated with the answers I will give.

I can tell you that these were recommended by our staff to ensure that the Ministers can travel, be accountable and have the same flexibility that other Members of Cabinet across this country have and what is allowed for federal Ministers will be used.

There were older procedures or policies. That is exactly my point. I do not know what the terms are, but they are technical terms and it is important to stick to them. I would suggest, not to waste a lot of time, that the Members see that this is moved into committee of the whole so that appropriate staff can address this. We do not need to get all worked up about it.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 193-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is right, I am getting frustrated by the answer. The Premier seems to say that staff advised that this is the way to do things. It is a political decision. The politicians are the ones who have adopted this policy. I want to know why the politicians felt it was necessary to tell their staff to do this.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 193-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of ways we can travel as Ministers. There is home travel and that has certain guidelines to it. We have moved from home travel to what we call non-portfolio travel that basically provides greater flexibility and accountability within the existing resources and establishes clear guidelines for the type of travel that was not addressed by current procedure. You can tell I am reading from briefing notes. If it is not clear, I cannot take total responsibility for it unless I am mumbling some of these words.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 193-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Premier has now used accountability twice in response to questions that I have raised. This policy, as I read it, contains no stipulation that the Ministers have to account for their trips. How does this policy increase accountability?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 193-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, the Ministers are allowed travel, duty and home travel. We are trying to provide flexibility so these will continue but also to allow for non-portfolio travel and to allow for spouses and designated people to attend functions with Ministers. These are understood to be requiring approval. Ministers have always travelled with the concurrence of their colleagues to ensure that we attend to important business and that we are here as well to take care of the business.

We cover for each other, we travel for each other and we are also asked to attend functions that are sometimes outside of our portfolio, but are not within existing guidelines. I think for the Arctic Winter Games, Aboriginal Achievement Awards, there is a range of events that require, in our judgment, the presence of the Government of the Northwest Territories. It is fitting that spouses or companions, whatever you want to call them, are attending these functions, because sometimes they take on the nature of social functions. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 194-14(5): Evictions From Public Housing in Fort Providence**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up with questions to the issue I raised in my Member's statement. It is with regard to evictions in my riding. Over the last little while we have had six families evicted. It is my understanding that there are 12 more who are in serious trouble and are targeted for evictions in April. Down the road we are looking at an additional 30. We have roughly 50 people who may be evicted in the next while in Fort Providence.

I wanted to ask the Minister if he could outline for me what the procedures for evictions are and more specifically, if there is any policy that requires the LHO to notify the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation that they will be evicting someone in the winter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Return to Question 194-14(5): Evictions From Public Housing in Fort Providence**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, there is a procedure. There are a number of reasons why an individual would be evicted. Once the eviction notice is given, because of some legalities that may be provided to the rental officer, which is a funded position by the Department of Justice, so we are at an arm's length of that officer, once it goes into the legal realm it is out of our hands. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 194-14(5): Evictions From Public Housing in Fort Providence**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had asked the Minister if he would indicate if there was anything in the procedures regarding notice to the regional office or the head office for winter evictions. I will ask a question again under evictions.

It is my understanding that there is a policy that the Housing Corporation has that directs them to provide counselling services to the tenants who are in trouble, including facing eviction and I have talked to most of the people who have been evicted and some who are on the verge of being evicted and I am not hearing that anyone has been counselled in terms of how to deal with this issue.

I would like to ask the Minister, can he tell me if the policy is being uniformly applied? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 194-14(5): Evictions From Public Housing in Fort Providence**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do have a funded position in all of the LHOs, it is called the tenant relations officer who performs those functions. We expect the tenant relations officer to be able to enter into a home to provide counselling, mentorship and also information

to those who are adversely affected and those who may be inadvertently evicted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 194-14(5): Evictions From Public Housing in Fort Providence**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is very difficult for me to understand how the tenant relations officers can provide counselling when none of them have been trained and with their workload they really do not have the time to do any meaningful consultation.

I would like to ask the Minister, have there been any independent reviews completed on the local housing authorities?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 194-14(5): Evictions From Public Housing in Fort Providence**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the year 2001-2002 we have conducted six LHO management and operations audits. We will continue to audit other LHOs to determine if an adequate level of service is being provided to those LHOs and also to the tenants. Financial counselling is one of the key areas that we need to concentrate on. We will continue to work to perform that function. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 194-14(5): Evictions From Public Housing in Fort Providence**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, will he commit to doing independent reviews on all the communities in the North, including Fort Providence, to ensure that legislation and policies are followed when it comes to evictions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 194-14(5): Evictions From Public Housing in Fort Providence**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am more than prepared to provide that to the Member as well as to other Members of the House. I am also prepared to revisit those communities so that we can set some specific guidelines to prevent future evictions in mid-winter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I will just take this time to remind the honourable Members on both sides of the House of the necessity for brevity in their questions and responses. The Chair has a full list of Members wishing to ask important questions, so please, the Speaker will apply the rules relatively strictly today. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 195-14(5): Consultation on Harmonization Strategy**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for Housing related to my Member's statement in two general areas. One is dealing with seniors who are on a pension or fixed income. In the past they did not have to pay any rent, but they will have to in this new harmonization program. Also, people who are taken off income support have to wait two months before they can get back on.

I would like to ask the Minister, what type of consultation is taking place with our elders and people on income support who will find themselves in a situation where they are laid off?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Return to Question 195-14(5): Consultation on Harmonization Strategy**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can only respond in the context of the role the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation plays in the new rent scale. I think part of that, Mr. Speaker, and if I may have your indulgence here in my timely response, is the harmonization chronology which dates back to 1995 and this is as current as February of this year.

It outlines a number of steps taken to address and readdress how it is going to impact not only the seniors but other public housing clients. I am under the understanding that this has received universal support from the Members of this House through a number of processes.

I see that when we do want to communicate back to those who are affected, we do have a communication plan in effect today. That is again another portion of this documentation that is fully supported by this House from what I can recollect. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 195-14(5): Consultation on Harmonization Strategy**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for not answering my question. Mr. Speaker, it is clear from my question, what are we doing to consult with our elders and people in our communities on the effect this harmonization program will have on people on income support and our seniors who are on a fixed pension?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 195-14(5): Consultation on Harmonization Strategy**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The LHOs were indentured to go to each individual senior to discuss with them the impacts and from the small communities I was made aware that very few, if any elders, will be impacted with any formal rent increases.

For those who may, and I emphasize may, we have other options that we wanted to discuss with them further. That is the intent of trying to defer the implementation of the harmonization policy until October 1, 2002.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 195-14(5): Consultation on Harmonization Strategy**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with our seniors, a lot of our seniors are a valuable resource for information and they do play an active role in the political system in our communities. A lot of our seniors are involved in elected councils, elders councils, in helping the school with our language programs. Any extra revenues that our elders receive through those programs will be calculated as income.

With what the Minister is saying, I think they are very much in jeopardy if they make anything over \$500. The rent will definitely be increased. Right now they do not pay any rent. I would like to ask the Minister, how much consultation has taken place with individual elders, not strictly with LHOs? Have you spoken to elders in the communities?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 195-14(5): Consultation on Harmonization Strategy**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the Member is asking me as the Minister in my travels, I do communicate very extensively with the elders. As a matter of fact, they are one of the key groups that I recognize as being very instrumental. Yes, we are cognizant of the fact that some will be impacted and thus we feel we do have some options available to them. It is just a matter of being able to sit down and delve further to determine what level of service we can provide. I cannot prematurely determine that at this point. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 195-14(5): Consultation on Harmonization Strategy**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, from the Minister's comments, I would like to make it clear that all elders that are presently in our Housing Corporation units will be impacted, not some. Every one of them will be impacted by this change. So, is that true?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 195-14(5): Consultation on Harmonization Strategy**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If we are using the common income exemption policy, yes, there will be some rent increases, but it varies from community to community, income to income. There will be, I will be honest with you, there will be some impact. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**Question 196-14(5): High Cost of Air Travel**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, in my question I addressed the issue of the high cost of air fares in the Northwest Territories. Air travel is for most of us, on most occasions, not an option. It is an essential service. I want to pursue this in questions to the Minister responsible for Transportation.

My question is, what avenues does our government have to work with air carriers and with other support networks in the aviation business to address the high cost of air fares? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Handley.

**Return to Question 196-14(5): High Cost of Air Travel**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do not have many direct avenues to impact the air fares in the sense that it is a private industry. We want to keep it that way. We have limited control over the costs of those airlines or the quality of service and destinations they serve.

We do, indirectly though, have an impact through the Minister for Transport Canada and some of the NAV Canada arrangements with the Northern Air Transport Association to help influence and persuade those who have a more direct impact, namely the federal government, to work with us. Directly, very little impact.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary to Question 196-14(5): High Cost of Air Travel**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too agree that it should not be government's role to begin to interfere directly into what we hope is a functioning private sector process. I would like to pursue the aspect of competition. It is well known that seat sales, departure times and fare structures among our principal airlines are almost identical.

What can we do to prompt innovation and more serious competition along our principal air routes? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 196-14(5): High Cost of Air Travel**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have a list of things we can do. I am attending the Northern Air Transport Association meeting in Whitehorse in April, and certainly the cost of travel will be an issue that will be discussed there, as well as the destinations.

It is very difficult in our situation though, Mr. Speaker, where we want to have good service. I think the public is interested in good service and reliable service and regular service, and also want to keep the cost down. I believe the airline industry is

trying to do a good job of balancing those two. I am certainly open to any suggestions that Members or industry may have on things we can do to lobby with the federal government.

Security and issues around security is a big cost as well as the standards that are placed on us in terms of airport quality. Those are two areas that we can work with the industry and with the federal Transportation Board. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary to Question 196-14(5): High Cost of Air Travel**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do know indeed that service and amenities have improved. We have superb service in the Northwest Territories. The point that I am getting at is cost and value. The Minister has said he would welcome ideas and suggestions from Members and the industry, and I want to ask if he would also welcome suggestions from the public. This government does not have a Minister responsible for Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Would his ministry accept comment from the general public on this aspect and get some debate going? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 196-14(5): High Cost of Air Travel**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we would consider that. I would like to do that right across the North. We did have an air industry workshop in December where we looked at a number of options, more related to the Yellowknife airport, which is only one of many airports, so I do not want to use that as the example of how it could be done because it is different in many other situations.

I think the Member has a good suggestion and I am certainly open to hearing from the public in terms of the service they receive and also the cost of it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary to Question 196-14(5): High Cost of Air Travel**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, I think the public would welcome that and I wanted to ask the Minister, as you know he has a public comment and complaint line set up for Highway No. 3, and I am wondering if he would be prepared to use that number, it is 1-888-711-0321, for people to comment to his department on air fares? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 196-14(5): High Cost of Air Travel**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to do that. I would like to advertise it though. I can assure the Member that there is lots of time and lots of opportunity for people to comment on the air side, because I believe we only

received, on last check, four calls on the road condition hotline. There is lots of opportunity for people to use up that air time for the air side now.

I think it is a good suggestion. I will certainly look at opening it up for comments on our air industry. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

**Question 197-14(5): Support for Commercial Fishermen**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. I have some concerns, Mr. Speaker, with the funding provided by RWED for harvesters.

Upon my initial examination of the funding arrangements to hunters and trappers, and conversely fishermen, I feel there are inequities in RWED's funding that adversely affect the fishermen. As I stated earlier, for the current year hunters and trappers have been allocated \$1,704,000 from GNWT funding, and the fishermen are receiving \$395,000. Could the Minister indicate to this House how the obvious differences in funding are arrived at? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Return to Question 197-14(5): Support for Commercial Fishermen**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are about 1,000 hunters and trappers throughout the whole Northwest Territories right from Sachs Harbour, Holman Island, Paulatuk right down to Fort Smith. There are about 100 fishermen who live on Great Slave Lake. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 197-14(5): Support for Commercial Fishermen**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the year 2000 RWED paid a total of \$649,000 to the WCB for the total cost of claims and administration fees for hunters and trappers that were injured, but they do not pay WCB coverage for commercial fishermen when they are required to pay for their coverage. Would the Minister please advise the House why his department provides WCB coverage for associated claims costs for hunters and trappers, but does not provide any WCB coverage for fishermen if they are injured? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for RWED, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 197-14(5): Support for Commercial Fishermen**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the arrangement that this government had made in the past

with regard to coverage for hunters and trappers with the Worker's Compensation Board, I am not familiar with the background information on that. I need to review that before I reply to the honourable Member. However, there are different licences for fishermen on Great Slave Lake, and some of the fishermen that are out there have a business and they hire people, and they should pay the WCB amounts if they employ other fishermen. They are probably covered under that area, but I have to check on that to be absolutely sure. I will get back to the Member on that as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 197-14(5): Support for Commercial Fishermen**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for that answer. Would the Minister state whether his department would consider providing WCB coverage for covering claim costs in the same manner for fishermen that they are currently doing for hunters and trappers, and have been doing for hunters and trappers since 1994? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for RWED, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 197-14(5): Support for Commercial Fishermen**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you. As I said, there are different licences out there, class A and B I believe. Some of the bigger fishermen have bigger operations compared to the smaller operations who are probably a one-man operation or a one-skip operation. I am not too sure any more. I used to fish out there in 1977 and there are some people that are very small fishermen. Depending on whether they pay WCB or not, if it is a small operation we could probably consider that, but I have to ask my department to review that question and get back to the Member as to whether we could do that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 197-14(5): Support for Commercial Fishermen**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department also has a disaster fund established for hunters and trappers. Would the Minister consider providing this disaster compensation to fishermen if their boats or equipment are destroyed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for RWED, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 197-14(5): Support for Commercial Fishermen**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will check on that as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Colleagues, I am just going to stop the question clock for a moment to draw your attention and help welcome in the visitor's gallery some very special students that are here with us today. They are here from the literacy outreach centre here in Yellowknife and they

are accompanied by their teachers, Paula Le Templier and Carolyn MacKay, as well as our public affairs officer, Ms. Colquhoun. Welcome them please.

-- Applause

Thank you. Thank you for your welcome. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

#### **Question 198-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Premier. In response to Mr. Dent's questions about the change in the ministerial travel policy, the Premier indicated that it was to increase flexibility and fairness and said that there was no need to get all worked up about it. I think, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, it will be the public that will get all worked up about this.

When I read it, non-portfolio travel to me says that Ministers can go golfing in PEI or take their spouses to see My Fair Lady in Toronto. I am wondering if the Premier can define non-portfolio travel for us? Does it even have to be business travel? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

#### **Return to Question 198-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that when we have questions to not jump to conclusions, simply ask the question and wait for the response. I have said that these revisions were based on what is provided for Members of Parliament. Certainly the Member should not make any suggestion that what governs the Members of Parliament is wrong because this is what it is based on.

We have provided changes that will, in fact, for Mr. Dent and Mr. Bell's information, provide greater flexibility for the day when they as Yellowknife-based Ministers will be sitting in Cabinet and requiring to travel on government business. Currently or in the past there was no home travel provided for Ministers that come from Yellowknife.

Under this new policy then, Mr. Dent and Mr. Bell have something to look forward to when they come here because there is a policy now that provides that they can travel and apply for trips, ask for trips to be covered by the government that will be deemed to be duty travel, but not relating specifically to the department that they are Minister of. This is what the changes provide for. They also provide for people like myself who represent a constituency outside Yellowknife and are required to maintain contact, family ties and community ties with the people I come from, my band, my community, my constituency. This is where the ties are with my children and my family, and it provides for that. It was provided for as well since I became a Member of the Legislature and Cabinet in 1987. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

#### **Supplementary to Question 198-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly home travel makes a lot of sense and we already have provisions for it. In fact, we already have Member travel and Ministers are allowed to have portfolio travel. I am specifically interested in non-portfolio travel. Does that have to be business travel or can it be for leisure? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

#### **Further Return to Question 198-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The changes that we have made do not allow for personal or vacation travel. This is to cover travel that is deemed to be the duty of government to attend, so it is to attend government-related and duty-related events and functions. It has to be very clear. This is not to allow people to go golfing, curling or anything else of that nature. This is to allow for Ministers and their spouses, on occasion, where we think it is necessary and appropriate, to travel at government expense to represent this government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

#### **Supplementary to Question 198-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that Ministers can already do that because they are all Members and they can go to Member functions on Member travel. For instance, if I want to go to a mining conference in the south and I think it has relevance and has a huge impact for my constituency, I will go out of my constituency funds. Are we saying that Ministers now have another pot that they can draw on and do not even need to use their Member travel funds now? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

#### **Further Return to Question 198-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the old system Ministers from Yellowknife had no home travel budget, so unless they could justify travelling under their specific portfolios there were no provisions to allow them to attend any functions. We thought that for greater flexibility, to provide fairness and to ensure that Ministers from Yellowknife can attend events and functions where it is appropriate for Ministers to be there, sometimes with their spouses and sometimes even with their children or a companion of their choice, whether an elder, a former MLA, whoever they can ask, under this procedure they can have it covered. If we feel it is inappropriate, it will not be covered.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Your final supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 198-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier indicated that formerly Ministers from Yellowknife had no home travel budget. I think that is largely because we can drive home.

-- Laughter

-- Applause

However, I am not quick to try to put down something that will somehow benefit Yellowknife Members, but I do not, in fact, think that that is the thrust of this. I guess I want absolute assurance that that is duty-related travel and has nothing to do with leisure. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 198-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The system is such that if you ask to go on a trip, for instance, in the future Mr. Dent might ask to attend the Great Northern Arts Festival and if Mr. Bell, for instance, should consider attending these good important functions like that, this policy would provide for that. It would provide that their spouses and their children can attend functions like that that are currently not provided for, unless they are a Minister with a portfolio that is related to those events. It is something that can be seen positively and will allow for government to have flexibility in providing for it.

If it is deemed by the staff to be frivolous or purely of a vacation or travel nature, the cost will not covered. They will not be reimbursed and the cost will be recovered. That has been the case for years and the staff are very, very strict about that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

**Question 199-14(5): Proposed Bison Management Plan**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, the Honourable Jim Antoine. I would like to ask the Minister if the proposed bison management plan that the department has now will be implemented as is? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for RWED, Mr. Antoine.

**Return to Question 199-14(5): Proposed Bison Management Plan**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes there are a number of legislative changes that have been proposed to regulations regarding hunting of wood bison that would allow for changes to the number of zones, allow for a new bison management area and a quota for Rae-Edzo general hunting licence holders. This new regulation is

expected to take place at the start of the next hunting season, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 199-14(5): Proposed Bison Management Plan**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have seen the proposed bison management plan and I saw the quotas. There is no fairness in it. Fort Providence GHL holders can get more tags and harvest more bison compared to Rae-Edzo or the whole Dogrib region. I would like to ask the Minister, are they going to be looking at this again, or are they going to leave it the way it is with the unfairness? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 199-14(5): Proposed Bison Management Plan**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This proposed legislative change has gone through consultation to confirm the support that is there for the proposed changes. These consultations are underway in Rae-Edzo as well as Fort Providence, so we are still in the consultation. This legislation could be changed as a result of these consultations. I will take the honourable Member's concern into consideration and take a closer look at the proposed changes to the legislation. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 199-14(5): Proposed Bison Management Plan**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Upon one of my visits to a constituent in Wha Ti, the chief of Wha Ti gave me some directions to give to the Minister. He asked that they do consultations with Wha Ti because they are in the region where the bison are right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 199-14(5): Proposed Bison Management Plan**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you. We will instruct the department to do consultation there then as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 199-14(5): Proposed Bison Management Plan**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if he can direct his department not to have the consultations when it conflicts with other activities like land claims and self-government negotiations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 199-14(5): Proposed Bison Management Plan**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department will be instructed to make sure they check that the dates do not conflict with other events that are going on. I also wanted to add that I am planning to tour with the honourable Member in the Dogrib communities and if the chiefs are available then I am available to talk with all of the issues that are of concern. If this is one of them, we will talk about it then. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Question 200-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to the Premier and it follows on the non-portfolio travel. Mr. Speaker, we are aware that the existing home travel allows for 32 trips for Ministers and that allows them, especially out-of-town Ministers, to travel back to their constituency up to 32 times per year.

We also know that as Members of this Legislative Assembly that we are all entitled through our constituency budgets to travel to other locations whether they are in our constituency or other jurisdictions in the Northwest Territories or Canada, as long as we feel it would benefit our constituency and the work we do.

I have a hard time relating to what this non-portfolio travel will allow above and beyond that. What will this non-portfolio travel benefit for, beyond what is already there? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Return to Question 200-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, as I have said, Ministers that are elected in Yellowknife, for instance, have no home travel provisions. It has been pointed out they can walk or drive home everyday and walk through their constituency, so it is no great consequence there. It also does not allow for Yellowknife-elected Ministers to attend important functions in and out of the Territory where it is in their interest to attend as Members of the Executive.

I pointed one out earlier, the Great Northern Arts Festival. There are other occasions when Ministers of government should attend functions because it is in the interest of this government that they attend. Sometimes it is in our interest to ensure that their spouses are there, it adds to the charm where there is none. Where there is need for social interaction, social grace, it always enhances it when our spouses attend. That is what it provides for.

It provides for greater enhancement of family, the promotion of family values that the Member believes so strongly in. We do not work ourselves to death on this side at the expense of our family and our children. It does allow for better work, more

efficient work by our Ministers and by this government, still staying within the resources allocated presently. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 200-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the Great Northern Arts Festival is getting so much publicity today. It is a good thing. I refer again to constituency travel which allows for that if Members feel it is appropriate for them to be there. If a Minister is filling in on another Minister's responsibility or request, that department will pay that cost. I have a hard time yet to see who this would actually benefit.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier just stated that he would be doing this within existing resources. Is that correct? Within existing resources?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 200-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** This change in procedures will not cost any more money. There is no additional money added or requested. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 200-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would the other implications of this be in fact taxable if you are taking your spouse along on a trip? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 200-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, as long as the trip is deemed to be on government business and duty travel, travel that is appropriate for a Minister to do under these procedures and it falls in the model of the House of Commons policy, I believe that would not apply. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 200-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to know if that interpretation then falls over all of the Members of the Assembly? If we are going to adopt the translation of the federal government and the interpretation of the taxable benefit, is that going to impact on all Members of this Assembly when it comes to travel of this government? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 200-14(5): New Ministerial Travel Policy**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, I would have to work with Mr. Hamilton to ascertain that. All I know is that Ministers like myself, when I wish to travel home to my constituency, I should not be burdened with the costs any more than a Minister from Yellowknife should to go home and see my constituents.

This is what I think we have achieved. We have also achieved that Ministers elected from the community of Yellowknife can attend important functions. Again, I use the Great Northern Arts Festival, but it could be a funeral of a great Inuvialuit elder that takes place in the future where some of us would all feel compelled to attend. A Minister elected out of Yellowknife can use that to attend an important function like that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Question 201-14(5): Definition of Suitable Housing**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Housing Corporation. I was going to refer to the harmonization program but my colleagues have done a well enough job on that. I think I will continue on with my questions of yesterday when it comes to the policy and mandate of the Housing Corporation.

When I asked the Minister about the mandate of the Housing Corporation, the Minister responded by saying that it was to provide suitable, affordable and adequate housing to the people of the Northwest Territories. Now, the interpretation of those statements, the Minister, when I asked about the interpretation of suitable housing, he stated that is the housing suitable for the people living there.

Now, let us get into the discussions of interpretation of suitable. When a client of public housing disagrees with the interpretation of the Housing Corporation's term suitable, who wins? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. I am not sure of the question, but the honourable Minister responsible for Housing may be. Mr. Allen.

**Return to Question 201-14(5): Definition of Suitable Housing**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to restate the definition of suitability, if there are enough bedrooms for the size of the family then that is to be deemed suitable. Now, I understand the Member's question is to have us assess the size of the family and whether the current accommodation they have is suitable for that family. We do have an LHO board that assesses those prerequisites. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 201-14(5): Definition of Suitable Housing**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when asked the question about which takes precedence, the Housing Corporation mandate or the local housing authority's policy, there are a number of people in the Northwest Territories who are blacklisted from other units that are more suitable to their needs because of arrears to the Housing Corporation.

The reason I ask that question is, whose interpretation do you take when it comes to the definition of suitability? The clients who may say that the Housing Corporation is not providing me a home that is suitable and the Housing Corporation is saying, we are providing a home that is suitable, therefore you have to pay the rent. The clients are not paying the rent. There is an argument there. Who wins?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 201-14(5): Definition of Suitable Housing**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a procedure set in place. That procedure is defined under the terms of the agreement between the LHOs and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. The intent is for the LHOs to work with the client base which is the public housing tenants.

If there is a problem, they may appeal to an LHO board or housing committee. If it cannot be resolved on that level, they have the ability to appeal to the district director. If that is not suitable, then they may appeal to the president of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation on a case-by-case basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 201-14(5): Definition of Suitable Housing**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is this policy and procedure communicated to the public housing clientele in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 201-14(5): Definition of Suitable Housing**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I would like to advise the Member and other Members of this House that there are procedures set out in the agreement. Since the LHOs are an agent of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, they are mandated to make the public housing unit tenants aware of those rules and procedures. That is normally carried out through the tenant relations officer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 201-14(5): Definition of Suitable Housing**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have constituents who are in that same situation where they disagreed with the local housing authority because of the suitability issue and they were not paying their rent because it was their way of saying I want better service.

Now, the Housing Corporation is saying, we are not going to move you. I want to address the cost factor. What is the cost factor if the definition is 30 percent of household income? Would the arrears owed by the client and the amount of money they would have to pay be factored into the 30 percent of total cost when they are taking advantage of the program that Mr. Allen just mentioned? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 201-14(5): Definition of Suitable Housing**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Mr. Speaker, I am going to attempt to answer this in the context that we allow the tenants who are in arrears to the LHOs or the housing association to enter into a debt repayment plan. This helps alleviate some of the problems of their ability to repay the arrears. We also do that on a case-by-case basis because not all tenants have the capability of repaying. Thus, we have a number of different methods to use to assist those tenants to liquidate their arrears to the local housing associations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 201-14(5): Definition of Suitable Housing**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister commit to us in this House, because I feel this is a major problem in the Northwest Territories, and with the potential introduction of the harmonization program, that the Minister find out how many clients out there in public housing are in arrears because of these circumstances and make that information available to me and Members of the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return to Question 201-14(5): Definition of Suitable Housing**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Mr. Speaker, I am not so sure I can provide that specific detail because of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, but I will double check with our legal people to ensure that if we can, we will. If not, then I would like to advise the Member I will take the responsibility of checking into this. Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Question 202-14(5): Ministerial Constituency Travel**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. The Premier had said earlier today that he

needed to maintain his family and community ties as do other Members from outside of Yellowknife who are on Cabinet and that was the reason for home travel. I think all Members would agree with that. It is absolutely essential that the Ministers be able to get back to their home community relatively often so that they can maintain those ties.

That is why, for as long as I have been elected, the last 10 years, Ministers have been able to access 32 visits a year back to their home community. There was even some discussion in the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly about reducing that, but we all agreed that it was important enough for Ministers to get home that often that we would not consider it.

What I fail to understand here is, why do Ministers need the ability to strengthen family and community ties more than Regular Members?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Return to Question 202-14(5): Ministerial Constituency Travel**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a Minister in this government coming from my community of Fort Simpson, with the amount of time that we live in Yellowknife we need to go back to our communities as often as we can between session and all of the other duties we have to try and maintain a strong tie with our communities and our families.

We have to live here in this community, in Yellowknife and to maintain a strong family connection to our communities is very difficult and we need to try to get back to our communities as often as we can and maintain our ties.

This political life is not forever, we take it in chunks of four years at a time. Once we are done here, we have to go back to our community and pick up where we left off. It is good to maintain a continuous relationship with our families so once we go back we fit into our communities and our life as ordinary people after we have done our public service. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 202-14(5): Ministerial Constituency Travel**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nobody in this House disputes the fact that that is an important and essential part of representing the communities in the North, maintaining that contact. It is also important that Members have strong family ties.

As I said earlier, Regular Members sometimes spend over 150 days per year in Yellowknife because of their duties. They are not afforded the same opportunity to travel home as Ministers. The question remains. Why do Ministers deserve more trips than Regular Members?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 202-14(5): Ministerial Constituency Travel**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if it is a question of Ordinary Members not having enough trips back to their communities, then we can take it up with the Board of Management and request additional trips, and also through the Caucus. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 202-14(5): Ministerial Constituency Travel**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following along the family issue, I quote from the policy when it says, "it is unrealistic to expect Ministers and their families to break all their ties with their home community and extended family." I think we all agree with home travel. How does home travel for Yellowknife Ministers strengthen their community ties?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 202-14(5): Ministerial Constituency Travel**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of reasons why this would be the case, to strengthen ties, but Ministers who come from Yellowknife need to develop and strengthen stronger ties with the whole community of the North, the communities. I think there are Members, seven of them come from Yellowknife, and I think there are people out in the communities who need to know them. The Ministers living in Yellowknife need to know our communities.

The only opportunities that Ministers from Yellowknife have is on duty travel. If they have a portfolio, that is the only time they can go is if their duties allow them to go into the communities. This way, I think that there is great opportunity for Ministers, even though it is not in their portfolio, to attend functions throughout the North.

There are different ways of doing it. You can use your own home travel as an MLA, but that is not MLA business. It is government official business to attend a funeral of a respected elder or a former colleague or a great event like a social event that you would like to attend. I think there is a great opportunity here to allow Ministers from Yellowknife to get to know people in the communities much closer, not only at official functions and meetings, but through social settings and other types of events that happen throughout the North.

We are all invited to them I think whenever we have a chance this gives it a better opportunity for Ministers from Yellowknife to go to the communities.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 202-14(5): Ministerial Constituency Travel**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, we have cut out compassionate travel for members of the public, but if you are

on Cabinet now you can travel to a funeral, it sounds like. I think the public will comment on that. The Minister of Education has a reason to visit every community in the Northwest Territories. He has schools in every community. Almost every Minister has a reason to visit every community, and you can make sure your visits tie into community events.

I am afraid, Mr. Speaker, I am having trouble understanding the rationale here, and taking your wife along. Mr. Speaker, I was a Member of Cabinet for four years, I travelled extensively to federal/provincial/territorial meetings across Canada and I did not find one provincial jurisdiction that paid for the spouse to travel. We are proposing spousal travel. Why do we have to be like the feds and why not like the provinces?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 202-14(5): Ministerial Constituency Travel**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Speaker, that is a very important and interesting question from the honourable Member. I will have to review the documents here and get back to him.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 202-14(5): Ministerial Constituency Travel**

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Speaker, I did not realize that I had one more supplementary.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order. Order please, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** We heard earlier today that this new policy will not cost any more money. How is that possible if the department is now going to be covering travel it did not cover before? We heard today that airplane travel is not free.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 202-14(5): Ministerial Constituency Travel**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, like the Premier had indicated, any request for travel will be closely scrutinized. We are not going to be using this frivolously. I think that we will be respectful of the concerns in the House. The new changes to the administrative procedure is not to have a flurry of travel by everyone. We all have really tight schedules to begin with anyways, so we will be very hard pressed to find time to go on these trips.

If the opportunity arises, I think the staff and Members are going to have to be very vigilant about this and make sure it is not abused. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. The time for question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to the opening address. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to go back to recognition of visitors in the gallery, please.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is requesting unanimous consent to return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Are there any nays? There are no nays, Mr. Antoine, you have the floor.

#### REVERT TO ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Speaker, we have guests in the gallery I would like to recognize with the Northwest Territories Native Women's Association. We have the president of the association, Liza Charlo-Pieper with the vice-president Gina Dolphus from Deline; Annie Goose, she is the treasurer from Holman. Accompanying them is the acting executive director, Sue Enge. Welcome to the gallery. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Welcome. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 9, replies to the opening address. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

#### ITEM 9: REPLIES TO THE OPENING ADDRESS

##### Reply 1-14(5)

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, a lot has changed in the last number of years. I come from the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly to this Assembly. I see there has been a real shift in focus from where we used to be one large Territory to where we are now a Territory on our own. One thing that I notice most, Mr. Speaker, is the attitude of the Cabinet towards ourselves as Regular Members. Mr. Speaker, I feel that as Regular Members, the questions and matters we bring forth to this House are serious matters and they should be dealt with on a similar tone, especially being directed to the government to say, "well, there is something wrong, either within our constituencies or within the way this government delivers programs and services."

Mr. Speaker, it is awfully frustrating as a Member who goes back to the constituents dealing with subject matters such as suicides, people who are either being evicted from their homes or having problems with income support, or having even problems finding a job, or in finding the resources to go back to school to get the training so they can take advantage of the economic opportunities that are within our communities and within our regions.

It is frustrating, Mr. Speaker, when people back home watch television and see how we are being responded to by Members of Cabinet. It has deteriorated to a point where I am wondering if it is worth our while to ask questions in this House to Members of Cabinet and being addressed with either the attitude of "no money," or, "sorry, there is nothing we can do there."

I think we have to stand up for the interests of the people we are elected to serve. We are the voice of the people. You are the government. The government is there to listen, take direction and set the direction for the people of the Northwest Territories, not to be put into a position where you toe the department line or be moulded to become just another bureaucrat because you are elected officials of this government. You are there to ensure the protection of the public as the number one priority of this government, not

ensuring that you can find some scam, come out with a million dollar idea and say "Well, holy smoke, I think I know how to spend a million dollars with another strategy, or a new initiative regarding how we find energy sources, or how do we find the resources regarding economic potential?"

At the end of the day, we as the Government of the Northwest Territories are not going to benefit from it. The resources are still flowing from Ottawa. Until that day changes, we will always be dependent on Ottawa for program and service dollars.

We have to ensure that we are protecting the interests of the people of the Northwest Territories. We, the Members of this House, are held accountable to the actions of the people we give direction to, to implement, carry out and ensure programs and services are being fairly distributed. I touch on the word fairly because in most cases, we sometimes draft policies and direction. We pass acts and regulations in this government, but in some cases, we have to have some idea that it may not always work. We may have to mould it and move it a bit to see exactly how it is going to be implemented in our communities and how it is going to be implemented in our large centres. How is the delivery mechanism really working?

Is the delivery mechanism that we have workable in all areas? In most cases, it is not. We should be able to streamline those initiatives in regard to the programs that we establish and implement, that they are actually there to serve the public better, and not cause chaos in our communities and our regions with initiatives that are not working.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is also important that we as a government do more to ensure that we are protecting the lives and well-being of all Northerners when it comes to economic development activities and resource development activities in the way of pipelines, mining developments in regard to diamond mines.

Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot of talk about pipelines and how it is going to boost our economies, generate all this employment and whatnot. Mr. Speaker, we have had our experience in the past with pipelines and how we have seen, at the end of it all, we never really benefited that much, considering all the hoopla that went around pipeline development and developments regarding the economy.

Regarding the pipeline proposal, there are a lot of questions out there being answered. What does it mean to own a pipeline? What does it mean to have an \$8 billion liability? What does it mean in regard to committing yourself to owning a percentage of a pipeline? Does that also mean that you are taking on the liability for environmental impacts, the social impacts of those developments?

I think it is important that we as a government start to really look at what the liability and the social and economic impacts on the whole Northwest Territories is going to be. Right now, there is a lot of development happening in the Mackenzie Delta area. We see the advantages, but we also are not looking at the impacts it is having on our communities.

We have touched on the issue of housing and also the inability of people in our communities to be able to access public housing. In order to take advantage of these developments, you have to either move back north, move back to your home communities, and then when you get there, you find out there

are no accommodations available and that you either have to find a home elsewhere or basically move back south.

I think a lot of people from the North have made that decision when they have had that choice of living in the North or moving south. I think what we have seen is that it is more economically viable to move south than it is to live in the Northwest Territories because the cost of living and the implications to the people of the Northwest Territories.

Getting back to the question of the oil and gas activity and pipelines, in the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, we looked at alternative means of generating revenue from these developments, different types of initiatives, ensuring that we have socio-economic agreements that force the developers to live up to their obligations and to make sure that a large portion of that development and the resources that flow from those developments stay in the Northwest Territories.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, we see a lot of people flying in and out from southern Canada, employed at these different development sites and areas in the North and flying south with the resources they acquired working in the Northwest Territories. As a government, we have to seriously re-look at exactly how are these socio-economic agreements working? Is there anything we can do to make these agreements better?

I think it is also important that we take advantage of these economic opportunities by getting high-quality paying jobs, and not just looking at the jobs at the lower level wage economy, where you are basically a labourer and are not being paid the high wages that you are in other professions.

I think one of the most important factors that we do not hear very much about is the protection of our environment, ensuring the protection of our environment is upheld to a point where it has a higher standard and higher protection mechanism than in most places, because the climate in the North is a sensitive environment, and we as a government have to be sure we protect our environment at all costs.

I think it is important. We have seen what environmental impacts can do with regard to our watersheds, dealing with the global effects that we see, such as greenhouse gases and also the climate change we have in the North. I think we have to seriously look at the environment and the socio-economic impacts on the Territory when it comes to dealing with the North's environment and protecting the people of the North, ensuring we have clean air, clean water and a clean environment.

I think another important mechanism that we have to allow for is that we have a fair process for all the people in the North, especially in regard to the latest court case in regard to Treaty 8. At this time, I would like to acknowledge the Treaty 8 court case and thank them for paving the way. A lot of people have gone before in regard to different court cases in the North, different court cases we have had, the Delgamuukw and the Morin decision, which recognizes treaty rights, recognizes the fundamental rights that were agreed to over a hundred years ago.

I think as a government, we have to acknowledge those rights and we have to ensure that we enact those treaty agreements in regard to Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, which were signed in the late 1800's and 1921. Also, to start implementing and recognizing the modern day treaties that we have in regard to

the Inuvialuit Agreement, the Gwich'in, the Sahtu and now the Dogrib Agreement, which is presently on its final agreement process.

I think as a government, we have to start living up to our obligations to First Nations governments in regard to treaty obligations. As a government, we have a fundamental responsibility to adhere to those agreements and the wording of those agreements.

We heard an issue here today regarding government's obligations regarding First Nations people. We as the Government of the Northwest Territories are responsible for delivering programs and services on behalf of the federal government, especially the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. I think a lot of times we lose sight of why, as the Government of the Northwest Territories, we are able to implement programs and services and ensure that we do have the resources to take care of social programs, housing programs, education programs. Exactly what was the intent of these programs when it was devolved to the Government of the Northwest Territories?

A lot of people, you can go back to our first Assembly, which was back in the 1950's and basically into the 60's into where we are today. Responsibility for transferring programs and services to the Government of the Northwest Territories from Ottawa was the responsibility of administering programs and services on behalf of the government, on behalf of the residents of the Northwest Territories, but ensuring that we do have an agreement in place to live up to what the intent of those agreements were.

Most agreements in the Northwest Territories were based on the social aspect of being a territory. We are a territory in the true sense of the word. We are not a province. The responsibility that we have as a territory is to ensure the programs and services we deliver in the Northwest Territories will be different than those delivered in provinces, because we are dependent on Ottawa for the resources to run programs and services, because the cost of living, the distance and also implementing those programs and services is at a higher cost than elsewhere in Canada.

I think that as a government, we are starting to lose sight of the fact that being a territory is not as bad as it looks. We receive a lot of programs and services that other jurisdictions in Canada and elsewhere, in regard to First Nations countries, they are in awe at what we have for housing programs, what we have for education programs, what we have by way of government-to-government relationships between our First Nations government and the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Department of Indian Affairs in the Northwest Territories.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, I think we should not start swinging away to try to pretend we are a province, which we are not. Initiatives we are doing by way of this government, in regard to harmonization, started looking at the whole aspect of taxation and means of generating new revenues. If we cannot afford it, we should not take it on. We do not want to be put into a situation where the federal government takes the initiative or takes the step.

Well, it seems like you guys are trying to generate new revenues by re-implementing social housing programs, by the harmonization program. The way I look at it, it is simply a

landlord who wants to squeeze a little more money out of its tenants. For myself, I do not agree with that.

I think as the Government of the Northwest Territories, by the new tax initiatives we are putting in place, it tells Ottawa we have a lot of money so we do not need anymore. I think that is a bad message to send to Ottawa, especially when we are continuing to put our hands out to Ottawa saying we need more money for infrastructure, yet we are cutting taxes in the Northwest Territories.

I feel that it is great to cut taxes, but what message does it send back to Ottawa? That we are getting too much money? We are too profitable and we can afford to start cutting taxes? The hand that feeds us sooner or later may be cutting us off.

Being a Member of the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, I have had to go through the growing pains of making some major cuts, major decisions that are still haunting us today. Mr. Speaker, I am talking about the harmonization ideas we had then. We had the idea of harmonizing health and social services into one department where now those two departments are now one. That has had a drastic affect with regard to programs and services which used to be the sole responsibility of the Department of Social Services. Now it seems that the whole focus of that program is based on health care, but not on social well-being or social needs.

The same thing with regard to the amalgamation of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources with regard to economic development initiatives and energy initiatives, which are now mixed in with the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. It is not really clear who is protecting the environment and who is in charge of developing the resources. There again, it seems like the resource portfolio has taken over responsibility for that department and very little is being done to ensure the protection of the environment and our wildlife. The differences between the renewable resource sector and the non-renewable resource sector is that the non-renewable resource sector seem to be the area that is striving the most, getting the most votes and getting the most dollars for those programs.

With regard to the cutbacks that were made by way of dissolving the division with responsibility for personnel, we have a very serious problem with regard to the hiring practices of this government, the implementation of the affirmative action policy and ensuring that we have a system in place that is fair to employees and to people who are looking for work within the public service. To look at the notion that we will allow the managers to manage and to hire, basically for me that is a setup for failure from the word go on the basis that there was nothing in that idea that forces the manager to follow the policies and procedures of this government.

We have not seen any major shift with regard to the hiring trends or practices of this government, especially with respect to the affirmative action policy in the area of senior managers. Yet, Mr. Speaker, we continue to move in a way of trying to find new initiatives, not realizing that maybe we should have learned from the old ones and realize that some of those initiatives that were supposed to solve all our problems might have created more problems than we expected.

I think that it is important as a government now that we have a little surplus with regard to the latest announcement on our

population numbers that tells me that since we are definitely based on the formula that our transfer payments from Ottawa will be less than what we had previously expected. Having gone through cutting the deficit of over \$100 million in the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly to where we are today, it is not going to take much to find ourselves back in that situation. All it will take is a major disaster by way of a fire, destruction of any one of our power plants, loss of a school, loss of any major capital item such as an office building and we as a government are not immune to those types of situations. I think that as a government we have to realize that we should be ensuring that we have a sound financial base to stand on, and we should not take our little surpluses for granted and thinking that everything is rosy out there, because it is not.

With regard to the environment, I have raised questions time and time again with respect to water problems and the effects we have seen elsewhere in Canada such as what happened in Walkerton and other provinces. Also the problem with respect to THMs in Fort McPherson and we continue to see other problems in other communities I represent of Aklavik and Tsiigehtchic, and other communities in the Northwest Territories. I think as a government we do have to take a serious look at exactly how environmentally safe are we with regard to the environmental impacts, the contaminants that come through our atmosphere and fall on us by way, say, of acid rain and what affect global warming has on ourselves as a Territory? We are starting to see the effects with regard to the permafrost, road infrastructure, community infrastructure, and also on ourselves as people and also what effect it is having on the mammals that we depend on in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of emphasis by this government to start looking at new initiatives and new ideas, yet I do not believe that we have the time for new ideas and new initiatives and we should be focusing on items and issues at hand, and trying to find ways of dealing with these issues, especially community issues, social issues and education issues. Those agencies, groups or governments responsible for those items, especially where federal responsibility comes in, until we have devolved those responsibilities to the Government of the Northwest Territories I for one feel that we as a government should not act like we are responsible for those portfolios until we are given those responsibilities.

On the oil and gas activities and resource development that are taking place, I think we have a fundamental responsibility to ensure that the social and economic well-being of our communities is protected. That is our responsibility, to ensure that we have social programs to deal with the alcohol abuse that comes with development. We have to ensure that we have a means for the people that are trying to find employment who may have an alcohol or drug problem have access to programs and services in our communities so that they can find a way to get away from the alcohol abuse by way of a treatment or community-based programs to allow them to be able to access work by means of dealing with the substance abuse problems that we have in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today because there is a matter that we do not hear much about, but I think it is important that someone finally stands up and talks about it. It bothers me that every time I go home I hear about individuals trying to commit suicide. I think it is a social problem. When we talk about income support programs, harmonization and economic activities, for our communities that have dealt with suicide, in

my case I know of probably 17 or 20 people who were personal friends of mine who have committed suicide. Mr. Speaker, I have to deal with suicide on a personal matter where I lost my best friend to suicide. I was probably the last person to speak to him and I was the first person to find him.

Mr. Speaker, also I have had the bad duty of having to pick up a young man who shot half his face off and carry him to the hospital because I could not get the RCMP to come and get him. When you see a young chap who is in the prime of his life trying to commit suicide and he shoots himself in a public area for the public to see, it is not a nice picture and it affects everyone in our community. Yet, Mr. Speaker, we do not seem to talk about it. It is other people's problems. It does not occur here. We will hide it in the closet. It will go away and we will not have to deal with it.

Mr. Speaker, when you come running out of a hospital after you carry a young man with half his head blown off, you puke your guts out, because that is exactly what it did to me.

Mr. Speaker, it upsets me that as a government we are not doing anything by way of funding programs and services to be implemented in our communities. We have made some drastic cuts to alcohol and drug programs by way of the alcohol and drug treatment centres we had in the Northwest Territories. I believe at one time we had four or five of them. Now in the Northwest Territories we have one. We are allowing development to take place in the Northwest Territories such as oil and gas development and mining development and yet, Mr. Speaker, these problems are not going to get any better. They are going to get worse. As a government we have to deal with them. We cannot continue to put them aside and say that they are someone else's problem, or that we do not have time to deal with them, or we will give you a mental health position in your communities with very little dollars to really have those people do an adequate job. Or that we will build more institutions so that we can put people in jail by way of developing women's facilities, young offender facilities and now a \$40 million corrections facility here in Yellowknife.

Is that the way we are going to deal with our problems, by institutionalizing everyone and putting them into facilities across the Northwest Territories? We do not have money for housing programs in our communities. We do not have money to establish alcohol and drug treatment programs for the well-being of our population so that those people could stay out of jail, could take advantage of the oil and gas activity, take advantage of the economic activities that we have so vast and available to us in the Northwest Territories. Yet very few people in the North are really taking advantage of those programs knowing that we have a very low qualified work force by way of education levels. We have very poor programs with regard to the establishment of core programs in our communities such as mental health programs, with regard to developing community capacity, with regard to dealing with social issues that are associated with oil and gas development.

What affect does the traditional lifestyle have with regard to the wage economy? What happens to those people who have a trade in the traditional economy area? Exactly what is the social impact on our communities? Exactly how do we deal with the impacts that come to our communities by way of suicide, family violence and children protection problems, and who is there to assist when those problems occur?

I think we have to work in partnership with resource developers to make them aware of these problems to ensure that they have programs on site to deal with problems, especially with respect to money management areas that they can talk to their employees about. Talk to them and encourage them that the alcohol and drug program that they have does not only have to be implemented on their job site. Work with communities to ensure that they assist those people on their job site to be able to take programs and services, to allow them to beat the effects of alcohol and drug abuse and to ensure that we as a government do more to develop that capacity in our communities so that we can deal with these problems at home and in our communities, dealing with social and economic impacts that will be coming to our communities and that have already affected our communities.

I think a lot of people in our communities, especially our elders, are very afraid of what is happening out there because of experiences they had over the last 30 years with regard to the oil and gas activities that happened back in the 1960's, 1970's and into the 1980's and how they have seen those effects drop down from one generation to the next generation to the next.

I think it is important as a government that we do deal with the stress and the effects on family violence problems that we see in our communities and ensuring that we have resources and the people to deal with these problems and programs, and assisting communities to take on those responsibilities with the adequate resources, the qualified people with skills in the different trade areas and also deal with the biggest problem that we have in our communities which is ensuring that our children grow up in a safe environment, knowing you can have the best of both worlds, the traditional economy with an economic wage base and deal with problems that affect our communities and our children, such as FAS/FAE, alcohol and drug problems, violence. We have to ensure that we find ways to work with the people in our communities to ensure we have safe houses so that when there is violence in the home, people know there is a safe place to go in our communities. To ensure the staff we have in our communities are able to cope, knowing we are not going to have burn-out or people quitting because of stress and the effects we are seeing in regard to counsellors, social workers, our police, and even the hamlets and band councils.

Everything we do here as a government, I do not think we really take for granted exactly the attitude, or a measuring stick to measure what the attitude of people in our communities is. Right now, the attitude of people in our communities is "You guys are not listening to us. You guys do not care. You guys do not have time for us. You have much bigger and better things to do." That is the sentiment I am trying to state here today, because I think we as a government have lost that. We have lost the momentum of really caring for the little guy.

We seem to have a lot of initiatives for big business with the diamond industry, oil and gas, and start focusing on mega-projects where we can find millions of dollars for infrastructure, hospitals, jail facilities, women's facilities, youth facilities, but yet, Mr. Speaker, when it comes down to improving the lives of people in communities, we just do not have it. I do not know what it is going to take for this government to grab hold of it and put some serious dollars into those areas where we need the most.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is frustrating standing here, knowing that in most of our communities, we are starting to lose what made us unique. The community I come from, Fort McPherson, has a history that goes back to 1850. Mr. Speaker, that is over 150 years ago. Yet, Mr. Speaker, what made the communities unique is the community support mechanisms of families, children, our leaders, and the environment and being able to holistically work in conjunction with what is around you; the mountains, the air, the trees, the river, the fish, the animals and most importantly, people have always cared for each other.

I think that is one thing that seems to be leaving our communities, the caring aspect and the cultural aspect with regard to the Inuvialuit and the Gwich'in people. It is something that I think we do not really realize may be gone unless we do something quick to ensure that our cultural activities are continued, the on-the-land programs. Our elders and traditional knowledge research has to be continued on.

The self-reliant community well-being, ensuring that community health is protected by looking at the different traditional medicines, ensuring that the quality of life aspects that we handed down to us from our grandparents and great grandparents in regard to the value.

I think there has always been an association with the church and the people in the North. There again, you go to church on Sunday, there are very few people attending church these days and it is sad to say most of them are elders. We have to look at ways of dealing with that.

Mr. Speaker, I touched on suicide prevention. Suicide affects every individual, young and old, people directly affected by the loss of a family, a loved one, a friend or someone you may have known. I think there are a lot of things in our communities with anger, people who are in grief. We need to work to find solutions to these problems and ensuring that we deal with them.

Again, we have to do more for our communities. We have to do more for the residents of the Northwest Territories so that we do not have people sleeping on the streets, so we do not have to deal with the issue of homelessness. So we do not have to deal with a situation where we know a lot of friends or people who have an alcohol or drug problem and shying away from them because of who they are. They are no different than we are. We have all had problems. We have basically managed to work our way through our problems, but there was always someone there to help us through those problems. I think that is all these people are asking for.

Again, it comes down to the economics, the social well-being of communities and ensuring we have the social fabric of this government that really works, that we do not simply look at a government as the size of your bureaucracy or the size of your budget.

I think the end of the measuring stick should be how many lives have we changed and exactly how many people were we able to help in the Northwest Territories? I think it is important that as a government, we seriously look at that, realizing we have problems with regard to children at risk. There is a real influx right now of children presently in care. I believe the question I asked to the Minister, his remark was there was some 250 children who are presently in care in foster homes and southern institutions.

Mr. Speaker, I totally disagree with that. I cannot comprehend reinventing hostel systems like we have had from the turn of the century to where we are today. Mr. Speaker, we have seen what hostels have done to aboriginal people. Institutionalizing people to the point where they just become another social statistic and they become the revolving cycle of life, where they continue to go in and out of institutions, because that is where children that start out in institutions eventually end up.

We should be doing more to assist families, to rebuild family units, to assist the husband, the wife, the children, to find ways of dealing with their problems so that we make families a better, holistic group through programs in regard to counselling and alcohol and drug programs to deal with their problems; to deal with the problem of social income. If you are unemployed, you are on welfare, you are a social statistic because you collect income support. Does that mean you are not a good parent? Every parent that we know of has their own qualities. I think we should not be penalizing people strictly because of a wage economy. If you are unemployed, does that make you less of a parent than someone who is rich?

I think that is a measuring stick that we lose sight of many times. Is it the fault of a person if they are a drop-out, they do not have an education base, they do not have a skill or a trade?

Mr. Speaker, a lot of these people I know of have more skills than the people in this room. If you put those people in the bush or on the land and expect them to go out there and make their way back, those people will make their way back 100 times out of 100. I think those are the type of skills we have to build on. We have to start building on the quality and skills of people that really have them in our communities, in regard to being able to give those people the opportunity to go back to where they were happy on the land, to be able to have their own independent camps and facilities, to be able to raise their children on the land, to be able to be proud parents because of an economic base where they are able to strive for themselves as hunters or trappers.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, as a government, we have destroyed that culture. We are not doing enough to enhance trapping as an industry. I believe we have sold out to Greenpeace when we agreed to the leg-hold trap. I think we destroyed the trapping industry by doing that.

Mr. Speaker, I feel we have to deal with the economies of scale, regardless of whether it is a tourism economy, the oil and gas economy, the mine economy, and also in regard to our community economies.

Every community has a unique side in regard to its history. The potential of tourism, the potential of our forestry industry, the potential of our renewable resource industry by way of fish, fresh meat, caribou, and also, most importantly, we have to do more to assist in small business. Small business, Mr. Speaker, makes up a larger percent of jobs and economic growth in our economy, and a lot of the larger ones. I think a lot of times, we forget about the small businessmen. In a lot of our communities, just having a mechanic in your community is an essential service. When you break down, you need a mechanic. There he is. If you break down and you do not have a mechanic, where do you go? You have to either go to Inuvik or Whitehorse or elsewhere. In most cases, those people are not available because of the demand on them from other

sectors of the economy, especially oil and gas and those industries.

Mr. Speaker, another area I would like to touch on is the whole area of the government-to-government relationships with First Nations governments. This government is not doing enough to ensure the economic viability of our aboriginal organizations. If anything, we are finding that some departments are more of a hindrance to aboriginal organizations, in particular, the Department of Public Works and Services.

I feel that we have our obligations under land claim agreements to clearly state some economic measures chapters, that this government that signed this agreement, is not living up to them.

When I hear a statement made by a Member within the civil service to an aboriginal organization, saying as far as we are concerned, you are not qualified or you do not have the ability to do a job, I find that offensive, deplorable. For someone to make that comment to an aboriginal corporation tells me they have no faith in aboriginal organizations and they should not be within the public service of this government.

I think it is clear, with regard to the economic measures section of the agreement, it has to implement and ensure that there is a process that we ensure there are measures in place to support the traditional Gwich'in economy, the individual harvesters programs and also in regard to the manufacturing of goods, arts and crafts and things in that area.

I think we also have to insist on delivering the outcome, which is basically clear, that you are talking about a land claim area which is a geographic area on a map which gives some rights and privileges to those organizations.

The reason that they have settled land claims is because they had given up the rights and interest elsewhere in Canada. For me that is giving up a lot. Yet, Mr. Speaker, we have preferential policies in regards to contracting, policies and procedures in regards to approaches to maximize local and regional and northern employment and business opportunities. I find there have been more road blocks put in place with these land claims agreements by this government. I think as a government we have to live up to those obligations and we do have to live up to those land claim agreements, as we have just heard in regards to the court case in Alberta in regards to Treaty 8, those treaties that were signed in 1898 to 1921 as well as the modern day treaties that are out there.

I think that it is imperative as a government we do more to ensure that we have agreements in place. We have memorandums of agreements established between aboriginal organizations and the Government of the Northwest Territories, different initiatives in regard to political accords, devolution of programs and services to regions and to ensure that the well-being of the communities is being looked at.

We have heard things on negotiated contracts, policies and procedures. Mr. Speaker, I have always stated that I support negotiated contracts on the basis that I have seen exactly how negotiated contracts have benefited people in my communities. How they have given young men and women an opportunity to be able to acquire skills and training and to be able to take advantage of those opportunities. A majority of those people have the qualifications to operate anywhere in Canada. I think that without having that opportunity we will continue to see

companies, operators from southern Canada and the larger centres, taking advantage of these opportunities that are in communities, in the regions that are not going to benefit the people who reside there. At the end of the day we will be the ones in our communities after these developments and activities have taken place.

I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, as a government that we do look at how First Nations governments really fit into the picture of this government. I think a lot of times we hear statements like, "We are working with First Nations government. We agree with them." Yet, Mr. Speaker, in the back rooms we know for a fact that the only reason that the government is greeting the First Nations governments is because there is something that we want from aboriginal governments, which is the Northern Accord so we can devolve the authority of oil and gas to the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I for one feel that the aboriginal First Nations should not sell out that right strictly for the sake of it unless the government lives up to its other obligations in the land claim agreements. In regard to policies and procedures that we have such as negotiated contracts and also ensuring that we do see a reflection of First Nations people within our government and ensuring that we have a system in place where we get quality programs and services being delivered to our communities by way of education programs, health programs and ensuring that the social well-being of our people in our communities are being looked to. We are not just another social statistic, but when hearing the number of suicides that have been reported, or that there has been a major incident where we have had a murder case, nowadays, Mr. Speaker, I think that is the only kind of press coverage that we get in our small communities. I think that we have a lot more activities that happen in our communities by way of people who are able to strive to be 100 years old or people who have been honoured or recognized by winning national awards. I think that we have to start looking at the whole idea of where we are going and where are we going to be in the next decade.

Mr. Speaker, I for one feel that this government has to move faster when we talk about implementing land claim agreements. We hear about a Wildlife Act that is still floating around out there. If we do not do anything quickly we will miss the window of opportunity and we do have to implement that agreement by way of passing legislation through this House to ensure that we do have an amendment to the Wildlife Act for the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it is important as a government we seriously start changing the means of how we operate as a government. We should start ensuring that we hear the warning signs and do more to ensure that the health and well-being of all our residents is looked at, that we do not implement things just for the sake of implementing them and find out at the end of the day that it is going to cost us more grief and problems for the people of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I think the biggest effect that we have probably seen was the downsizing of the bureaucracy in doing away with the Department of Personnel and amalgamating health and social services into one. I think that social services is now being undermined and not really looked at. I think that it is important as a government that we take the time to see exactly where are we going by way of our strategies, initiatives and how we as a government are going to make realistically, not

change for the sake of change, but change for the sake of making things better.

I have a real concern with the harmonization program. Will it really make things better, or will it formulate itself to be just another means of controlling the lives of people in the Northwest Territories? Where we as a government become a landlord which basically will start dictating to our tenants on how we control their lives. How much money you make. Where did you make that money? Then at the end of the day we are going to be clawing it all back if we find out they have made any dollars by way of the family tax credit or by way of benefit agreements, or in regard to the Northwest Territories living allowance. I for one disagree that if a person receives a benefit from the federal government or the Government of the Northwest Territories or any institution that that benefit should be exempt from the clawback provisions that presently exist in regards to the policy of this government.

I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, that we seriously look at the implications or have a system in place to measure what the impacts of programs and decisions that we make in this Legislature have on the people of the Northwest Territories by way of having a review process every two years or every three years to ensure that it is working. It is not working and if it is not working, how can we work to make it better? I think most importantly, what is the impact of those programs on the residents of the Northwest Territories and is it really worthwhile to do that?

Mr. Speaker, I think that it is important as a government that we seriously look at where we are going as a Government of the Northwest Territories. With division, I had the honour of being in this House with Members from Nunavut, in which a majority of the Members of this House were from small communities. I think that it is an important component that is missing here. A lot of issues in this House have been focused on mega projects, how it can benefit the larger communities and not really focusing on community needs and community requests and concerns.

I think as a government we have seen the inequities of a court case by a judge which was imposed on this Legislature to allow for more seats for the larger communities. I think, Mr. Speaker, it is important that we as a government do a thorough review of exactly how these legal judicial decisions affect ourselves as government to really govern. There is a fine line between the judicial and the Legislature in their jobs. I agree with that, but I think that when this implicates the delivery of programs and services and the voices of the people of the Northwest Territories to be overheard or underheard, depending where you come from, it has a hindrance on the delivery of good government.

Mr. Speaker, we as the Government of the Northwest Territories have to do more to encourage development of our infrastructure. Yet, Mr. Speaker, I think that it is important that we have to allow for the First Nations government to work in conjunction with this government when we talk about dealing with the federal government on First Nations issue. Especially when you are talking about pipelines, you are talking about road infrastructures because at the end of the day you will have to talk to them anyhow. They are the ones that have the land base. They are the ones that will determine the access routes. They are the ones that will determine the right of ways for pipelines. The right of ways in regard to the Mackenzie

Highway, in regards to the use of granular materials and ensuring that the economic well-being of our communities and the people in the North stays with the people in the North and does not get siphoned off to other southern businesses who are here for the short term and leave the residents of the Northwest Territories to look at the implications good or bad from developments. I think that with economic benefit agreements, social benefit agreements, that we as government have to ensure we have some mechanism of ensuring that we get the maximum benefit from these developments.

Mr. Speaker, I find it awfully difficult that we expect to ask the aboriginal groups or aboriginal organizations to negotiate impact benefit agreements or social economic agreements and then we have a government that turns around and says, "Well our legal opinion is that those agreements should be clawed back." I find it awfully hard that this government makes that type of legal opinion and does not even take the time of day or even looks at the economic benefit agreement because it is a confidential, legally binding document which they did not see. So how can you make a judgment on an agreement or document you did not have a chance to look at or review what the implication of that agreement is?

I think that it is important that these agreements that we have do not jeopardize the relationship between First Nations governments and the Government of the Northwest Territories to really work together to improve the lives of the members of the aboriginal organizations and the Government of the Northwest Territories to encourage aboriginal organizations to work with industry in promoting economic development. On the other hand, we are clawing back those benefits that the First Nations government received by way of economic benefit agreements.

I for one disagree that the IBA agreements are going to be classified as income. Yet the department has not even looked at the impact benefit agreements. For myself I think that is misleading.

We as a government, having seen what has happened with regard to different court cases and precedents set elsewhere, that through the land claim or treaty processes those agreements should be exempted forthwith and not have to be clawed back simply because of a bad policy within the government. If anything, this government should do the right thing and amend that government policy and exclude these benefits from the clawback provisions.

I think it is important as a government that we realistically look at how policies of this government are being implemented and exactly who are they at the end of the day going to impact. If they do impact programs and services that we have, what is the allocation or the opportunity for First Nations, or the courts for that matter, to resolve? For myself, this is unjust and it sets a bad precedent. I think if anything we do not want to set bad precedents.

Mr. Speaker, we passed a motion in this House with regard to the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as Members of this Assembly. Yet Mr. Speaker, I think it is critical that as a government we do not forget the whole idea we have had in place for establishing protected areas, protection of our wildlife and most importantly, Mr. Speaker, to me it is a question of precedent. We have to set the precedent to the rest of Canada and if that means to the rest of the world that all

calving areas, regardless of where they are, should be off limits for development. I for one will always stick to that principle. I think it is important that we do not jeopardize or threaten the life line to a lot of the people in our communities and to the Porcupine Caribou herds that have fed, clothed and sustained the people of the Northwest Territories for thousands of years.

I think it is crucial and critical that as a government we continue to send that message, that everything is not for sale and everything is not open for development and that we consider that as a precedent or policy of this government. Yet Mr. Speaker, I have raised this issue with many Ministers who have gone to international conferences in Washington, Alaska and elsewhere, and I think it is crucial and critical that we as a government do not sell out on our morals. I think it is important that we let the people of the Northwest Territories, Canada and elsewhere know that we are doing our part in the Northwest Territories by establishing protected areas and parks where we do have calving areas in the Northwest Territories and elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, I think we also have to look at the area with regard to taxation with respect to the court case with regard to Treaty 8. I think it is an important decision. As long as I have been involved with the land claim process and the Dene/Metis process, it has always been the position of people of Treaty 8 or the Akaitcho territory that they have always been exempt from taxation. They have always recognized that right under the treaty. I think as a government we do have to live up to that court case and we do have to recognize that these people are exempt from taxation; whether it is personal income tax, property taxes or corporation taxes. I think that in order for this government to do the right thing we have to encompass that court decision and finally realize and recognize as Canadians that treaties are a legal document. They are in place because of the fiduciary obligation that the federal government made to First Nations people, who basically signed treaties as a peace treaty, and to ensure that those obligations that are in those agreements are lived up to.

I think it is from this court case that other First Nations governments and First Nations people have to seriously look at what is in their treaties. What is meant by guaranteed education and guaranteed with respect to medicine? Is there a guarantee with respect to housing? If there is, I think this government has an obligation to ensure that that is provided, and the implications that treaties and land claim agreements have on governments. Until this government finally starts calling our First Nations governments, governments, we will always be in the scenario of them being a little less than what we are.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, in our communities the band councils and aboriginal organizations have a higher footing than this Government of the Northwest Territories. I think as a government that we, if anything, should endorse that court decision and see exactly how it can benefit ourselves as the Northwest Territories. I think also realizing that we cannot continue to use the argument that that happened back then and that does not apply today because as we have seen from the court cases and this previous one, they do apply today and they will continue to carry on into the future.

I think it is important that as a government we do the right thing by way of upholding this court decision and implementing it immediately.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important as a government that we be more respectful of communities, especially the small communities. In some cases a lot of people think that because they only have 100 or 150 people they are really not that unique. Well, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you they are unique. I think as a government we are doing a very poor job in ensuring the protection and well-being of our small communities and the people in those small communities. I for one would like to forewarn the government that they do have to look at this as a serious matter and quit sloughing it off with bad answers and saying that you do not have the numbers or our study says that you do not qualify because you are a small community.

I for one take offence with that. Every community in the Northwest Territories should be treated on the same basis. Especially from the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, Members from the Eastern Arctic and ourselves always took that. It did not matter what sized community you were, Kuglugtuk, Holman Island, Colville Lake or Tsiigehtchic, you had a right to be able to have infrastructure. You had a right to deliver a program inside this government. You were going to be given infrastructure like any other community.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, I see a very bad trend here where it seems like we have refocused the emphasis of this government and started seeing the diamonds in our eyes and oil and gas in our blood, and we are forgetting exactly what we are really here for. I think we as a government have to ensure that we do more for the protection and the well-being of all our residents. We have to realize that the social situation a lot of our people are in is no fault of their own. We should not turn our backs on people who are in need and basically force something on someone which at the end of the day will cause more of a hindrance and a problem than trying to help the person succeed, get ahead and make good decisions by offering them programs and services so they can improve their quality of life and the quality of our communities.

Mr. Speaker, with that, thank you very much. Mahsi.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 9, replies to the opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

#### **ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS**

##### **Bill 10: An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight has reviewed Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act and wishes to report that Bill 10 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS****Tabled Document 21-14(5): Government of the Northwest Territories 2000 Public Service Annual Report**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I have two documents I wish to table today. Mr. Speaker, first I wish to table the following document entitled Government of the Northwest Territories 2000 Public Service Annual Report.

**Tabled Document 22-14(5): Towards Improved Accountability, GNWT Results Report 2000-2001**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Second, Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Towards Improved Accountability, GNWT Results Report 2000-2001. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Tabled Document 23-14(5): Yellowknifer Newspaper Article Entitled Money for Sorensen and Bayly, March 8, 2002**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following article from the Yellowknifer from Friday, March 8<sup>th</sup> entitled Money for Sorensen and Bayly. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION****Motion 7-14(5): Request for Special Audit by the Auditor General of Canada**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 14, 2002 I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the Legislative Assembly requests the Auditor General of Canada to undertake a special audit into all aspects and approvals of the process that lead to the payments for termination, compensation and benefits to former employees as provided for in the special warrant approved by the Financial Management Board on January 21, 2002.

And further that the Auditor General investigate and consider any other factors in her opinion she feels relevant; And furthermore requests that all employees and officials actively cooperate with the Auditor General in providing all appropriate documents, papers, and information; And furthermore that the Auditor General is requested to complete this special audit as soon as practicable, and provide a report to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will seek unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Motion 8-14(5): Membership on the Special Joint Committee on the Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, March 14, 2002 I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that the following Members be appointed to the Special Joint Committee on Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs:

- Mr. David Krutko, the Member for Mackenzie Delta;
- Mr. Leon Lafferty, the Member for North Slave;
- Mr. Michael McLeod, the Member for Deh Cho;
- Mr. Steven Nitah, the Member for Tu Nedhe; and
- Honourable Vince Steen, the Member for Nunakput.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will seek unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**ITEM 16: MOTIONS**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with Motion 7-14(5) that I gave notice of earlier today. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays, Mr. Braden, you may deal with your motion.

**Motion 7-14(5): Request for Special Audit by the Auditor General of Canada (Carried)**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. This motion is for the request for a special audit by the Auditor General of Canada.

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly recommends the appointment of the Premier and Members of the Executive Council to be responsible for the overall management and direction of the executive government of the Northwest Territories, including matters of policy;

AND WHEREAS one Minister may be appointed to have authority over more than one department or to hold more than one title;

AND WHEREAS a Minister has responsibility for all matters arising within a department over which the Minister has authority;

AND WHEREAS the Auditor General of Canada is the auditor for the Northwest Territories by virtue of the Northwest Territories Act and Financial Administration Act;

AND WHEREAS section 31 of the Northwest Territories Act gives to the Auditor General all the powers that the Auditor General has under the Auditor General Act;

AND WHEREAS each department and its officials are responsible for co-operating with the Office of the Auditor General and with the Comptroller General and for responding to and acting on the observations raised by the Office of the Auditor General relating to concerns arising from audits;

AND WHEREAS subsection 13(1), of the Auditor General Act describes the powers of the Auditor General to be entitled to free access at all convenient times to information that relates to the fulfillment of her responsibilities;

AND WHEREAS the Auditor General reports directly to the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS there is significant concern by the Legislative Assembly that the public interest requires the Auditor General to conduct a special audit into all matters and circumstances surrounding the Financial Management Board and Executive Council's approval of a special warrant in the amount of \$696,000 approved on January 21, 2002 and presented to the Legislative Assembly in Bill 9, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2001-2002.

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the Legislative Assembly requests the Auditor General of Canada to undertake a special audit into all aspects and approvals of the process that lead to the payments for termination, compensation and benefits to former employees as provided for in the special warrant approved by the Financial Management Board on January 21, 2002;

AND FURTHER that the Auditor General investigate and consider any other factors in her opinion she feels relevant;

AND FURTHERMORE requests that all employees and officials actively cooperate with the Auditor General in providing all appropriate documents, papers, and information;

AND FURTHERMORE that the Auditor General is requested to complete this special audit as soon as practicable and provide a report to the Legislative Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Some context I think is in order to provide some information to the public about this motion, Mr. Speaker. The issue of conflict and/or process has been before this Assembly and the people of the Northwest Territories for many months. We have dealt with many aspects of the issue and we are now, I hope and I believe, in its final stages, and that is Bill 9.

Mr. Speaker, we are still frustrated though and I think this frustration is shared between Members and the Executive

because our process and our rules and our practice imposes a necessary degree of confidentiality on some information and some documents that pertain to the termination issue.

We have probed these issues at some length, Mr. Speaker, and we have reached something of a stalemate. The bottleneck is not being able to see and verify information as provided for but also as protected under process and confidentiality.

Mr. Speaker, this motion will bring in an independent and well-qualified agency, that of the Auditor General of Canada that has the trust of this Assembly. The Auditor General can then, in confidence and on our behalf, see that this information can be brought forward and verified in a report to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, in concluding my remarks I urge all Members, including Cabinet, to support this motion as a credible and authoritative way of determining what happened and satisfy this matter in a timely matter and beyond any further doubt. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the motion. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Mr. Speaker, my comment is not going to be very long, I just want to put on record my position on this motion. Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting this motion. I do not have a problem with the principle of asking for the assistance of the Office of the Auditor General in cases where it is necessary, but I am not convinced that in this specific case it warrants that sort of review. I believe that, given the information that we got from the committee and we were privy to a lot of information in regard to the details of the separation packages in the proceedings that transpired here for a couple of days, I do believe that I have enough information that is satisfactory to me.

I take it from the pretty reasonable responses from the officials and the Ministers and whoever else who answered to this, I am not sure there are questions remaining.

Mr. Speaker, my last point is that as I stated before, I do not remember in all of my time in involvement with the government another case where something as private and sensitive as a separation package has been discussed to this detail. I have to put on the record the respect I have for the senior officials that come to serve the government and people who put their personal lives on hold to serve this government. I do not believe this is a way to show the respect and dignity that should be warranted to every citizen and every official that works for this government. I wanted to put that on the record. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request a recorded vote.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the motion. The mover may have the last word on it. Debate has ended. A recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour, please stand.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Braden, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Roland, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Bell, Mr. Nitah.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. All those opposed, please stand.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Ms. Lee.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. All those abstaining, please stand.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Steen, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Handley, Mr. Allen, Mr. Ootes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Voting has ended. The results of the recorded votes are as follows: those in favour, 10; those opposed, one; those abstaining, six. Therefore, the motion is carried.

-- Applause

The motion has been adopted by the House. Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with Motion 8-14(5) that I gave notice of earlier today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays, Mr. Nitah, you may deal with your motion.

**Motion 8-14(5): Membership on the Special Joint Committee on the Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs (Carried)**

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

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly has established the Special Joint Committee on Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs;

AND WHEREAS the membership of the special joint committee is to consist of four Regular Members and one Member of the Executive Council;

AND WHEREAS the Striking Committee are prepared to recommend the membership of the special joint committee;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta that the following Members be appointed to the Special Joint Committee on Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs:

- Mr. David Krutko, the Member for Mackenzie Delta;
- Mr. Leon Lafferty, the Member for North Slave;
- Mr. Michael McLeod, the Member for Deh Cho;
- Mr. Steven Nitah, the Member for Tu Nedhe; and
- Honourable Vince Steen, the Member for Nunakput.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this motion has been in the making for the last little while. It has gone around the House on a number of occasions and I think it is an

acceptable committee that is going to look at the relationship between this government and small, rural, non-tax-based communities and the problems that those communities are having these days that our current standing committees do not seem to address.

Cabinet has appointed Mr. Steen to the committee and I think Mr. Steen will bring a lot of wisdom and knowledge to the committee and we are thankful for his involvement. I encourage the Members to support this motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

-- Applause

Motion 8 is carried and adopted. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 2, Bill 4, Bill 9, Committee Report 1-14(5), Committee Report 2-14(5), Committee Report 3-14(5), with Mr. Delorey in the chair.

#### ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** I would like to call committee of the whole to order. Before we deal with the matters at hand I would like to provide my ruling on a point of order raised yesterday in the House, a point of order raised Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2002 by the Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

#### Chair's Ruling

In stating her point of order, Ms. Lee referred to comments made by the Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen and I quote from page 1227 of the unedited Hansard:

I just heard the statements being made by my colleague, the Member for Hay River South, implying that somehow I had leaked information that was given to the committee. If I recall her quote correctly, she said "... And God knows what else." I ask you to check the transcript.

Ms. Lee then proceeded to cite Rules 23(h), (i) and (j) which reference allegations against another Member, the imputation of motives and uttering deliberate falsehoods.

I have carefully reviewed the comments made by Mrs. Groenewegen, which gave rise to Ms. Lee's point of order, and they are contained on page 1227 of the unedited Hansard.

Mrs. Groenewegen does in fact quote from the March 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Yellowknifer newspaper comments that are attributed to Ms. Lee. In addition, following this citation, Mrs. Groenewegen goes on to remark, and I quote from page 1227 of unedited Hansard, "It would appear that in fact, it was Ms. Lee who spoke to the media about the nature of the settlements, and heaven only knows what else."

As your Chair, I proceeded to allow debate on the point of order. While the debate served to illuminate many of the contentious issues surrounding the point of order, comments did not deal with the crux of the matter.

After careful deliberation I find that Mrs. Groenewegen's comment, "...and heaven only knows what else," is the one which causes concern and is particularly referenced by Ms. Lee in her point of order, although Ms. Lee did not quote correctly, as she did not have the benefit of the unedited Hansard.

In the context used by Mrs. Groenewegen, it is this comment which does infer that the Member for Range Lake had shared confidential information and while it does not impute motive, I find that it does constitute an implicit allegation against the Member in contravention of Rule 23(h) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly.

Therefore, I rule that Ms. Lee does have a point of order and I now ask the Member for Hay River South if she is prepared to retract the offending comments. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to retract those comments. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The point of order is concluded. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend the committee continue consideration of Bill 9 and once we conclude that, resume consideration of Bill 2 and Committee Reports 1 through 3 concurrently, specifically to consider the budget of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, followed by the Department of Justice.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** The Chair will call a short break and we will come back to review Bill 9.

-- Break

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** I would like to call committee of the whole back to order. We are reviewing Bill 9. Mr. Minister, would you like to bring in witnesses? Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, I would. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses in? Mr. Minister, for the record, would you please introduce your witnesses?

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me are Liz Snider, secretary to Cabinet and Lew Voytilla, secretary to the Financial Management Board.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. We are on page 6, Executive, operations expenditures, special warrants, Cabinet Secretariat, \$776,000. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have some questions for the Minister. He indicated the last time we sat down to review this supp that he felt he was in conflict and declared so in Cabinet when it came to matters related to the conflict process, so he removed himself from Cabinet discussions. Presumably, he then removed himself from acting

in certain duties as the Minister for the public service, and the Premier then took over those specific duties.

I am wondering if Mr. Handley can indicate why he felt that, after the point in which the committee report was tabled in the House, he was still in conflict? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, if I understand the question correctly, I felt I was still in conflict on any matter that dealt with the decision on the settlement with the two individuals concerned. I kept myself away from that process, even though the committee had already completed its report. I was in conflict because I was one of the signatories for the report and the recommendations in it and really could not be involved in any matters related there. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. So because of the Minister's involvement in the committee that produced the report on the conflict process, the Minister felt that he was in conflict and therefore could not be a signatory to these termination contracts. If indeed he was at conflict in these matters, I am wondering if, on January 21<sup>st</sup>, I believe that is the date that FMB reviewed this supp, I am wondering if he declared conflict on that day, or did he chair the meeting that reviewed this supp and finally, subsequently voted on and approved this coming forward to the House?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I did chair the meeting on January 21<sup>st</sup>. I was no longer in conflict, because the money in question or the arrangements had already been made. That was not the issue anymore. The issue that was looked at on January 21<sup>st</sup> was whether the Department of the Executive had the money in their appropriation to be able to cover this, or whether it was necessary to include it in the supp. The decisions had already been made, except there was a supp required, and that certainly was not in conflict. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. I would agree and acknowledge that the Minister did the right thing in removing himself from Cabinet discussions. I do believe he was in conflict in these matters. I guess my question is about who assumed the role for the Minister of the public service. It was the Premier who in fact decided himself that he would take over the role as the Minister of the public service. We know there was no official process for doing this, so in fact, Cabinet was not made aware that this was going on, I believe. He was a witness in the conflict process. He gave testimony at this conflict process. Furthermore, he was named in the conflict report, specifically in one of the recommendations, recommendation 4:

The committee recommends that the Premier take immediate action to regain the confidence of the public and all Members in the integrity of government and the standards of all persons within government. This action is essential in order that the Premier retain the confidence of the House.

He was a witness in the process, gave testimony, was named in a recommendation in the report, yet it was he who took the

role of the Minister for the public service in order to sign the termination contract of one of the people who was let go, did not sign the other one, but at least signed one of them. I am wondering, in this Minister's view, does that not seem to be a conflict?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, no, I do not think so. First of all, the conflict committee's report made recommendations to the Premier of actions he should take in order to regain confidence, so that is what he was doing. As we heard yesterday, it was Ms. Snider who took the responsibility on the negotiations. He did not appear to have involved himself in that either, so I do not think there was, from his perspective, that there was a conflict. He was doing what the committee had asked him to do. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One point in the Premier's testimony in the conflict process, he said "If there are issues considering conduct, that is for the Board of Management, or perhaps myself as Premier, to deal with." Certainly, obviously it was clear to everybody that the Board of Management could not be involved in dealing with conduct issues of senior staff and as Premier, he had a role to play in restoring the public confidence, but I do not know, in my mind, that should have extended to the Minister for the public service.

We are all representatives of this government. I think it leaves the perception that there is a possibility that people may perceive he was also in conflict. I do not understand why another Member who was clearly not even close to the process at all, one of the other very able Cabinet Ministers was not asked, the Deputy Premier, for instance, Mr. Antoine, was not asked to assume the role of the Minister for the public service. I think that would have been very clear to the public that there was some distance there and I think it would have been very reassuring.

It is strange to me that was not undertaken. I think had it been, it would have been deemed to be appropriate. Would the Minister please respond to why he feels another Minister who was totally detached and uninvolved from this process was not appointed to do this job?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** As I said, Mr. Chairman, I think the Premier was doing what the committee had asked him to do. I do not believe he was in conflict. As well, it is common practice for the manager, the supervisor, to be involved in the discipline and termination of an employee who works for him. That happens all the time in government. While there may have been other ways of doing it or other perspectives on it, I do not think the Premier was at all in conflict in this sense here. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. The Minister indicated that managers are always involved in discipline. I would assume he means in negotiating these types of termination contracts. I would agree with him. I would also agree that they typically would be signing these, not the Minister for the public service. I am wondering if

this Minister for the public service can tell us, in his tenure as Minister, how many termination contracts he has been asked to sign? We have lost some other senior-level civil servants. There have been arrangements made. Presumably then, this Minister must have signed off on those as Minister for the public service, or are we talking about a single, isolated incident, the first in memory, that the Minister for the public service has ever had to sign off on a termination contract?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, first of all, for at pleasure appointments, the deputy ministers contracts and at pleasure appointments reporting to the Premier, the Premier in this government, in the past government, and I do not know about the one before that, has had that responsibility and retained that responsibility.

In terms of my role as the Minister for the public service, the responsibility for termination was in 1996, when my predecessor delegated it out to the deputy minister. I have not been involved in very many of the termination agreements and so on. That has been delegated. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. Luckily, Mr. Voytilla is here, who has a long corporate history with this government. I am wondering if he can tell us, since 1996, has the Minister for the public service, whether it be the Premier or whoever is acting in that capacity, have they ever signed off on a termination contract instead of having the deputy sign off on it?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Voytilla.

**MR. VOYTILLA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My recollection is, of course, that there would have been situations where the Premier would have signed that off on the people who directly reported to him and who had at pleasure contracts. The bulk of them, the rest of them would have been signed off by the appropriate deputy head or deputy minister. From recollection, I do not recall whether any have come specifically to the Minister responsible. There might have been one or two in the last five or six years that I do not recall, but we can certainly check on that for the Member.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Voytilla. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On this supplementary appropriation under Cabinet Secretariat, I think with the motion we dealt with earlier, I would, for myself, look to waiting for the results of that motion being implemented. One question I do have before I move on to the next area of this supplementary appropriation is, we have heard the Minister state on the record that in the removal or termination, as Minister responsible for the public service and in that role when questioning about the exclusive responsibility of the Minister responsible for that act, that he felt there was conflict and, rightly so, stepped aside from it.

At the beginning, as that Minister for the public service has the exclusive responsibility for appointments, was he involved in that process?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, there are two ways this happens. One is the staffing or appointments. Appointments have been delegated to deputy ministers, deputy heads. The only other option is for direct appointments that are all done through Cabinet. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Was this done with these contracts we are referring to through this supp? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I will have to ask for the question again, sorry.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Mr. Roland, could you please restate your question?

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Was the process followed for the two positions that are being terminated? Which process was used in their hiring? Was it Cabinet approval? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, both of the individuals were Cabinet approvals.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, the two hirings, there was a full Cabinet approval on the hiring of those positions and knowledge of the contracts put in place? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, it was Cabinet approval of their appointments, and then Cabinet approves them, as we said before, the at pleasure contracts, but all the detail is not something that Cabinet would become involved in. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That will be all I have for questions in this area. As I stated earlier, with the motion we passed in the House, I would leave the rest of it to that process. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. Yesterday, Ms. Snider, in answering a question about why she did not sign one of the termination contracts, I believe indicated, and this is not a direct quote, but I believe she indicated something to the effect "I did not have the delegated authority to sign the contract." In a return to an oral question made by Minister Handley as the Minister of Finance, he indicates:

As the Minister for the public service, I have sole authority and responsibility to manage the public service in a manner consistent with the Public Service Act. Many of the authorities have been delegated to deputy ministers.

Apparently, the ability to sign a contract, a termination contract of this nature, was outside of those authorities that had been delegated. Is there somewhere that we can see what levels of authority have been delegated to deputy ministers? There must be some policies, some regulations that clearly indicate what is inside and outside the delegated authority. For instance, just as an example, if there is a termination contract signed that allows for more severance to be paid than is indicated expressly in the terms of the contract, is that something that falls inside or outside the deputy's delegated authority? Is there somewhere we can see that?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I do not mind sharing the letter of delegation that was signed off by then Minister Todd in 1996 that outlined the terms. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That would be appreciated. Just a couple more things. I would also like to see if we could get copies of both termination contracts with the appropriate confidential information blacked out on them, for instance, dollars and these kinds of things, which would infringe upon this third-party privacy I am not interested in seeing. What I am interested in seeing is the two termination contracts of the former chief of staff and the former principal secretary. I believe that should be something that this House could see, as long as there is no confidential information that would infringe on that third-party privacy.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, it does not matter how much we black out on it, we cannot release that kind of information, except within the ATIPP provisions, the main one being third-party concurrence. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I will have to accept that at this point. I feel there were a lot of questions asked and not properly answered or, in my opinion, skirted around in the last couple of days in dealing with this, but I am satisfied that the Auditor General is coming in behind this to have a look thoroughly at all of these matters.

One last question I have on this is, you have seen, Mr. Chairman, in the days of questions about this supplementary appropriation and this amount of money, the termination contracts, much concern expressed. I guess we should be clear that this came before Cabinet, or FMB, and was approved. Apparently, there were not that many concerns at FMB because it came to this House without being changed. I do not know if it was questioned, but at any case, it was approved by all the Cabinet Ministers sitting on FMB.

I would just like Minister Handley to verify that although this House has had many, many questions, Cabinet did indeed support and approve this.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, just for clarification on my last answer, I had said third-party concurrence. It is actually third-party notice, and then that kicks in the process through ATIPP, just to be clear on that.

With regard to the January 21<sup>st</sup> approval of the special warrant by FMB, yes, FMB approved it. The money, as I had said before, had already been committed through a contract, so the merits of the contract were not the question that was looked at. The question that was looked at by FMB at that point is, does the department have the money in their appropriation to be able to do this or do we need a supp? That is the issue that was looked at and approved on January 21<sup>st</sup>. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. Just to be clear, when the Financial Management Board, and FMB are the Members of Cabinet wearing different hats, when FMB approved this, they were simply approving that this come forward because there was not money in the budget. They were in no way suggesting that they felt that this was within terms of contracts, or this should have been approved in the first place, or this should have happened at all. What they were saying was we agree, there is not money in the budget for this and obviously, there would not be and therefore it came forward to this House. Is that correct? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** That is correct. That is what FMB was looking at. Did the department have the money in their appropriation to cover it? If not, it would have to be approved. We are not looking at, after the fact, the merits of how the contract was worded or signed or anything like that. It was only did the department have the money or did we need a supp for this? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. So this is something I hope the Auditor General will look into. If I understand it correctly, FMBS took a look at this to decide whether or not this should be approved, looked at the termination contract which had been signed and agreed the amount we are paying out is set out in the termination contract and there are signatures with authority on it, so we will approve it. Never mind the fact that may not have jived with the original employment contract. It was one contract away, so FMBS was only approving that second termination contract. They approved it on the basis that yes, the amount being paid was stipulated in that termination contract. Then that came forward to FMB, who are only looking to see if in fact there was money in the budget. Not whether or not that made sense, but whether there was money in the budget and they approved it on that basis.

It really raises a lot of questions for me on checks and balances. There seem to be a myriad of ways through this maze in which money ends up at this level in the House. It has already been spent, the cheque has been cashed and I have a lot of concerns about that.

I will leave it with that, Mr. Chairman, and I certainly hope the Auditor General will be able to look into these matters and get

answers to many of the questions we have asked and have not been able to get, or have gotten behind closed doors but have not been able to get in this public forum. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. A statement. I did not hear a question there. Did you want to respond, Mr. Handley?

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, certainly. I think the Auditor General, as part of her duties, will be doing that. She looks at the contracts we sign, the supps that are approved, the guidelines, regulations and so on to do this, as a matter of course. With the motion that was passed today, that will be an extra piece of advice to her to do her job. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. We are on page 6, Executive, operations expenditures, special warrant, Cabinet Secretariat, \$776,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 7, Executive, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, directorate, \$948,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Labour relations, compensation services, not previously authorized, \$106,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** We are on page 8, Executive, operations expenditures, Aboriginal Affairs, not previously authorized, negative \$30,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, special warrants, \$776,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Not previously authorized, \$1,024,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, regional operations, not previously authorized, \$322,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$322,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 10, Public Works and Services, operations expenditures, directorate, not previously authorized, negative \$2,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Asset management, special warrants, \$126,800. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** With asset management, there are two line items. One comes under the Department of Public Works and there is another line item later on under Transportation under a similar building. With those costs, is there duplication? Is there a way of calculating which costs were for what specific project from two separate departments? It would seem like it is one project within but we are getting two submissions from two different departments. Why was it not just brought in by the Department of Transportation?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, this is not a duplication, the reason why two departments are listed here is because they both incurred costs. The Department of Public Works and Services are responsible for the relocation of the Department of Transportation and their staff to temporary locations, and then a return move, and so on. They had costs with regard to the relocation.

The Department of Transportation had costs which included the replacement of materials, supplies and equipment. The costs for the Department of Transportation were \$26,400 and Public Works had \$126,800. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Is that building a Government of the Northwest Territories asset?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, no, the building is a leased building.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** With the lease, what was the term in the lease? How much time is left in that lease, and are we going to be extending that lease realizing we have this problem with the building?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I will have to get back on the length of that lease. I do not think the problem we had with the roof on the building is indicative of a structural problem with the whole building. Apparently one of the supporting pillars had been cut off at one point in history and structurally it was not sound. That has been repaired. There has been a fair bit of investment to have the highways people located back in that building. We will have to get back on how long the lease is for that building. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just thought that since we made this major investment, like with the Laing Building, we might have some office space there. I thought maybe we could put these people in there, fill it up with our own people, since we own that building.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I do not believe there is room to put them in the Laing Building but when the lease is up and there is an alternative space then certainly we would consider whatever alternatives there are. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. We are on page 10. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On this same issue Mr. Krutko raised, being a leased building, the lease agreement would not cover costs like this, being a building that is supplied to the government, it collapses or fails. Would that not be included in the costs of the owner of that building to ensure it is stable and usable space? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, no, the tenant does not have insurance to cover this kind of thing and the government's annual deductible is \$1 million. This is the first time this has happened in 25 years of leasing space. To carry insurance for this sort of possibility is just not financially a good decision.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are other government leases for occupying space, do they fall under that same category of not being insured to cover that type of a loss, I guess? If that is the case, the potential is we will be, for the failure of any leases, we are going to pay for the repairs ourselves and the cost of moving and so on. It just does not seem to make sense if we have that kind of lease setups and arrangements out there.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, we include our loss in our insurance against the million that we have. That is for our loss. If we were to ask the landlord or the owner of the building to carry insurance for this kind of eventuality then I suspect it would cost us much more than this would be, happening once in 25 years. We might go another 50 years before we ever see something like this. We would be forcing landlords to carry that kind of insurance and they would be charging us for it. It is easier for us and more economical to take the risk.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Page 10, asset management, special warrants, \$126,800.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Not previously authorized, \$659,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Systems and communications, not previously authorized, \$337,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Petroleum products, not previously authorized, negative \$1,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, special warrants, \$126,800.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Not previously authorized, \$993,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Going on to Health and Social Services, operations expenditures, page 11. Children's programs, not previously authorized, \$460,000. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister give us an idea of where these children are with regard to southern placements and how many of them are there?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, there are 34 children who are in southern placements. Thirteen of them are in the Bosco Homes, one in a place called Dube's, there are seven in Parkland, there are seven in Ranch Ehrlo, and six in Wood's Home. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Could the Minister elaborate a little more with regard to the 34? What do they provide that we cannot provide here in the Northwest Territories?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, maybe I will ask the Minister of Health and Social Services if he can provide more detail on what the services are. Certainly it is specialized services that we would not have in the North, but I will ask the Minister.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the kind of specialized services depend on the individual child. The facilities, depending which facility we are talking about, will deal with moderate to extreme behavioural problems. They will deal with children who have been diagnosed with conduct disorders and other related disorders that require very specialized supervision, access to psychiatrists and psychologists and therapeutic social workers and specialized schools that can deal with the behaviour as well as the educational requirements of the children.

It also may be due to the fact that there is no space in the North, but mainly it is for the specialized reasons that I have outlined. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister made a comment that there are no specialized areas in the North to deal with that. Have we considered looking at developing those specialized programs and having them delivered in the Northwest Territories? I think that in most cases you talk about psychologists and psychiatrists and these other professions. I think if we have the ability to deliver those programs in the North we should do so.

That for me is important. We have seen closures in our health centres, closures of different wards, because of not having the professional people in the North. I think that as a government, before we start looking at sending people to southern institutions that we see exactly what we are doing to, if anything, bring in people who are in southern institutions back to the North.

I would like to ask the Minister, have you looked at the cost implications or the ability to implement these programs in the Northwest Territories?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this is an issue that is constantly under evaluation. The number of children in care fluctuates. Sometimes it is for child welfare reasons, sometimes it may be for medical reasons. In fact, over the last 15 years there have been just that such repatriation.

The territorial treatment centre was in fact set up to repatriate some of the services. There are problems trying to set up highly specialized care facilities in the North with the difficulty of obtaining the kind of professional resources that we need and having to be able to use them fully on an ongoing basis. It is the same with health services, that you cannot afford to duplicate some of the very high-end, technically advanced, medically complex services that are provided down south. We have done repatriations on the medical side as well, some with success, some, because of the complexity and the requirements for very specialized care, did not work as well as we had anticipated. We are always trying to keep as many children in the North as possible. Unfortunately, the demand and the requirement for specialized services have continued to be on an incline. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the Minister have a general age breakdown of the number of these children? What are their ages? How many of them?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have a breakdown as to the facilities that the children are in. There is some other personal information we can give, demographic information, possibly age. I do not have it with me. I can commit to get it to the Member. Mr. Handley has already quoted where the children are, keeping in mind

that is basically a snapshot because children are moving in and out of the system and facilities depending on the range of their treatment and extent of the treatment. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you. The Minister touched on the geographical and regional breakdown. Do you have any idea of how many children are from the Inuvik region or the Mackenzie Delta region?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Once again, I do not have that level of detail, but I can give the Member a breakdown not only of where the children are in facilities, but where they are from.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I, for one, find it hard to believe that with the amount of money we are spending, \$460,000 that is not previously authorized and an overall budget of over \$10 million, with a large portion of that going to southern institutions, I blame that on the lack of infrastructure and programs being delivered in the Northwest Territories. You are saying that we have a treatment facility in the Northwest Territories. Right now there is only one treatment facility with 30 beds.

If anything, that is the whole idea of taking the capacity, of taking on these people, it is probably because we are limited in the amount of resources and infrastructure to deliver programs and services. In regard to Tl'oondih and other programs such as that, they did have different professions in that area where you had psychologists and people who deal with the different emotional behaviours. I think because of the attitude of the government saying that you do not have the expertise, well we are able to identify those with expertise in Canada to work to implement these programs in the Northwest Territories. Those programs have worked in the Northwest Territories. Yet again, it seems like without having the resources or having the professions based in the Northwest Territories we will always continue to have this dependency on southern Canada.

I would like to ask the Minister, will you seriously consider doing whatever you can to ensure that we try and attract people with those professions and the expertise like psychologists and people who can deal with these types of children in the Northwest Territories? Can the Minister commit to that?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, just one correction. The \$10 million as shown here in children's programs is not all southern placements. That is the total of children's programs. It is roughly \$2.7 million for child placement. I wanted to clear that up. I will leave the other part of the question to the Minister of Health and Social Services regarding the commitment.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as Minister, it is only a matter of program sense to do as the Member has suggested. I would like to point out as well that we have an alcohol and drug facility on the Hay River Reserve and that is Nats'ejee K'eh, but we also have facilities for children in Yellowknife, in Fort Smith, in Inuvik and Hay River. There are group homes, there are group homes for adults in Yellowknife and Simpson.

So, in addition to special foster placements across the Northwest Territories we have an array of services. The problem that we have is dealing with the children who require specialized services, either child welfare services, psychological services or medical services.

Like the Member, I would be very interested if we could in fact come to the day when we do not have to ship children south. I would be happy to work with the Social Programs Committee and the communities to see. Repatriation is always on the table and we are trying to see how we can provide those services. Access to highly trained professionals is difficult, as we have learned from recruitment retention of doctors and nurses. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Page 11, children's programs. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under this area, again, not previously authorized for a higher number of children in southern placements than anticipated. Through the budgeting process and business plans I know departments put in items for forced growth. I would like to know, why was this not included in that situation? I know again from history the departments plan for increased costs in case contracts for those placements which are changed and go up. There seems to be a number used, I do not know if it is four or five percent, for forced growth, but why would that not be included in the department's estimates? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, certainly we allow departments to try to make their projects with forced growth. They are operating with a limited budget. There are always unknowns that happen throughout a year. We do not know what the number of children will be, exactly. We do not know what the costs of providing the service for them will be for those particular children in any given year. The only way around this kind of situation, Mr. Chairman, would be to allow departments to have such a large figure that they would not have to come back. I do not think that is a good way of managing our resources here, so we keep a fairly tight reign on it, but we do allow for forced growth. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I ask that is if there is a trend there, it is something to look at. The planning cycle is an important one and hopefully we are planning correctly for potential impacts throughout the year. Was this the first increase that we have seen in this area?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, if my knowledge is right, we believe that they had some increase built into their budget this year for this, but it was not enough. If you are asking about previous years then I would expect that in previous years there probably were instances where there were more children in southern placement than we had anticipated and probably years where they had less as well. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess that is something that we have to look at overall. I know the Minister stated an issue of repatriation and it is something that has been discussed for some time in this government. Knowing that there is over \$2.7 million just in this field now for southern facilities and workers, we are paying for somebody else to be able to be staffed up and have that professional expertise. When does it become economical or more appropriate to develop that here in our jurisdiction in the Northwest Territories? Has that been considered in this as the costs continue to rise? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, certainly as the Minister has pointed out, we want to watch this all the time and if our population increases to the point that we are able to do this in the North, then certainly we should do it in the North.

I might point out that \$2.7 million or three point some million in total here, given the kind of specialized services that are necessary and I do not know the nature of each of these 34 children, I doubt that we could run an institution for 34 children with that variety of specialized needs for the amount of money here. I am not a specialist in this area, but we are always watching that one. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on the point of repatriation of people. In Inuvik they established what they call the Charlotte Vehus Home so that we can try and bring people who have disabilities from southern Canada back up to the Delta region. I think that was a good start and I think, if anything, whenever possible we should continue to do that. I think that it is important as a government that we support groups and organizations that want to assist, especially in regard to facilitating and housing people closer to their homes and closer to the North, to try and find a way of getting these people back into the communities or the communities that they come from. Then they could be closer to their families and closer to their communities instead of having them in Alberta.

We cannot keep dropping our problems on other people in other jurisdictions. We do have to look at dealing with problems at home and we are always telling our communities, "we expect you to have the ability to govern yourselves or take on responsibilities for programs and services." I would like to hear from the Minister that we do not automatically put the brakes on and stop the whole initiative of trying to repatriate people back to their communities and back to the regional centres and back to the North. I think that it is essential that we do develop, not only the infrastructure, but also the expertise that we have at hand in the North. I think that it is important that we do that.

I would like to ask the Minister, what are you doing to ensure that process is looked at with the communities and with the affected families and the aboriginal organizations and communities in the North?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, firstly the intent for children in care is to keep their stay in care as short as possible and make all attempts possible to get them reunited with their families in their communities. As I have indicated over the last number of questions, this child welfare information is constantly being evaluated and it is not all child welfare information; some of it is medical. As Mr. Handley has indicated and Mr. Voytilla, we look at this and if there is any kind of long enough trend we are going to be looking at trying to provide the services in the North.

The problem comes by virtue of the fact that the requirement is for very specialized, high-end services that tend to be medically complex or behaviourally and psychologically or physiologically complex and we do not have the resources to deal with them in the North. We have made efforts and will continue to make efforts through Trailcross, through territorial treatment centres, the group homes that we have, the specialized foster placements. We have difficulty in getting a child psychiatrist on a longer, full-time basis in Yellowknife. We do not have speech pathologists because we cannot fill the positions.

Are we looking at trying to repatriate? Yes, we are and we work with the health authorities and the communities to try and do that. We deal with adults as well, which is why they built the facility that they did in the Deh Cho for adults. So it is an ongoing process, the numbers change and the children come in and out of care, but we do work towards that goal. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Again, Mr. Chairman, I would just like to stress to the Minister, I know that it is a challenge, but I think that in order for us to face that challenge we have to change our concept with regard to the professions. I know it is hard to get doctors and psychiatrists and whatnot, but unless we have a program, a facility and a means at the end of the day of delivering these programs, we will always have to depend on the south until we change that attitude of this government. Let us get on with ensuring that we do develop our expertise and develop our infrastructure in the Northwest Territories to basically carry out these types of programs.

I think as a government that we cannot continue to hide behind the argument that we cannot, cannot, cannot. Maybe if we try, try, try and make an attempt to show that we can facilitate those areas we know we can manage. The other ones that we cannot, sure I agree. Maybe we will not have all the expertise in the world, but those we can attract and those ones that we can deliver in the Northwest Territories we should do everything in our means to carry that out. I have a real problem when we look at the whole delivery mechanism in the Northwest Territories. Unless we change the attitude of this government, we will continue to institutionalize people in southern institutions.

Unless there is a will, there is no way. Unless the will comes from that side of the House, we will always hear the argument that we do not have the expertise, the infrastructure or the professions to do it. Let us make it a priority to find the expertise, find the people to do it and let us get on with it. I think it is important as a government that we start thinking positively here and try and get it done. Saying that we cannot, cannot, cannot or we do not have this or we do not have that, let us go and get it, let us find the expertise and let us develop it in the Northwest Territories so that people do not have to leave the North for those programs and services that we can deliver in the North.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I think our government agrees with the message the Member is expressing. Wherever it is possible, then yes, let us try and find a way of providing services for these children in the North. We certainly do not want to send children south just for the sake of sending them south. I think we can look at it and continually be creative in ways of keeping them here and still providing good services for them. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Page 11. Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to just echo my colleagues here. I would like to just bring out a thing that one of my constituents spoke to me about. He said that his son is down south now, but up until he was almost 18 he took care of him at home and because he was aging and he was not able to take care of him he had no choice but to send him south for help. What he is saying is that if he was to be in the North he could still enjoy taking him out on the land maybe once a week and experience his culture, what he used to do before.

This child has a behavioural problem. He needs to be medicated because he does not take his medication on time, he was not supervised and then he has problems. Other than that, he is pretty quiet and pretty good, and he knows what is going on around him. He can still enjoy the traditional lifestyle once a week on Sundays or whatever, and he said that he could relieve the professionals that are taking care of him once a week by taking him out on the land.

What are we doing? What is the process we are using to evaluate the children that are down south? What process are we using? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Handley is indicating Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, two things. If the Member would care to, outside of this House give me the details of the situation he is referring to, I can get information that would allow me to speak knowledgeably with him about the particulars. Children are referred south for medical or child welfare reasons after some fairly rigorous work with social workers, doctors, nurses, possibly psychologists, teleconferences with specialists, assessments that are done by specialists, once again psychologists, psychiatrists and doctors, and an assessment is made based on those factors that are brought to light through that kind of work. The child's file is reviewed from the time that

they have come to the attention of the department. All these factors are put together. What kind of resources are available in the North and when are they available? There is a whole host of factors that is looked at on any particular situation. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to say that if I was a facility owner for taking care of these children down there and I was getting a sizeable amount of money for just taking care of them and if I was to do an assessment on them I would make sure they stayed there. That would be my income and my whole source of income, so I would make sure they stayed in the south. Do we have any specialists that we use that are away from the home who are going to make sure that we do have the expertise that we need and not something where someone makes an assessment with compensation or something? What do the used car salesmen do? For everyone that is referred to them, they get a commission. I am hoping that is not happening with us down there. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to assure the Member that we do not use the facility staff to assess the children to see whether they are going to go south. Those assessments are made and controlled and the process is run by our people in the North. When it is determined that there is no other place to go but the south, then we look at the resources that are available down south to see what the best fit is for the particular child and situation. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister mentioned some facilities and I know the one in Yellowknife, the Nats'ejee K'eh, is empty right now and could be used. With just minor renovations maybe we can repatriate some of our children back up North because it is not being used for the purpose it was built for. Even if it is going to be in Yellowknife, I am sure the families of the children down south would be happy to see them in the North where they can visit them a lot more often than when they were down south. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, we can take a look at that kind of facility. The big issue for us is the expertise to be able to provide the service. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Page 11, children's programs, not previously authorized, \$460,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Community health programs, not previously authorized, \$419,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$879,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the high number of adults in southern facilities, do you have a number there?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, there are 22 adults in placement. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Can the Minister give us an idea of where these people are with regard to what type of facilities?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I can give you the names of the facilities and the location if you like, but I cannot speak to what kind of facilities they are. There is the Michener Centre, Parkland, Community Residence Program, Ranch Ehrlo, I Have a Chance, Manitoba Family Services, Integrated Services, Excell, Independent Counselling, Alberta Hospital, Calgary Alternative Support Services. Those various facilities are located in Youngstown, Red Deer, Spruce Grove, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Calgary. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Chairman, with regard to these facilities is there anything these facilities are presently delivering that can be delivered in the Northwest Territories?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, it would be the same as for the children. It would be specialized care that would be available in these facilities. It is exactly the same circumstances. The issues around repatriating them to the North would be the same. I guess our response is the same. We are spending almost \$2.5 million caring for these adults in the south. If it is possible to bring them North, then we should be doing that and we will make every effort to do it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Is there a possibility of getting a geographical breakdown of exactly where these are from so we can get a general idea of the number from, say, the northern region versus the southern region?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, we gave it to the committee I believe, but I can give it to you by board. The Yellowknife board has 12 people out in the south; Fort Simpson, there are none right now; Inuvik, eight; the Dogrib board, one; and Hay River, one. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Page 11, total department, not previously authorized, \$879,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 12, Justice, operations expenditures, services to government, not previously authorized, \$15,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Registries and court services, not previously authorized, negative \$46,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Community justice and corrections, not previously authorized, \$26,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We seem to see a lot of reference to the Grollier Hall residence and school healing centre. There were other hostels and other facilities in the Northwest Territories besides Grollier Hall, and it seems like we are focusing on Grollier Hall. Do we have any funds or resources going to the other hostels or institutions that were in there the last number of years? There have been institutions in the North right up to the 1990s, and I am just wondering. It seems like we are only focusing on one general hostel, but we used to have a lot of hostels in the Northwest Territories. Are there also resources being spent with other groups, organizations or agencies that may represent other residences or whatnot from other hostels?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To our knowledge this is the only school healing circle society with which we are in the alternate dispute resolution process. There is not any for the others right now. The money that is in here is for the ADR process. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I asked is I was pretty impressed when I met with the Aboriginal Healing Foundation in Ottawa. They had a map on the wall of all of the hostels in the Northwest Territories. I was pretty amazed to find out that there was a hostel in Fort McPherson that was established back in 1898.

You look at the map on the wall that they had, there were a lot of hostels in the Northwest Territories. The reason I raise this question is that I think there are probably a lot of other people out there who may not be aware of this program or who are not accessing this program.

I think that if you do not include a process for these other individuals who may be out there, because you do talk to people who have gone through the hostel systems, especially people who were taken away from home for, in some cases, up to 10 years at a very young age and today, a lot of them do have problems and have social issues associated with it.

I think that as a government we should ensure that we do have a dispute mechanism or a process to resolve those outstanding issues also. I do not want ourselves or anyone to think we are only focusing on one particular area of concern or problem. We do have a lot of people in our communities and in our society who have had problems associated with this.

I am wondering, what are we doing to reach out to those other individuals so that they can also have a process in place to resolve the outstanding problems that may have occurred through the hostel systems of the Northwest Territories?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I think that is a good question and one we would probably want to get into when we review the Department of Justice's budget. As far as this support is concerned, we are only dealing with the ADR process that we are in right now.

There possibly are people who went to other residential schools who could have claims against the government. I do not know if they are aware of it. They likely would be given the publicity on this sort of issue. Right now, this is the only one where we have an ongoing ADR process.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it is important, as a government, that we do make people aware that there is such a program and we ensure that we do not leave anyone out there on their own, that this process does not limit them because they are not associated with this group and whatnot.

I think it is important that we do deal with this matter and deal with it fairly for all people who have been affected by what has happened in our residential schools.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I did not hear a question there. We will go on to community justice and corrections. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to a question, I would like to ask the Minister what they are doing through a consultation process or a public relations process to ensure that people are aware that there is a fundamental process, an additional process in place through the Department of Justice and that people can access it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. We are dealing with this one line item under Grollier Hall. If there are more items to take up, it is better taken up with Justice, I would think. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It does deal with community justice and corrections. The Minister did state in his comments that the Department of Justice is responsible for this program and the Department of Justice should ensure that

justice is being served and they do everything they can to ensure this program is publicly announced and people out there have due process. The dispute resolution process should not be closed to one group.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I am sure there are a lot of issues around this with community justice and corrections, but on this one, the alternate dispute resolution process, is not a program, just a process that has been used to deal with outstanding claims with regard to Grollier Hall School. It is the only situation where we have these kinds of claims right now.

What other programs Justice may have, I am not familiar with. That is something that, as I said, when we do the Justice budget we can get into those. On this one, this is the only situation in which we are using this process. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Page 12, community justice and corrections, \$26,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, not previously authorized, negative \$5,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** On to page 13. Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, operations expenditures, Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, not previously authorized, \$99,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$99,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 14, Education, Culture and Employment. Operations expenditures, advanced education and careers, not previously authorized, \$318,000. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A question on the Arctic College heavy equipment operator program, could you elaborate a little bit on that? What has happened there? Has the money been transferred from that program to another program? Did all their equipment break down?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I will ask Mr. Voytilla to explain how the amortization changes work. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Voytilla.

**MR. VOYTILLA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$200,000 is just a transfer from operations expenses to capital so that the department can purchase a piece of equipment that they need to work on the fuel spill as opposed to renting it. They feel that will give more value to the approach that they have taken to cleaning up the spill which is to do it through the college training program.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Voytilla. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Can the Minister elaborate on what type of equipment? Is it a specialized piece of equipment? Are we talking a crane, plane or train?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is an excavator. I understand the college has an old one that is past its usefulness and this gives them an opportunity to own a newer piece of equipment while doing some useful work.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Page 14, Education, Culture and Employment, advanced education and careers, not previously authorized, \$318,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Education and culture, not previously authorized, \$953,980.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$1,271,980.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Transportation, operations expenditures, page 15. Corporate services, special warrants, \$26,400.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Airports, not previously authorized, \$617,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Highways, not previously authorized, negative \$752,000. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** In regard to airports, I am wondering if there is any way for this government to be able to recoup any of these costs from Transport Canada with regard to the Canadian security issues? It seems like we are basically being told to improve the security measures at the different airports. I am wondering if there is a program there where we will be able to recoup some of these costs from Ottawa?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, there is not a program that the federal government makes available. We have to comply with the restrictions they put on. There is not a program to recover the costs. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is there anything the government is doing to try to recoup these costs by increased ticket fares or adding a charge at the airport?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, along with the other Ministers of Transportation, provincial and territorial, we are continuing to lobby the federal Minister of Transportation Canada for these costs to be recouped. At this point there is no program or agreement on his part. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Airports, not previously authorized, \$617,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Highways, not previously authorized, negative \$752,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Ferries, not previously authorized, \$78,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Community marine, not previously authorized, \$8,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Transportation, operations expenditures, motor vehicles, not previously authorized, negative \$1,070,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, special warrants, \$26,400.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Not previously authorized, negative \$1,119,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** On to page 17. Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, operations expenditures, resource management and economic development, not previously authorized, \$182,489.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Forest management, not previously authorized, negative \$67,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, not previously authorized, negative \$42,489.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 18, Executive, capital investment expenditures, directorate, special warrants, \$107,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Labour relations and compensation services, not previously authorized, \$34,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, special warrants, \$107,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Not previously authorized, \$34,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 19. Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, advanced education and careers, not previously authorized, \$200,000. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Could the Minister elaborate exactly what the relationship between what this program is and the program he announced previously with regard to the piece of equipment that was purchased? Can he elaborate on those two? One in advanced education and careers, with Education, Culture and Employment?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, this is the other side of the transfer. We transferred money from operations to capital. The operations on the other page was a negative. This one is the capital, this is on the positive side. This is where the money is being transferred to. One just offsets the other. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Page 19. Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, advanced education and careers, not previously authorized, \$200,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$200,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 20, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, airports, not previously authorized, \$56,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Highways, special warrants, \$1,100,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Motor vehicles, not previously authorized, negative \$500,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total department, special warrants, \$1.1 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Not previously authorized, negative \$444,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** We will move to the bill itself, tab 9. Bill 9, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2001-2002. We will stand down the preamble. Clause 1.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Clause 2.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Clause 3.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Clause 4.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Clause 5.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 2, clause 6.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Clause 7.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Clause 8.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 3, schedule, supplementary amounts appropriated for the 2001-2002 fiscal year. Part 1, vote 1. Operations expenditures, total supplementary appropriation for operations expenditures, \$6,429,136.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Part 2, vote 2. Capital investment expenditures, total supplementary appropriation for capital investment expenditures, \$997,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total supplementary appropriation, \$7,426,136.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Back to page 1. Preamble.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Agreed. The bill as a whole?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Does the committee agree that Bill 9 is now ready for third reading?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Minister and your witnesses for appearing. As previously agreed, we will now go on to Bill 2 with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Does the Minister have any opening remarks? Mr. Ootes.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, Mr. Chairman and committee members. I am here today to present the 2002-2003 main estimates for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Chairman, the main estimates we are bringing forward today total \$195.9 million. This covers operations and maintenance as well as amortization of our capital assets and represents a \$12.5 million increase over last year.

This increase covers commitments including the NWTTA collective agreement increases, growth in school expenditures, and increases in supports for students. The estimates also include investments for Maximizing Northern Employment initiatives, revitalization of aboriginal languages and culture, income support benefits, and early childhood development.

I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Social Programs for their feedback and support during the review of our 2002-2005 business plan and our 2002-2003 main estimates. Their comments and insights have contributed significantly to these finalized plans.

Mr. Chairman, our main estimates support numerous goals outlined in Towards a Better Tomorrow. Some include:

- a society which reflects the culture, language, and heritage of northern people;
- a comprehensive early childhood system that leads to better beginnings for our children;
- healthy schools that foster student achievement and success;
- lifelong learning opportunities available to all community residents; and,
- Northerners as full participants in the northern economy.

As outlined by Minister Handley in the Budget Address, as well as by the Social Agenda Working Group, the most pressing issue is not how much we spend in these areas, but whether or not our expenditures are having an impact. While we are anxiously awaiting the recommendations from the Social Agenda Working Group, we recognize the need to act on those items that can be addressed within existing budgets.

During the review of the department's business plan, the Standing Committee on Social Programs outlines the need for additional support to Northwest Territories day cares. Based on this and on meetings we have had with organizations and municipalities, we will be investing an additional \$1 million in this area. This additional investment will provide direct support to operators by increasing subsidies, start-up and operations and maintenance funding. This will help ensure that children have access to quality care without undue hardship on their parents.

In 2002-2003, the department will continue implementation of its plan to fund school growth and to reduce the pupil-teacher

ratio from 18:1 to 16:1 over a four-year period. The ratio is currently at 16.6:1 and will be reduced to 16:1 by the 2003-2004 school year. Funding for student supports is currently at 12 percent. Our plan was to increase this to 14 percent in the upcoming year. At the request of the standing committee, however, we have increased this amount to 15 percent for 2002-2003. This initiative will result in an additional estimated investment of over \$2.7 million in schools in 2002-2003.

Over the past year, our government has supported increased involvement of Northerners in our growing economy through investments in Maximizing Northern Employment. We plan on continuing this initiative with investments in:

- Student Success Centres, \$180,000;
- Expanded TEP Program delivery, \$839,000;
- Training in the oil and gas industry, \$600,000;
- The Northern Employment Support Program, \$150,000; and,
- Working with other departments such as Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and the Executive on private partnerships, employment and training initiatives. We intend to focus our efforts in these areas so that small communities benefit as much as possible.

Mr. Chairman, we will be continuing our investment of \$2.4 million in the Government of the Northwest Territories' Literacy Strategy to improve the network of literacy programs and services in the Northwest Territories. We will focus on the need to increase literacy levels in all official languages of the Northwest Territories and the need to provide multi-year funding for agencies that deliver literacy programs. We will work to implement an accountability framework that provides guidelines for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of programs allowing for the release of timely and accurate results. Special initiatives will be in place to increase access to literacy programs for seniors, incarcerated and disabled clients.

Mr. Chairman, unfortunately not all members of our society are able to participate fully in economic pursuits that result in self-sufficiency. Based on this reality, and recommendations from the standing committee, we plan on reinvesting \$1.5 million into income support. This reinvestment will cover a number of areas including singles accommodation, food benefits, disability allowances and seniors' home heating subsidies.

The state of the aboriginal languages of the Northwest Territories has been in decline for a number of years. I am sure that all Members of this House will agree that what defines us as a people is our culture and language is a key component of that culture. All Northerners have a role to play in improving the health of our aboriginal languages. We will continue to work closely with the aboriginal language communities and the Special Committee on Official Languages to promote and revitalize aboriginal languages. A new investment of \$919,000 will help with the acquisition, maintenance and revitalization of aboriginal languages and culture. Initially, emphasis will be placed on language acquisition through programs that assist Northerners to learn their mother tongue.

For 2002-2003 capital, Mr. Chairman, the department will start construction of a new Aurora College academic/administration

building in Inuvik. We will also complete renovation and addition projects for Princess Alexandra School in Hay River, the Helen Kalvak School in Holman, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and Aurora College residence units at Northern United Place. The coming year will also see design work start on an addition to the Chief Albert Wright School in Tulita and the renovation of Mildred Hall School in Yellowknife. A number of other smaller projects are also planned for 2002-2003.

Mr. Chairman, committee members, all the investments I have outlined support the goals of this government and the mandate of the Department Education, Culture and Employment. This concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Does the standing committee which reviewed this department have any comments? Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Social Programs met from January 14<sup>th</sup> to January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2002 to review the draft main estimates. The social programs envelope includes the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, the Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Social Services and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

The committee, in our discussions with the departments, raised a number of issues. These discussions resulted in the committee making some specific recommendations. The issues and recommendations will be discussed under the appropriate department.

We will talk now about the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. The Standing Committee on Social Programs met on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2002 to consider the 2002-2003 main estimates for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Committee members noted a \$694,000 increase in the amortization estimates, \$2,834,000 for the collective agreement with the Northwest Territories Teachers Association, \$1 million in additional funding for day care and \$1.5 million to improve income support program changes since the business plan review.

Members were pleased to note that the department accepted the recommendation, made by the AOC during the review of the business plan, that the department reinvest the projected \$1.5 million savings that were expected in the income support program. Members were also pleased to see that the department recognized the Social Programs Committee's concerns expressed during the business plan review and increased funding for day care programs by \$1 million over last year's main estimates.

### Income Support Programs

As previously mentioned, Mr. Chairman, members were pleased to note that the department accepted the recommendation of the Accountability and Oversight Committee that the \$1.5 million in projected savings, due to increased economic activity, be reinvested in the program.

The \$1.5 million will be invested in improving the seniors' fuel subsidy by decreasing the income threshold for eligibility, increasing the singles accommodation benefit, increasing the

disability allowance, increasing the food benefit and by allowing income support recipients to keep their GST rebate cheques with no penalty.

Members are concerned that, even though the department is increasing the dollar amounts provided to income support clients for food and personal items, the increase does not contemplate the provision of a healthy food basket. Without adequate resources to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables, income support clients and especially their dependants, may not be getting the nutrition they need to be successful in achieving their goals.

The department maintains that because there is no recognized standard for what constitutes a healthy food basket it is impossible for the department to place a dollar value on the basket. Committee members would point out that the Canada Food Guide provides direction for what constitutes healthy eating. It should be a straightforward matter to extrapolate this information into a dollar value for the provision of a healthy food basket in each community. The Standing Committee on Social Programs will continue to press the department to provide enough funding to income support clients to purchase a healthy food basket.

Improvements to the seniors' fuel subsidy have broadened the income thresholds for eligibility and will result in more seniors being helped in maintaining their independence. Members have requested further information from the department on the possibility of the changes to the seniors' fuel subsidy being made retroactive to the start of the 2001-2002 heating season.

In addition, members have asked the department to clarify policy as it relates to the provision of fire wood under the seniors fuel subsidy. Committee members have been told some seniors have received their five cords of wood in eight foot lengths and have then had to pay someone out of their own pockets to cut the wood into stove-length. Members believe in consistency and consequently, the wood should be provided to the seniors in stove-lengths.

### Expansion of Kindergarten Program

The Standing Committee on Social Programs has asked the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to examine the possibility of expanding kindergarten to full time for 5-year-old students and half time for 4-year-old students. Committee members see an advantage to expanding the kindergarten program in terms of early childhood development and in terms of reducing strains on the day care system.

The Aboriginal Head Start Program is an example of the advantages of early childhood education. The majority of students who have gone through the program are entering grade 1 functioning at least at a grade 1 level, if not better.

The department has provided the committee with a rough estimate of \$8 million to implement a half-time kindergarten program for 4-year-olds and a full-time kindergarten program for 5-year-olds. This estimate does not include any provision for capital costs for expanding schools.

It is obvious that a decision to expand the kindergarten program could not be made and incorporated in time to be included in this year's budget. However, the Standing Committee on Social Programs strongly believes that the issue of expanding the kindergarten program deserves further in-

depth study. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment has provided the committee with a rough estimate on the costs to expand the kindergarten program. They did not provide any analysis on any projected cost savings that could be realized.

For example, committee members can point to studies that show that a \$1.00 investment in quality early childhood education means a \$2.00 return to Canadian society as a whole in the future. Mr. Chairman, I believe that number should be a \$7.00 return to Canadian society as a whole in the future. Students who receive a good foundation for learning through a quality early childhood education are significantly more likely to graduate from high school and university. Human Resources and Development Canada have proved a direct correlation between education levels and reliance on income support programs. The higher the level of education, the less likely a person is to collect unemployment or social assistance. Members would also point out that there would be reduced costs to the department's day care program.

The Standing Committee on Social Programs will be pressing the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to examine the positive effects of expanding the NWT's kindergarten program.

#### **Student Financial Assistance Program**

The Standing Committee on Social Programs has requested further information on the department's new interest relief plan. While members can see the benefit of an interest relief plan for students who do not have the financial wherewithal to pay back their loans as determined by a means test, there is a concern that the interest relief plan is too narrow in its scope resulting in very little uptake.

Members of the committee believe that if the real intent of the Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy is to encourage students to return to the North and use their skills in developing our economy, other government programs, such as the Student Financial Assistance Program, should complement that intent.

Under the present system, there is no incentive for a student with a significant student loan beyond what is remissible, to return to the North. The student can find employment elsewhere and make the same payments on the loan as if they were domiciled in the Northwest Territories. If the government was to consider making the interest on student loans remissible, it might encourage students to return to the North. The student would still be expected to repay the principal of the loan, but would have the interest remised if they lived in the Northwest Territories. Another possibility would be making student loan interest an exemption under the territorial income tax regime.

The committee was disappointed that the department had not yet dealt with the issue of how distance education programs would be dealt with under the student loan program. Members do look forward to reviewing the details of how the department will deal with distance education under the Student Financial Assistance Program in June of 2002.

#### **Day Care Programs**

Members were pleased that the Minister managed to secure an extra \$1 million in funding for day care programs. Members

understand that the extra funding will be used to increase the daily subsidy to licensed day care operators and to increase the subsidy to low-income parents.

While both of these funding increases will in no doubt reduce some of the strains on the day care system, there is still a concern at the committee level that there is more the department could be doing to help day care operators.

Members note that non-profit associations run many of the licensed day care providers and are reliant on volunteer board members. Many of these associations have experienced difficulties in attracting board members with the right skill sets to efficiently run a successful non-profit venture.

The Standing Committee on Social Programs believes one area the department should concentrate on is providing administrative support to day care operators/volunteer organizations. As an example, day care in the Dogrib region is administered through the Dogrib Community Services Board. This has meant significant savings through a centralized administration process and has resulted in quality day care in the region.

It was noted that the Minister spoke of working with the City of Yellowknife to streamline day care operations within Yellowknife. Committee members look forward to further information on any success.

The City of Yellowknife and the larger regional centres may have the capacity within the local government to become involved in the administration/support of local day care operations. However, it is clear to Members that the smaller communities would still need support from the department.

#### **Recommendation**

The Standing Committee on Social Programs recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment assist local day care operators in dealing with their administrative burden and by offering quality support and advice to volunteer boards.

Mr. Chairman, with your consent, I would now like to ask if the Member for Great Slave can continue with the committee report.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On to the topic of the Aboriginal Language Strategy.

#### **Aboriginal Language Strategy**

During the review of the main estimates, the department provided the Standing Committee on Social Programs a briefing on the Aboriginal Language Strategy. Many of the concepts, such as language nests, have been successful in other parts of the world where language and its associated culture has been in danger of being assimilated by a dominant culture.

Members of the committee note that the implementation of many of the facets of the Aboriginal Language Strategy will require buy-in from the local education authorities. Members are concerned the strategy assumes large volunteer

participation by fluent members of a language group and that this may be a significant challenge in this day and age.

The strategy contains no money to provide remuneration to those people who get involved in the language nests. The committee wonders if there has been any interest expressed by persons eager to volunteer for this concept.

Members note that the Maori language nests that the department is holding up as the example of the success of such programs are staffed by paid members of the New Zealand Public Service called Kahanga Reo Kaiako.

The standing committee notes that many parts of the strategy are in the development phase and believes that the department has a lot of work to do before it can implement its Aboriginal Language Strategy.

On a related subject, Members remain concerned that the development of standards and certification for aboriginal translators and interpreters appears stalled. Committee members strongly believe that the lack of certification is impacting the ability of aboriginal Northerners to earn a living providing interpreter/translation services. Employers may be reluctant to pay aboriginal interpreter/translators the same as certified French interpreter/translators because of concerns about professional standards.

#### **Towards Excellence**

Members noted that the last Report on Education in the Northwest Territories: Towards Excellence was released in February 2000 for the school year 1998-1999. Members are disappointed that the department has not kept up with the original promise to release this report every second year and strongly encourage the department to keep the report current. Committee members look forward to seeing the next report by June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002 as promised by the Minister.

Members would also like to see student debt load for post-secondary students included as one of the indicators included in Towards Excellence: A Report on Education in the Northwest Territories. Members are concerned the redesign of the Student Financial Assistance Program may adversely affect Northerners by putting an onerous debt load on returning students.

#### **Recommendation**

The Standing Committee on Social Programs recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment track student debt load as one of the indicators in Towards Excellence: A Report on Education in the Northwest Territories.

#### **Adult Basic Education**

Members noted that basic literacy programs are available in most communities. However, for students to advance past the basic literacy stage it is necessary for them to take accredited high school courses. It is understood that some of these high school courses are available on-line and can be accessed by students in the learning centres and after hours in the schools. Members believe that there must also be a resource person available to these students to provide tutoring assistance and technical support. Simple access to the necessary computer hardware and software will not ensure success.

#### **Pupil-Teacher Ratio versus Student Support Services**

The Standing Committee on Social Programs is extremely pleased that the department increased funding to decrease the pupil-teacher ratio in advance of the legislated requirement. This has meant that more money will be made available to the school boards for the provision of instructional services in these main estimates. However, members note that increased funding for the pupil-teacher ratio does not always relate directly to the actual number of students in a classroom. This is because the funding for pupil-teacher ratios can be used by the education authorities to fund positions like language and cultural specialists, guidance counsellors, vice-principals and shop and phys-ed teachers, or even to provide bussing.

So, even with the increase in funding to decrease the pupil-teacher ratio, it is possible that in some schools no increase in support will reach the students and teachers in the classroom. The requirement to increase support to teachers and students in the classroom was made very clear in the 2000 Student Support Needs Assessment.

Instead of putting all of the additional funding into the reduction of the pupil-teacher ratio, members of the standing committee proposed that the estimated \$900,000 that would be necessary to meet next year's legislated requirement for student support funding be advanced to this year's main estimates. The department can then use the remaining additional funding to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio in this fiscal year and then meet the legislated requirement next year by using the \$900,000 that would have been used to meet the student support requirements.

Members passed this proposal on to the Accountability and Oversight committee in order that a recommendation could be made to the government to change the main estimates in advance of their presentation to the Legislative Assembly. We are very pleased that the Minister and the government accepted this recommendation.

#### **Private Sector Development Fund**

Members noted that this part of the Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy was very poorly advertised. This is the section of the strategy that provides funding support to private business so they can hire student interns.

Members received complaints from constituent business owners that they were unaware that the program was available and were not afforded an opportunity to apply for funding.

The standing committee recognizes the department was rushed in rolling out and setting up the parameters for funding eligibility and does not believe that there were any improprieties in funding allocation.

The Minister has committed to improving communication of the private sector development fund to the business community and ensuring a fair and equitable approval process. Members of the committee were satisfied with this commitment until it was noted that the government had taken out a four-page ad, at the fold, advertising the Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy and highlighting the private sector development fund in the January edition of the Far North Oil and Gas Review.

An examination of similar publications published at the same time and aimed at the mining and construction sectors revealed

no such advertising. Members of the committee are now concerned that the government is only targeting the oil and gas sector for funding under the private sector development fund.

### **Nursing Program at Aurora College**

Members of the standing committee remain convinced that the expansion of the Nursing Program at Aurora College is one of the Northwest Territories best options for ensuring a high quality, adequately staffed health care system. It is understood that the further expansion of the program is hindered by the lack of mentors and training opportunities available at the Stanton Regional Hospital.

That being said, there has been no evidence presented to the committee that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, the Department of Health and Social Services, Aurora College and Stanton Regional Hospital have been working together to find ways to maximize opportunities to enrol more nurses into the nursing program.

### **Apprenticeship Training**

The Standing Committee on Social Programs notes that funding for apprenticeship training has remained the same as contained in last year's main estimates. Members are extremely concerned that with all of the resource development projects expected in the next few years there may not be enough funding available for all interested Northerners to take advantage of apprenticeship opportunities.

The Minister did reassure the members that no NWT resident who qualified for an apprenticeship has been turned down yet. Members believe there is a need for the department to closely monitor and work with the resource developers to identify and fund apprenticeship positions.

Members note that we need a variety of different paths for young people to achieve their education, and with the tremendous potential for jobs in the trades, there needs to be more emphasis on programs like the Schools North Apprenticeship Program (SNAP). The committee has been a strong supporter of SNAP and members are disappointed that there has not been a significant expansion in the numbers of students participating in the program. The committee expects the department to make increased uptake a priority in the next fiscal year.

### **Literacy Funding to Organizations**

Finally, Mr. Chairman, information provided to the committee during the main estimates indicated that the majority of funding in the Literacy Strategy listed under literacy funding for organizations actually was used to fund literacy activities in other departments. The committee does not argue with the need for funding the Department of Justice for literacy programs in the correctional centres. However, there was consensus that listing such funding under, Literacy Funding to Organizations, was a misnomer and that the main estimates should be changed to reflect that it now involves transfers to other departments.

Mr. Chairman, that ends the report of the standing committee on the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Would the Minister like to bring in any witnesses? Mr. Minister.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in. Mr. Minister, please introduce your witnesses for the record.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my immediate right is Dr. Loretta Foley, the deputy minister of the department; Leslie Allen, the assistant deputy minister for advanced education and careers; and on my left is Paul Devitt, the director of management services.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. General comments. Detail. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I figure this is an appropriate time, since I have the Minister and the deputy minister all in one room. Can the Minister tell me what the status of the assistant deputy minister is today?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is a process in place to deal with the assistant deputy minister to be reintegrated and reinstated to her position. That is imminent, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Can the Minister tell me how much longer we have to wait for this process to end?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is being coordinated by the senior deputy minister of the government. I believe that it is a very short period of time. I am not quite sure, Mr. Chairman, of the exact date that this could happen, but it has been worked out between the individuals of when this should take place with the cooperation of all individuals. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since we are in the process of dishing out compensation, I wonder at this time if there is a need for compensation for the stress and duress we are putting this person under. Is there any consideration in regard to compensating this person for the duress she is under?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a personnel matter. I cannot comment on that, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Can the Minister tell me when he can comment on this matter?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Chairman, I am not in a position to be able to even comment on that. That is totally outside of my jurisdiction and responsibility.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will there be some sort of report filed through FMBS in regard to this process? For me it seems like it is pretty convoluted. With the process that has been taken, where it was supposed to be a three-month process it is now over four months. If that is the process we are using, it does not seem to be working. I find it frustrating, coming back from my riding and everyone is asking what the situation is with the assistant deputy minister and I, for one, have to answer to that. That is why I am asking these questions now.

I think that, personally, there should be a review taking place after this so we do not have to go through this scenario again and we have a mechanism in place to avoid these long delays in reinstating people within our government.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Mr. Minister.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a staffing matter. Certainly, I cannot be seen to be influencing that, Mr. Chairman. There is a process in place and I am supportive of that. I do feel, at the moment, it has been handled appropriately, Mr. Chairman. As I stated, the process is underway.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With this matter, I for one feel that either I will be asking for a review or that we instruct the government that we consider such a process in light of what happened. I think that we as a government and the individuals in our public service should have some comfort that there is a clearly spelled out process, there is due process and that we do not have a situation where we hear statements being made in the press by the assistant and also yourself as a Minister and then we find out there has been a layoff for three months and now we find out there is a process. It just seems like it is ongoing.

I think we have to have some answers to this. I think you are accountable to the Members of this House and accountable to the civil servants of this government. You are the Minister. I for one feel you do have responsibility here.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** I did not hear a question. That is a comment. At this time I will recognize the clock and rise to report progress. Thank you to the Minister and his witnesses. I will see you tomorrow morning.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of committee of the whole. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

#### ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 9, Bill 2 and Committee Report 3-14(5) and would like to report progress and that Bill 9 is ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen, seconds the motion. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion

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

#### ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Speaker, meetings tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight and Cabinet House Strategy; at 10:30 a.m. of the Standing Committees on Governance and Economic Development and on Social Programs.

Orders of the day for Wednesday, March 13, 2002:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 2, Appropriation Act, 2002-2003
  - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act
  - Committee Report 1-14(5), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates
  - Committee Report 2-14(5), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates
  - Committee Report 3-14(5), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates

20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
  - Bill 9, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2001-2002
22. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 13, 2002, at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 7:38 p.m.