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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

FRIDAY, JUNE 30, 2000

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Good morning, everyone. Before we begin the regular agenda, I would like to provide my ruling on the point of order raised yesterday by the Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Speaker's Ruling

The Member for Hay River South raised her point of order under rule 23 (1).

Rule 23 (1) states:

"In debate, a Member will be called to order by the Speaker if the Member imputes false or hidden motives to another Member."

The circumstances that gave rise to Mrs. Groenewegen's point of order are contained on page 529 of unedited Hansard of June 28, 2000. The Member believed that during Members' statements, the Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger, in making the following statement, imputed that she as Minister had hidden motives with respect to money that was appropriated by the Legislative Assembly.

The words that raised the point of order are contained on page 529 of unedited Hansard dated June 28, 2000, and I quote:

"it would almost appear that, when it comes to recruitment and retention, the Department of Health and Social Services has obtained public money from this legislature under false pretenses"

During debate on the point of order, the Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger, indicated that he had very carefully considered his comments and had qualified them and had not stated emphatically or definitively. In fact, he had used the words, "it would almost appear".

In considering the point of order, I considered the comments of both Members and went further to understand the rule which uses the words imputes and motives. Imputes means to lay the responsibility or blame or often falsely or unjustly charged. Motive implies an emotion or desire operating on the will and causing it to act.

I am afraid these definitions are not very helpful to me in making a determination on the point of order. Also, Mr. Miltenberger's use of the words "emphatically or definitively" may have lessened his imputation and motivation.

I have also reviewed Beauchesnes's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, 6th edition, and Marleau and Montpetits House of Commons Procedures and Practice for this ruling. I also considered, although Mrs. Groenewegen did not raise it in her point of order, that the use of the words "false pretenses" by Mr. Miltenberger might have been unparliamentary.

I would also like to note, for the benefit of all Members, that I will not entertain the argument that a comment that imputes motives or implies the uttering of falsehoods can be qualified by the use of carefully chosen words such as "it would almost appear". Approaching the line, so to speak, is the same as crossing it in matters such as this.

After lengthy research last night as the House sat late, I could not find a definitive authority to assist me with this ruling. Therefore, I wish to rule that the Member for Hay River South does not have a point of order based on the facts put to the Chair.

However, I would caution not only the Member for Thebacha but all Members to be cautious not to use words that may, if taken in a different context, lead to imputing motives. Thank you for your attention.

-- Applause

Good morning, everyone. I am pleased to recognize tomorrow, July 1, as Canada Day 2000, a very special day for all Canadians, a day to acknowledge the unique and special qualities that make our country what it is.

Canada is a country that is truly enriched by cultural diversities, from First Nations to people from every country in the world. Through this diversity, we have created a friendly, welcoming nation for all who live and visit here. Even as Canadians travelling within our country, we are overwhelmed at the friendly nature of our fellow Canadians from coast to coast,

This attribute is well established worldwide, and it is a trait to be truly proud of. As we celebrate Canada Day 2000, we should reflect on our multitude of heritages from around the world, the true wealth of our nation.

As we celebrate tomorrow together as Canadians, let us also celebrate the individuality that enriches our Canadian society. In conclusion, I wish to draw your attention to the colourful display in the Great Hall of Canada Day posters, submitted by students across the Northwest Territories. The winner of the poster challenge, Michelle Lavoie from École St. Joseph School, will be travelling to Canada Day celebrations in our nation's capital, where she will present flowers to the Prime Minister's wife, Madame Chretien.

Happy birthday, Canada. Bonne fete.

-- Applause

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 12-14(3): Recreation and Sport New Directions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I am very pleased to provide a report to the Assembly on an essential part of MACA's community development initiatives in the NWT.

Last month, MACA hosted a Recreation and Sport Directions Conference in Hay River. Over 80 delegates from nearly every NWT community and all recreation and sport organizations attended this important planning event.

During the conference, I had the pleasure of working with many dedicated and hard working people. Most were volunteers. Many were northern-trained recreation professionals and several, I am pleased to say, were Members of this Assembly. I would like to thank my fellow MLAs who could attend, or who wrote to me with their comments or concerns.

Together, we spent two days looking at what we can do to build a stronger recreation and sport system here in the NWT. We began by reviewing our achievements and the challenges we have overcome during the last two decades. Then, building on our experience of the past, we started to work on a plan that will guide the future development of the NWT recreation and sport system.

By the end of the conference, Mr. Speaker, we had agreed to a common vision for the future of recreation and sport in the NWT. We also identified a number of priorities and possible actions under each of those priorities that will help us achieve that vision.

The department is now working on a plan for the development of a stronger recreation and sport system based on these meetings in Hay River. An important goal of the plan will be to improve access to recreation and sport programs for all residents of the NWT. The plan will particularly focus on those from smaller communities and those who face barriers to participation.

In July, I will be providing Members with a copy of this draft plan and the Hay River conference proceedings. At that time, I will be asking Members for their comments so that the department and its recreation and sport partners can finalize their own plans and begin to implement them later this year.

On a related matter, Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to report that the NWT will be hosting one of six national conferences being sponsored by the Honourable Denis Codeine, Federal Minister of State for Amateur Sport.

On July 13th and 14th, delegates from across Nunavut, the NWT and Yukon will be meeting in Yellowknife with Minister Codeine and his officials to provide input on a new Fitness and Amateur Sport Act.

This is an unprecedented opportunity for Northerners to influence national policy and to air our unique northern perspectives in this area. I hope that some of the ideas developed in Hay River will be considered by Minister Codeine as he considers changes at the national level.

Mr. Speaker, in Towards a Better Tomorrow, Members of this Assembly recently confirmed our commitment to helping Northerners improve the quality of their lives. Recreation and sport programs provide important opportunities for all of us to live healthier and happier lives. Improving those opportunities is one way that this government can achieve the vision we have outlined.

The NWT recreation and sport system has come a long way in the last few years through the dedication and commitment of a large number of volunteers and professionals. With the continued assistance and support of the GNWT, these individuals and the communities and organizations they represent are now ready to make an even greater contribution to a vibrant, prosperous and unified Northwest Territories. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Canada Day Celebrations

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on the eve of Canada's birthday, I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate and pay tribute to the best country in the world for the eighth time, according to the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, as a proud immigrant, I consider myself a special person because I can celebrate two birthdays a year. The one I am most grateful for is the day my family and I began a new life in Canada here in Yellowknife some 22 years ago.

For me, this new life has been one full of vast opportunities and one I consider an absolute privilege. I value everything Canada is, because this is a country not only rich in resources, and the most beautiful landscapes from one corner of the country to another, but one that is rich in people whose values I share and cherish deeply.

This is a country where its citizens fundamentally believe in their basic rights as an individual and understand their neighbours are entitled to the same, where we appreciate and protect equality and fairness in the workplace as well as in social settings, where we provide basic health care and educational programs to all, so each and every one of us can have a chance at becoming the best manifestation of her or himself. Where we have a social security net for the poor, the old and otherwise disadvantaged.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that not all of us feel as privileged as I do, not all the time, anyway, and there are some who feel downright left behind. On this very special day, I must express my gratitude to all those who placed their trust in me by giving me a place in this honourable House, so I can work to make a difference for those in need.

May I add, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to this Canada Day weekend for many celebrations I can share with my constituents, and some rest as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement on Canada Day Celebrations

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I swore today as well to clearly state that my name is Michael, and I am Canadian.

-- Laughter

I am very, very proud to be standing here in this House, in this land, and in this country of Canada, and that tomorrow is a tremendously special day, one of the best birthdays in the world. We do have a lot to be grateful for and I would like to take this time to acknowledge all the tremendous amount of hard work that people across the Northwest Territories and Canada have done who have been working on the celebrations that we are all going to take part in, tomorrow.

I would like to recognize, of course, the labours of the people in Fort Smith, where they are planning a full slate of activities, as we do take time, as a community, to celebrate a unique opportunity to reflect and to enjoy the many good things we have as Canadians.

Like my colleague, Ms. Lee, it is a privilege to be here and I hope people will take time to recognize that we are the best country in the world, we have much to be grateful for, and I am very, very happy as a Canadian to stand here today. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

Member's Statement on Recognition of Yellowknife Students and Teachers

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise here today to recognize the fine students from St. Pat's and Sir John High Schools in Yellowknife who graduated this spring. I was lucky enough to be able to attend both ceremonies and both were tremendous. I left the ceremonies feeling that we are certainly faced with a beautiful picture for the future, one that I do not think we have seen the likes of in recent memory.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, I graduated from Sir John Franklin ten years ago. It was a proud moment for me, but I do not remember feeling the same kind of optimism that we see around us here now, at least economically, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to congratulate all the kids who have completed their studies in grades K-11, and are now out for summer break. As well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the teachers, who worked so hard this year, and did such a fine job and are now, after spending the last couple of weeks working on report cards, I am sure are working on cleaning up their classrooms. We would like to thank them for all the work they have done this year.

So to kids and teachers, we would like to say enjoy your summer. You have done good work and we will see you in the fall. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Canada Day Celebrations

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, along with some of my colleagues here, I would like to speak a little bit about what tomorrow will mean to my family and I.

Mr. Speaker, I reflect back on growing up at home and my father, sitting down after a special meal, would remind us that we had so much bounty in front of us. That we were full and still had leftovers and he would point out that in other countries, in this world, there are people starving.

He would always do that to keep us mindful that we are truly blessed in this land. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is not just another day off, and I think Canadians need to remember that. They tend to take things for granted in the country that we live in, when things are so easy to access.

We need to reflect on the opportunities we have on the richness of our heritage and our culture. It is a time to remind our children of what we truly own as people and as Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be an Inuvialuit, Canadian and proud to have my children raised in this land. I like to think that, being from the Northwest Territories, not only puts me higher on the map, but puts me in a special land because of the freedom we have, the clean air and my ability to jump into a boat and go out and live more freely, as one would say.

As Members, we should all remind our constituents and our families of the blessings we have, that we have more than any other place in this world. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to send a message back to my family and tell them, I will be there to share this special day, Canada Day, with them in my home. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Concerns of Businesses Operating on the Hay River Reserve

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement today concerns difficulties being faced by businesses situated on the Hay River Dene Reserve.

Mr. Speaker, the Hay River Dene Reserve is a separate community from the town of Hay River. However, when it comes to the application of the Business Incentive Policy, with respect to the Government of the Northwest Territories tendering practices, it would appear that they are the same community.

Specifically, this means that the Hay River Dene Reserve businesses do not benefit from local preference or Government of the NWT contracts bid out for services on the reserve. However, Mr. Speaker, the town of Hay River itself recognizes

that the reserve is a separate community. It requires those businesses based on the reserve to have a non-resident business license when they do business in the town of Hay River.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the NWT should be encouraging businesses to grow and prosper on the reserve by applying a local preference policy to resident reserve business when they issue public tenders. In such a matter, they will create business opportunity, employment growth, and investment on the Hay River Dene Reserve.

Mr. Speaker, residents and business owners on the Hay River Reserve also find it difficult to access funds available through the Business Development Fund and the Business Credit Corporation. The town of Hay River is the second largest community in the North. They enjoy the luxury of many types of businesses and services.

Mr. Speaker, the criteria to access business development funding does not allow for market disruption, but what this interprets to is that the reserve cannot start up any businesses that compete with any business that exists in the town of Hay River.

Mr. Speaker, the lack of banking services on the reserve when the difficulties that the banking sector has with providing funding to on-reserve businesses make it especially important that the Government of the NWT provide financial alternatives.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development should play a major supporting role regarding development on the reserve. It should start by listening to the concerns of the residents and the leaders of the community, and translate what it hears into a committed plan of action that will foster and sustain economic development for the Hay River Dene Reserve. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Member's Statement on Melissa Fletcher – Canada World Youth International Exchange Program

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues have noted, tomorrow is Canada Day, an important day in the life of our country. A day to celebrate the birthday of our country, and also a day to celebrate citizenship.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, a special part of tomorrow's celebration here in Yellowknife, will be the ceremony that confers Canadian citizenship on a number of people. Mr. Speaker, this morning I would like to salute a young woman, from my constituency, who demonstrates the finest qualities of citizenship through volunteering.

Melissa Fletcher has been living in Yellowknife for 12 years, and has just completed her second year of study at the University of Lethbridge. Melissa, who joins us today in the gallery, was recently selected as one of three youth in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut to participate in the Canada World Youth International Exchange Program.

Melissa's exchange will begin in August, when she joins ten other young people from Canada and Sri Lanka, in Fernie, B.C.

For three and a half months they will live with local families and be involved as volunteers in community based programs in Fernie. Then, Mr. Speaker, the ten youth will travel to Sri Lanka, for a similar three and a half month period to continue their volunteer work.

Mr. Speaker, exchange programs like these allow our youth to increase their awareness of local and global issues, strengthen their sense of responsibility and to become future leaders in our community.

I have met with Melissa and I know that she will be a wonderful ambassador for Yellowknife, the Northwest Territories, and for Canada. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Melissa and wish her all the best in her exchange. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Canada Day Celebrations

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my name is David and I am Canadian, and proud of it.

-- Applause

Canada Day is a day for us to celebrate the uniqueness of being Canadians. This day gives us the opportunity to see how lucky we are to live in a land so rich and so vast compared to other areas in the world. However, we have to realize that as Canadians, we must not lose sight of what we sometimes take for granted.

I feel, we, as Canadians, have to do more to bring the life expectancy of our First Nations people in-line with other Canadians, and we also have to deal with the problem in Canada of homelessness, people living in poverty, children having the right and security of having a safe home and a safe lifestyle.

We as a government and as Canadians, have to ensure that we have the best place in the world. We also realize that we have to bring the line between the rich and the poor more to the centre, so we can feel as one and we do not have a discrepancy between the rich and the poor.

So with that, I wish everybody a happy Canada Day. Take care, and all the best.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Krutko. Discours des deputes. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement on Initiatives to Reduce Impaired Driving

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the eve of this national holiday, Canada Day, I am pleased to make note of the work that we are all doing to address a serious problem in this country, that of impaired driving.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving, or MADD, as they are known, recently published a report on provincial and territorial vehicle

legislation across Canada, to champion their cause of deterring impaired driving.

A failing grade of F on the MADD report card was assigned to the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker, of 22 percent, the lowest in Canada. The highest, by comparison, was Ontario, at 51 percent. The full report is easily pulled up on the internet site at their MADD Canada address.

Mr. Speaker, I was encouraged earlier this week to hear the Minister of Transportation outline his department's efforts to develop a strategy to reduce impaired driving, as a comprehensive approach to the problem of drinking and driving.

I was also impressed, Mr. Speaker, with the input of partnerships the department is building with other groups in the Northwest Territories to deal with this very serious issue. Included in the approach are a legislation enforcement, public education and rehabilitation.

During the last session, this Assembly learned about the Canadian Youth Against Drinking and Driving Conference in March, 2001, being organized by the Yellowknife students of that organization. Members of this House, including the Premier and Cabinet, met personally with the students to hear about their preparation and fundraising in support of the 11th annual CYADD meeting. It is a conference, Mr. Speaker, that could see as many as 500 students and young people coming to Yellowknife, and it could be one of the largest conferences ever in the Northwest Territories.

I am aware that Students Against Drinking and Driving have undertaken an extensive fundraising campaign and recently made a presentation to the Ministers of Transportation and Youth. At this particular time, major fundraisers are being sought, and the organization has been very successful. So far, Mr. Speaker, they have raised over \$70,000.

The Minister of Youth and this government have been very supportive of the SADD program. I wish to compliment the Ministers on their initiatives in this portfolio. There is still much work to be done with regard to financing and arrangements for the conference, and I intend to raise this issue with the Minister later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Member's Statement on Mackenzie Youth Summer Games

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I would like to share with Members an exciting event which is taking place in Rae-Edzo next week.

From July 3rd through the 7th, over 100 youth from the North Slave, the South Slave, and the Deh Cho will be gathering in Rae. They will be participating in the Mackenzie Youth Summer Games, which is the largest youth event of the summer.

The games have been held annually for over a decade, and this is the first time that Rae-Edzo is hosting it. Youth will have a chance to participate in events such as soccer, volleyball, swimming and canoeing. Youth will also be exposed to a

traditional component of Dene games; hand games, setting nets and elder story telling.

A camp has been set up at Russell Lake, and I extend an open invitation to all the MLAs to come out and have a meal and share our traditional stories, and to cheer for our youth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Member's Statement on Enrolment Levels of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Students

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in the House, Members on this side of the House expressed their deep concern with a very serious problem in the Northwest Territories, which is literacy.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, we have to recognize good news stories when there are good news stories.

In Lutselk'e, today, the kindergarten class is graduating, and it gives me encouragement to find out that, in the past years, enrollment in post-secondary education by aboriginal students has risen sharply.

In the early 1990s, we were lacking behind the national average. Today, I am proud to say the aboriginal component in post-secondary education in Canada, we are above the national average.

-- Applause

It might be resulting from communities and regions taking over their own education system, like the North Slave Dogrib Communities Services Board. Once you take ownership of institutions, you start instilling pride and respect in yourselves, and I think that goes a long way.

Having said that, I want to encourage and I look forward to meeting with the youth of the Akaitcho territory, who are starting a youth conference on justice, health and what not over the next week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Merci, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements, the honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Member's Statement on Fuel Prices Paid by Commercial Fisherpersons

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak about the high price of fuel in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, this initiative is dear and near to the hearts of many of my constituents. In particular, those that are engaged in commercial fishing on Great Slave Lake. Mr. Speaker, this issue is also relevant to fisher persons that live in other communities and fish in Great Slave Lake. For example, there are commercial fisher persons that reside in Kakisa and Yellowknife. As you can well see, Mr. Speaker, this issue of commercial fisher persons paying a road tax for fuel is truly a Northwest Territories matter and not exclusively in the domain of Hay River although I am aware that the majority of

commercial fisher persons currently fishing on Great Slave Lake reside in Hay River.

Mr. Speaker, I have recently attended numerous meetings of the Northwest Territories Fisherman's Federation to hear their views and opinions. Mr. Speaker, during these meetings, officials representing the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development have addressed the Northwest Territories Fisherman's Federation that RWED is currently developing a Great Slave Lake Fishing Strategy. Mr. Speaker, this strategy will have a direct impact on the livelihood of all commercial fisher persons on Great Slave Lake.

Mr. Speaker, the department has approached the Northwest Territories Fisherman's Federation for their input towards developing this strategy. I wish to acknowledge and commend the department for this effort. Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories Fisherman's Federation and many of my constituents have requested that the department and this strategy address the issue of paying of road taxes to the Government of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, as you are undoubtedly aware, one of the most significant costs which commercial fisher persons incur is the price of fuel.

Mr. Speaker, commercial fisher persons require fuel to operate their boats on the lake during the summer season and their bombardiers on the ice during the winter season. None of these activities involve the use of Northwest Territories roads. Yet when they pay for fuel, they are also paying for Northwest Territories road tax. Mr. Speaker this issue has been brought to the attention of the government on numerous occasions. The government has not provided an effective solution to this problem. I am proud to be here to represent the fishermen of Hay River. I look forward to this Canada Day weekend, and to spending a few days in my riding. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Merci Mr. Delorey. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement on Canada Day Celebrations

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would also like to speak on Canada Day today and the celebration of citizenship. My parents emigrated from Holland after World War II, when I was a young boy. They came to create a better life for their two children, my brother and I. We came on an immigrant ship and landed in Halifax. We travelled from Halifax over a two-day period, on a coal-fired train to the Ottawa valley. We lived in a one-room log cabin in the country and my brother and I attended a one-room school. We felt very fortunate. This country has been very good to our family. We are very lucky. This is the best country in the world, Mr. Speaker, there is no question about that.

The United Nations has acknowledged that some eight times. It is based on a comparison of some 175 countries in the world and some 100 criteria in terms of education, lifestyle, health services, and so on. People from around the world want to come and live in this particular country. They are, all over the world, very anxious to be citizens of our country here.

I would like to publicly thank my parents for bringing my brother and I to this country. I would like to thank this country for what it

has done for my brother and I and my family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 3, Members' statements, the honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement on Canada Day Celebrations

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I rise today to make a Member's statement and to state, Mr. Speaker, that I also am proud to be a Canadian, proud to be a Northerner and proud to sit in this Legislature.

As Mr. Krutko so eloquently said, we have much work to do to bring about true prosperity, true equality and true freedom for Northerners. We sing in our national anthem the line "the true North, strong and free", and that should be the motto of the efforts of this government. Strong, rich in culture, rich in resources, rich in people, but also free, Mr. Speaker. Our people need to be free. Free to pursue their goals and aspirations, free from fear, free from the things that would bind them, such as addictions to drugs and alcohol, free to access every opportunity available to them.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to put forward my best effort, along with the honourable colleagues in the Legislature, to make our country, particularly the citizens of the Northwest Territories, strong and free. Happy Canada Day.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Merci, Madam Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement on Canada Day Celebrations

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Merci, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, every year on July 1st, I have been celebrating Canada Day. I grew up in my community of Fort Simpson. I always remember, as a Dene, we would live out on the land and we would come to town for the summer. It was always a special day. The summer I remember was the one I eventually found out about Canada Day. At first, it was a great celebration, a gathering of people. Being a Dene and eating strange foods like hot dogs and ice cream. Eventually, I found out that it was Canada Day. The significance of it to me is that it was a very important day.

In my line of work, I have an opportunity to travel a number of times in different countries. Once you come back you realize that Canada is a great place. On behalf of my communities, Fort Simpson, Fort Liard, Nahanni Butte, Jean Marie, and Trout Lake, tomorrow will be a special day. I know that everybody makes their plans to celebrate. I will not be there with them, but I will be celebrating here and will be there in spirit with the people I represent. Thank you. Mahsi.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Merci, Mr. Antoine. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

Member's Statement on Canada Day Celebrations

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During my time as a Member of this Assembly, I have had opportunities to travel abroad, to Russia and the far East. It is during travelling times that you become aware of how good a country Canada really is. The freedom we have and the ability to move around freely within our country is not reflected when you go abroad. You realize that they do not have the same opportunities. You then become more proud of the country you are from. In particular, Mr. Speaker, I think that it is most evident when it is time to return to Canada, you really appreciate that you are returning home. It is really good to see Canadian soil from an aircraft from high above, and you know that you are returning to a country that is free.

One of the things that I have also realized is the value of a Canadian passport. It seems to be a very coveted document. Many people would like to be able to possess one. I was kind of proud to have that document in my possession. I will be returning home to take part in celebrations on Canada Day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return to Question 70-14(3): Audit of the Peoplesoft Program

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Bell on June 27th. Later today at an appropriate time, I will be tabling the Peoplesoft audit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery, the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you know, today for the first time, the city of Yellowknife participates as a host for the Celebration Canada in the Capitals program. So in the next few days, six families each from a different province or territory are here to visit Yellowknife to explore our country's diverse culture and heritage. In turn, we have dispatched 13 families from across the Northwest Territories to other capital cities in the country to celebrate Canada Day.

I would like to recognize the folks who have taken the time to visit us today. From Swan River, Manitoba, the Better family; Anita, Harvey, Ben and Kay. From Fort McMurray Alberta, the McBatridge family: Randy, Sharon, Katherine and Sara.

-- Applause

From Prince Rupert, British Columbia: Julia Watts, Dorothy Young, Crystal Young, Raymond Gunnal.

-- Applause

From Sachs Harbour, Northwest Territories: Teddy Elias, Yvonne Elias, Margaret Lennie.

-- Applause

From Charlottetown, PEI: Craig Walker, Joanne Walker, Nick Walker and Joal Walker.

-- Applause

From Whitehorse, Yukon: Calista Warner, Susan Warner, Wayne Mattheson and Melissa Mattheson.

-- Applause

Thank you very much for taking the time to join us.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly. We truly have people from coast to coast to coast and everything in between. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nunakput Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is not too often that I get the opportunity to recognize some of my constituents. So I too would like to recognize Teddy Elias, Yvonne Elias and Margaret Lennie. I would like to welcome them to the House. As I have stated earlier, they are here to take part in Canada Day events with the families from coast to coast to coast.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the constituent I spoke of earlier today in my Member's Statement, Melissa Fletcher. I would also recognize another constituent I have not seen for awhile, Yvonne Quick, who is with the Celebrate Canada in the Capitals program, obviously helping others hosting today.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am at a bit of a disadvantage, I cannot see her, but I am advised that Renee Lamoureux, who is an advisor with the St. Pat's Students Against Drinking and Driving, is in the gallery with us today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize two constituents of mine in the gallery, Blair Dunbar and Linda Dunbar. May I say, Mr. Speaker, they are long term residents of Yellowknife, a strong backbone of the volunteer community in Yellowknife, and part of the team of Capital Canada.

I would like to recognize Blair and Linda Dunbar. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 103-14(3): Funding for Students Against Drinking and Driving

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question for the Minister responsible for Youth. As the Minister knows, from a recent presentation by the Students Against Drunk Driving committee, major sponsors are being sought for the CYADD conference in Yellowknife next March. The students have outlined a very professional budget, somewhere in the neighborhood, I understand, of \$200,000 to present this event. They have targeted the Government of the NWT as one of the potential contributors, to the tune, I believe, of \$35,000.

The Minister is seeking funds from within government. Can the Minister advise this House of funding that the Government of the NWT is able to commit in support of the CYADD conference? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The Honourable Minister responsible for Youth, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 103-14(3): Funding for Students Against Drinking and Driving

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to inform the Member today that we have sought financial income support to be provided to the Yellowknife chapter of SADD.

As the Minister responsible for Youth, I have asked that we get the response back by today, June 30th. As of yesterday, I am pleased to advise the Member that we have received, from the Department of Transportation, \$10,000 plus income support. We also received confirmation from Education, Culture and Employment of another \$10,000. We expect to have some form of inclined proportional support from the Department of Finance.

We will continue to work and seek more financial assistance from other participating departments.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 103-14(3): Funding for Students Against Drinking and Driving

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Excellent news. Can the Minister inform this House of other initiatives that he might be able to take to provide support to the SADD organization and this conference? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The Honourable Minister responsible for Youth, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 103-14(3): Funding for Students Against Drinking and Driving

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I can confirm the Member's question. I have and will approach other provincial and federal counterparts to keep our strong lobby effort going to ensure that this conference becomes a success. It is important to the Northwest Territories as well as other jurisdictions across Canada who will continue to work with our Members here in the House, and our departments to ensure that we have fun and complete this fine effort. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 104-14(3): Funding Source for Youth Programs

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Youth. I received a call earlier today from a young lady in Fort McPherson, who is trying to work with the youth, but she is finding it awfully frustrating to access different programs to assist them to deliver different initiatives and opportunities for the communities, especially with the summer programs for youth.

I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Youth, is there any booklet or list of funding projects that may be out there, so community organizations or individuals working with youth find it easier just to go on? Who are the contact people? How much money is in the different programs? Do you have a list of those programs so that it is more accessible to communities?

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

Return to Question 104-14(3): Funding Source for Youth Programs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have tried to compile all the information on the number of funding agencies with the various departments. Unfortunately, to this date, we have not. We had projected that perhaps we will have that ready by September 1st, but it is an ongoing process.

Our executive assistant has been working with the social envelope group to try to compile that information and present it at a later date. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 104-14(3): Funding Source for Youth Programs

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe the Minister can help out if he can identify an individual, or someone within the department, that these people can contact, so that they do not have to phone their MLAs, or try to lobby the band.

Is there a person within the department who someone can contact to get more information on what programs are open?

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

Further Return to Question 104-14(3): Funding Source for Youth Programs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently, I would advise them to contact our executive assistant, Mr. Tom Williams, to inquire about the information necessary to apply at the various departments for funding. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 104-14(3): Funding Source for Youth Programs

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are there any regional youth programs available in the Inuvik region that they can access?

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

Further Return to Question 104-14(3): Funding Source for Youth Programs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this moment, I can only advise the Member that they should inquire to the various departments, specifically to their interest. We are trying to compile this information so we can disseminate it to various members of the communities. At this point, that is all that we can really do. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 104-14(3): Funding Source for Youth Programs

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister identify how much money is available for the youth at the present time?

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

Further Return to Question 104-14(3): Funding Source for Youth Programs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, I could not provide that information at the moment. As I said earlier, we are still trying to find out the funding agencies and what is available to the public. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

Question 105-14(3): GNWT Addictions Strategy

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister of Health. Earlier this week, I asked her about an overall strategy for mental health and addictions. The question was taken as notice, so I will not ask the same question, Mr. Speaker.

However, I have constituents who come to me with concerns about what this government is doing for people who are trying to deal with addictions and mental health issues.

I am wondering if Mrs. Groenewegen can tell us what kind of priority, the government feels this should take. What they are doing to deal with this? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 105-14(3): GNWT Addictions Strategy

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, mental health and addictions is indeed a priority of my department. At this present time, we are developing a territorial strategy. As I have mentioned previously in the house, during this Session, there is over \$7 million in funds, which are allocated out of our budget, to deal with various initiatives to address addictions problems.

We are trying to take a very holistic approach, examining linkages between mental health, addictions, family violence, and suicide. We cannot look at addictions in isolation because, as all of us know, there are many underlying causes to addictions. So we are trying to take a holistic approach, an inclusive approach. Also, we are cooperating with our non-government organizations to make sure that we come up with the best strategy available. Then, the next step will be to identify the cost of implementing such a strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 105-14(3): GNWT Addictions Strategy

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the answer. I have to tell you, I am glad to hear that a strategy is in the works. I think it is critical. I have discussed this with some of my constituents and they have made the comment to me that surely the government cannot have a strategy, unless the strategy is one that involves shutting down facilities.

I am glad to hear that the department is making this a priority and doing something. Can the Minister tell us when we might see this strategy? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 105-14(3): GNWT Addictions Strategy

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is anticipated that the strategy will be finished by April 2001. That may seem a ways off, but we do have to do some groundwork to ensure that we get things right. One of those things is a Mental Health Needs Assessment Survey, so that we can assess the magnitude of the problem and come up with areas where we might access resources for this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 105-14(3): GNWT Addictions Strategy

MR. BELL: That does seem a ways off. I am glad to hear that they are doing a needs assessment survey. Can I ask the

Minister if the department is doing this in isolation or if they are actually consulting with communities and with NGOs? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 105-14(3): GNWT Addictions Strategy

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a Territorial Steering Committee has been set up, and it involves representatives from the Department of Health and Social Services; Education, Culture and Employment; health and social services boards; the Canadian Mental Health Association Northwest Territories Division and community-based drug and alcohol projects.

So we are seeking input and direction from these other organizations and partners. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Final supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 105-14(3): GNWT Addictions Strategy

MR. BELL: Thank you. I am glad to hear that. Given the urgency, and that April 2001 is certainly a ways off, I am wondering if the Minister has looked at reopening some of the facilities we so desperately need before that time? I do not think we can wait, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 105-14(3): GNWT Addictions Strategy

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said previously, the government does make significant investment in dealing with mental health and addictions issues at this time. Those initiatives will continue in the interim, and probably will not be enhancing the level of services now until we complete this strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 106-14(3): Highway Maintenance Priorities

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Transportation, the Honourable Vince Steen. First of all, I would like to thank the Minister for providing me with a written response to my concerns about the maintenance of territorial highways.

In the letter of June 23rd, he wrote:

"The Department of Transportation maintenance expenditures by highway, give no indication of its maintenance priority. The priority to keep the territorial highway system safely passable is the same everywhere. Achieving that priority does cost more for one highway than another, but all of our highways have the same priority. They are to remain safely passable."

When I received this letter, I thought about the times I am driving back to Rae, and then I took a ride on Highway No. 4, to see the difference. I found out that Highway No. 3 to Rae was not safe. The road on Highway No. 4, or the Ingraham Trail, was in better condition than Highway No. 3.

I am just wondering, Mr. Minister, the priorities that your staff set, did they go to Rae? Did they ever drive that highway? Thank you, Mr. Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 106-14(3): Highway Maintenance Priorities

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are three of four points that the Member brought up, and I will try to address them.

First of all, have my staff ever driven the highways? There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker. That is one of the requirements of the highway foreman position, that he must actually drive those highways to envision the highway conditions himself. Based on this, it means a lot as to what sort of maintenance he would then put in place to address the conditions of the highways that he has experienced.

As to whether or not Highway No. 3 is in better condition than Highway No. 4 is certainly a matter of opinion. It is like horseracing. Everybody has a different opinion of it. If you were driving Highway No. 4 every time, I would have complaints steady to my department from people living out on Highway No. 4, that Highway No. 4 is in very rough condition. They would say Highway No. 3 is in good condition.

I do not know. The department tries to respond and I take comments that the highways are not safe quite seriously. This is the second such comment I have heard in the last few days. I must say that I immediately contacted my department when I heard these comments. We are of the opinion, Mr. Speaker, that these highways are safe if you stay within driving conditions and adjust your speed accordingly.

We must emphasize that we cannot always immediately address potholes as they appear, because it takes time to respond considering the amount of personnel and equipment we have to do these jobs. We do make every effort to assure the highways are passable and safe. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 106-14(3): Highway Maintenance Priorities

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did mention, on a couple of occasions, that the highway is not safe. The reason I did is because they are not safe. I am not saying it just because I like to drive back and forth to Rae. I would like to ask the Minister if he is going to make sure his staff are driving that road, and that the maintenance is up to standards and equal to other highways?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 106-14(3): Highway Maintenance Priorities

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to assure the Member and the House, that I do not believe that my staff needs me riding on them all the time to ensure they do their job. I believe they do their job. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 106-14(3): Highway Maintenance Priorities

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, if he can make available to me and other MLAs, the expenditures between Highway No. 4 and Highway No. 3, since January on the maintenance of those roads?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question is not clear to me. I wonder if I could ask the Member to repeat his question.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Lafferty, if you could just ask that same question again so the Minister will understand it. We will not dock you for it.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will just put the question in another way.

I have been studying the 1998-1999...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Lafferty, put it the same way.

MR. LAFFERTY: What I said was that the Highway No. 3, Highway No. 4, if we can get the information on the expenditures on it, from January until now on the maintenance? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 106-14(3): Highway Maintenance Priorities

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to have the department supply the Member with that information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Final Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 106-14(3): Highway Maintenance Priorities

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to ask the Minister if his staff are driving 2000 vehicles, compared to my constituents, which are driving 4 or 5 year old vehicles? There is a difference in how they do their maintenance when they drive a better vehicle on that highway.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 106-14(3): Highway Maintenance Priorities

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department does have modern vehicles, I suppose you could use the word, and we appreciate that there may be a difference between older vehicles that people drive versus what we drive, in reference to how rough the road may feel if you do not have a vehicle that is up to date. We do appreciate that.

Again, we emphasize that the condition of the road and the condition of your vehicle decides the speed limit that you drive, not what is posted. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 107-14(3): Safety of Highway No. 3

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to follow up on the question being asked by the Member for North Slave in regard to the safety of Highway No. 3. I am not understanding what the Minister is saying, Mr. Speaker. Is he saying that when Members of this House, who drive the road every day and come in and say that the road is not safe, is he saying that he is going to disregard the statements from the Member and go by what the department is telling him, which is saying that it is safe?

Is that what the Minister is saying, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 107-14(3): Safety of Highway No. 3

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I am trying to say here is that the department does take into consideration, and I take into consideration, statements made by Members in this House as to the safety of the highways and the condition they are in. We then take that and we compare it to what we have experienced ourselves. We have certain standards that we apply in order to judge whether a road is safe or not.

All we can do then is go back to the Member and ask him for specifics as to the problem that they have experienced. So it is a combination of everything, Mr. Speaker, as to what the department does in the end.

If we feel that it does require more maintenance, then we will do that. We do have standards to meet and we do meet those standards. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 107-14(3): Safety of Highway No. 3

MS. LEE: Mr. Speaker, the Minister has advised that his staff drives that road everyday. I understand that the Member from North Slave and the Member for Deh Cho, drive on that road every day. Also, talking to the truck operators in town, I am told that there are at least two spots on that road where two trucks cannot pass each other.

Is the Minister aware of that? If he is, would he not agree that that is a very unsafe condition? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. I will disregard one of those questions because it is an opinion. You are asking for an opinion. I think the first portion, if he is aware, would be the question. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 107-14(3): Safety of Highway No. 3

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department has not pointed that out to me. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 107-14(3): Safety of Highway No. 3

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I get the Minister to commit to asking the staff, his able staff, who know all about every nook and cranny of that highway, ask them if there are two spots on that highway where two trucks cannot pass, and what are they willing to do about it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Steen, you may answer both of those questions at the same time. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 107-14(3): Safety of Highway No. 3

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Speaker, I will attempt to get from the department, for the purpose of supplying to the House, whether or not there is anywhere on the highway where two vehicles cannot pass each other. I presume we are referring here to just normal trucks.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 108-14(3): Consolidation of Youth Program Information

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that endorsement.

-- Laughter

Mr. Speaker, in regard to information, I know it is going to be awhile before the Minister comes up with a document, but I wonder, in the meantime, especially with the youth, that they are trying programs for students this summer that are out of school. They want to do different things with the youth in the communities so that they can keep them occupied during the summer.

I am just wondering if it is possible for the department to put a briefing information pamphlet, or what not, together to identify specific programs and contact people for those different programs, so we can send it to our communities, so the communities can have this information available and take advantage of the money for this summer. September is too late.

So I would like to ask the Minister, will the department consider developing such a document or an information package, to

identify the programs and the contact people and the resources that are there so the communities can access that money this summer?

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

Return to Question 108-14(3): Consolidation of Youth Program Information

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I do not see it as a problem. I believe we can establish a priority list immediately. We will set that as part of our next task. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 108-14(3): Consolidation of Youth Program Information

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister exactly how soon can he have this material available and sent into the communities so they can take advantage of this money this summer? How soon?

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

Further Return to Question 108-14(3): Consolidation of Youth Program Information

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just conferring with my colleague here, we feel we can have that presented by next week. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 108-14(3): Consolidation of Youth Program Information

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regarding the information, ensuring that there are also contact people so that the communities can also plan for this for next year, so that we know that if they cannot access some of this money this year, they are able to make these contacts and develop a proposal so that they can access it. Could he also ensure they have names and contact people listed on these different programs, so they are able to speak to the different departments? Will he ensure that?

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

Further Return to Question 108-14(3): Consolidation of Youth Program Information

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I feel we can identify not only the various programs, but also the contact persons for each one. Thank you.

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

Question 109-14(3): Highway Expenditures Per Kilometre

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you. My question is for the honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen. The question I have is, on the Highway Traffic 1998 Report, we have kilometre readings for Highway No. 4, but it does not have the amount in there and for between 243km-333km at Yellowknife, they are including the construction area, which the construction was started at that time. By looking at the numbers, I cannot figure out the amount of money which is spent per kilometre by looking at this report.

I was just wondering if the Minister will make available to us, if they have one now, a traffic counter. If they do not have one then maybe they should put one at Hay River, just to keep track of our maintenance cost. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 109-14(3): Highway Expenditures Per Kilometre

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will ask the department to supply that information to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, replies to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS**Tabled Document 23-14(3): Government of the Northwest Territories PeopleSoft Implementation Review, July 16,1999**

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table two documents today. First, I wish to table the following document, entitled Government of the Northwest Territories PeopleSoft Implementation Review, July 16,1999. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

Tabled Document 24-14(3): Government of the Northwest Territories Public Accounts 1998-99

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Government of the Northwest Territories Public Accounts 1998-99. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 13, tabling of documents.

Tabled Document 25-14(3): Annual Report of the Language Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, 1998-99

In accordance with the Official Languages Act, I wish to table the Annual Report of the Language Commissioner of the Northwest Territories covering the fiscal year 1998-99.

Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS**Bill 7: Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act 2000**

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 7, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2000, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill corrects inconsistencies and errors in the statutes of the Northwest Territories.

The bill also deals with other matters of a minor, non-controversial and uncomplicated nature in the statutes, and repeals statutory provisions that have ceased to have effect. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, regarding the Miscellaneous Act, I for one have raised this question several times, that we have to bring our acts and legislation in line with the land claim agreements and our obligations within those.

I think this government has to ensure that, when they do these amendments in trying to streamline our regulations, people do not have a bureaucratic nightmare when they have to deal with things. We also have to keep in mind we have an obligation under these land claim agreements.

I would like to make sure that when we make these amendments, we consider there are other areas out there that could have an affect on what we are doing. Will the Minister consider that as part of his amendments in the future?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I should caution Members that we should speak to the principle of the bill. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 7 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee. Item 18, second reading of bills. Mr. Antoine.

Bill 8: Justice Statutes Amendment Act

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Bill 8, Justice Statutes Amendment Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes minor amendments to seven acts that relate to the administration of justice in the Northwest Territories.

The Coroner's Act is amended to authorize a coroner to investigate a death, notwithstanding that the body has been destroyed or it is in a place from which it cannot be recovered, for example, deep water, or has been removed from the Northwest Territories. The amendments clarify that only a qualified pathologist may perform an autopsy, and delete a requirement that the pituitary glands of the deceased be

removed during an autopsy. Finally, the amendments correct a number of instances where the words coroner is misspelled.

The Corrections Act, a number of minor corrections are made to the Act, including removing a reference pertaining to a remission of a sentence that accrued to an inmate before July 1, 1978, adjusting provisions that refer to the Parole Act Canada so that referred to the successor legislation the Corrections and Conditional Release Act Canada, and replacing a reference to the Canadian Penitentiary Services with a reference to its successor, the Corrections Services of Canada.

The Judicial Act is amended to permit the senior judge of the Supreme Court to convene meetings of the judges of the court to consider matters pertaining to the administration of justice. A mechanism is put in place so the reference to senior judge of the Supreme Court is changed to Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. That position has been created by amendments to the Judge's Act Canada, and bringing into force Section 2 of An Act to Amend the Judicial Act, No. 2, NWT, 1995, c-6.

The Securities Act is amended to clarify the registrar of securities may make a note exempting an applicant from requirements of the regulations, as well as requirements of the Act.

The Societies Act is amended to clarify that one or more deputy registrars of societies may be appointed to act on behalf of the registrar of societies.

That Statutes Revision Act is amended to provide that the statutes revision prepared for the Northwest Territories will include statutory material enacted on or before January 1, 2000, and to limit the items that must be included in the report submitted to the Minister of Justice by the statutes revision commissioner.

The Territorial Court Act is amended to make minor amendments to the provisions pertaining to the Northwest Territories judicial remuneration commission, including removing a transitional provision relating to the term of office members of the commission extending from 60 to 90 days the time available for the commission to hold an inquiry, and submit its report on the salaries and benefits of territorial judges, extending from 60 to 90 days the time available for the government to implement the recommendations of the commission and clarifying the implementation will take effect on April 1 of the year the commission report is provided to the Minister. The Act is also amended to substitute references to the chief justice of the Supreme Court for references to the senior judges of the Supreme Court. These latter amendments will not come into force until the position of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court has been created by amendment to the Judges Act of Canada, and bringing into force section 2 of An Act to Amend the Judicial Act No. 2, NWT, c-6. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 8 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee. Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Bill 9: An Act to Amend the NWT Power Corporation Act

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 9, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Power Corporation Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Northwest Territories Power Corporation Act to provide the Northwest Territories Power Corporation with the same investment powers that public agencies have under the Financial Administration Act. Then, in addition, to permit the corporation to invest in any securities and investment instruments it deems to be prudent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 9 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 1; Bill 6; Committee Report 1-14(3); Committee Report 2-14(3); Committee Report 3-14(3); and by the authority given the Speaker by Motion 4-14(3), the House is resolved into committee of the whole to sit beyond the time of adjournment until the committee is prepared to report, with Mr. Krutko in the Chair.

ITEM 20: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call the committee to order. We are dealing with Bill 1, Appropriation Act, 2000-2001, and Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Nurses Profession Act, Committee Reports 1-14(3), Committee Report 2-14(3), Committee Report 3-14(3). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend that we continue consideration of Bill 1 and Committee Reports 1, 2 and 3 concurrently. Specifically, to look at the budget for the Department of the Executive, followed by the Department of Justice, should we conclude the Executive.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the Department of the Executive if he has any opening comments. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of the Executive's goals, contained in the 2000-2001 Main Estimates, reflect the broad direction set by the 14th Legislative Assembly in Towards A Better Tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of the Executive has identified four key strategies that will guide the actions that we will take in order to do our part in achieving the overall vision for the NWT held in that document.

The four strategies identified by the Department of the Executive are as follows:

1. To articulate, disseminate and coordinate the implementation of the government's agenda;

2. To support a collaborative intergovernmental approach to political and economic development in, and for, the Northwest Territories;
3. To support a collaborative approach to effective and efficient program delivery and capacity building; and
4. To strengthen the public service.

These strategies reflect the department's mandate to provide coordination and leadership to the departments of this government to assist them in achieving their mandate and goals.

I will take a moment, Mr. Chairman, to elaborate further on each of these key strategies.

Communications

Our first strategy is to articulate, disseminate and coordinate the implementation of the government's agenda. Coordinated corporate communications provide benefit by ensuring that all residents of the Northwest Territories understand the role of government in today's environment. This ensures people are adequately informed of the direction of government, are empowered to participate in the governance process and are armed with the knowledge required to effectively access the programs and services of government.

By doing our part to provide effective communications on the activities and initiatives of government, the Department of the Executive will contribute to achieving the goal, identified in *Towards a Better Tomorrow*, of improved accountability and increased opportunities for public participation in government.

Intergovernmental Collaboration

Mr. Chairman, the Department of the Executive's second goal is to support a collaborative intergovernmental approach to political and economic development in, and for, the NWT.

The shape of governance in the Northwest Territories is undergoing fundamental change at the community, regional and territorial levels,

Significant progress has been made in the advancement of Aboriginal rights and self-government negotiations. This is demonstrated by the number of self-government and land claim agreements underway or already concluded in the NWT. The Intergovernmental Forum has been established to support a cooperative approach by the federal, territorial and aboriginal governments to shared jurisdiction and decision making on issues such as devolution and resource revenue-sharing. In addition, community governments across the NWT are working to redefine their areas of jurisdiction.

As well, effort is being made to build national intergovernmental partnerships. Across the NWT, our residents are working to achieve their political goals and aspirations.

At the same time, we are experiencing unprecedented economic potential through the development of our non-renewable resource sector. Carefully managed, this development could be the key to economic prosperity for our residents in the years to come.

We recognize that progress will only be made through the

identification of common interests and by a commitment to move forward in partnership with other governments, key stakeholders, business and industry, and, indeed, all residents of the NWT. For this reason, support for a collaborative intergovernmental approach to political and economic development in, and for, the NWT is the second key strategy the Department of the Executive has identified.

Program Delivery and Capacity Building

Mr. Chairman, our third key strategy also honours the commitment to partnerships that is expressed in *Towards a Better Tomorrow*. This strategy is to support a collaborative approach to effective and efficient program delivery and capacity building. By building the capacity of regions and communities to deliver the programs and services that they are, or will be responsible for as self-government unfolds, we guarantee that the programs our residents access remain effective for their needs.

We are committed to working closely with the Accountability and Oversight Committee in developing our regional capacity-building plan.

Strengthening the Public Service

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we have identified strengthening the public service as another key strategy of the Executive. The programs and services of government, no matter how efficiently designed, cannot be effectively delivered to the public without the civil service. The skills and knowledge of our employees contribute in large part to our success. Therefore, our fourth strategy acknowledges the value of our employees and expresses our commitment to ensuring that the civil service is stable, knowledgeable and experienced.

Main Estimate Investments

In order to achieve these goals, the Department of the Executive is requesting approval for a budget of \$10,130,000 for the fiscal year 2000-2001. This budget includes areas of forced growth, support for the addition of a new Cabinet Minister, funding to implement decisions of the previous Cabinet and strategic new investments towards achieving the goals and priorities of this government.

In the area of forced growth, \$268,000 has been allocated for pension reform resulting from decisions of the federal government and \$295,000 has been allocated to support the Caucus decision for an additional Minister.

Funding has also been allocated to support the unfunded decisions of the previous government to establish a regional relations and communications division within the Department of the Executive. As part of the allocation of resources to these initiatives, a review was undertaken of their respective responsibilities and changes were made to enhance those responsibilities and bring them more in line with the priorities of this government. The budget therefore includes \$254,000 to provide for regional liaison between headquarters and the GNWT regional offices, but more importantly to develop options to implement the government priority of regional capacity building.

The budget includes \$239,000 for executive communications. In addition, the responsibilities for communicating within the GNWT, with the public and with the media have been

consolidated to provide for a more strategic approach. This reorganization will result in cost savings while providing more coordinated and more effective program delivery.

The budget also includes increases for strategic investments in government-wide initiatives identified as important to this government.

A major initiative requiring funding through the main estimates will be the Staff Retention Policy. This policy, announced on May 5, 2000, supports our strategy of strengthening the public service. The Staff Retention Policy is a critical initiative put in place to allow the GNWT to meet its commitment to retaining valued employees who provide skills, experience and corporate knowledge to the organization. The Staff Retention Policy will allow for retraining and redeployment of staff, thereby improving job satisfaction and security. The initiative has received support from the Union of Northern Workers and was viewed as a positive step towards maintaining a good relationship between government and labour.

A key component of this strategy is the Staff Training and Development Fund. An initial investment of \$250,000 has been earmarked for this fund. The department's corporate human resource services division will administer the fund on behalf of the government. Corporate human resource services, in conjunction with FMBS labour relations division, is in the process of developing detailed procedures for the application of the Staff Retention Policy and the use of the Staff Training and Development Fund. Because this is a critical initiative of this government, designed to increase our effectiveness and ensure our capacity for the continued delivery of programs and services, our main estimates include a requirement for this additional \$250,000.

Another major initiative of this government will be participation in the Intergovernmental Forum. As I have indicated, this tripartite forum will address matters regarding the devolution of lands and resources, the sharing of resource revenues, the Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline and other issues as they may arise. An investment of \$545,000 is included in the main estimates to fund the GNWT's participation in the Intergovernmental Forum. This initiative will be coordinated by the department's Intergovernmental Forum Secretariat.

As well, the federal government and the GNWT have agreed to share the costs required to adequately fund aboriginal government participation in these discussions. The GNWT has committed to funding \$333,000, which is one third of the year 2000-2001 costs of \$1 million. This funding requirement has not been included in this budget, but will be requested as supplemental funding later this year.

Finally, the budget includes a \$179,000 increase to provide additional support to the Premier's office for the increased responsibilities assigned to the chief of staff and the addition of an executive secretary to the principal secretary.

Main Estimate Reductions

Mr. Chairman, the department has identified some areas where economizing measures can be taken to help offset a portion of the additional financial requirements we have identified.

During the review of the department's interim appropriation, it was clear that the department would have to look within to find some additional resources. At that time I offered to reduce the

department's interim appropriation request by \$100,000 as an interim measure. In recognition that this was only a start towards identifying savings, I directed my deputy minister to review the organizational structure of the department and to identify areas where further economizing measures could be taken.

Based on a thorough review of the functions of the Executive, the department has identified a total of \$226,000 in reductions to the original target that was presented to this committee in March of this year. This represents an additional \$126,000 over the amount offered up during the review of the interim appropriations.

\$115,000 has been reduced from the department's submission through the streamlining of administrative support functions in the cabinet secretariat and the Minister's offices.

As well, in order to implement our strategy of communicating and coordinating the implementation of the government's agenda, we have taken a more strategic approach to the communications function within the Executive. By shifting our focus toward proactive communications, designed to positively shape public opinion rather than to react to the negative, we realigned the responsibilities of the department's communicators. By integrating the public affairs program of the Premier's office into the Executive's communications division, the department has eliminated one position while achieving the delivery of an enhanced communications function with no loss of service. Total savings in this area amount to \$81,000.

Finally, the decision to house the Intergovernmental Forum in existing government office space rather than new office space has resulted in a \$30,000 savings in minor capital expenditures and the avoidance of additional lease costs.

The main estimates we are about to review together contain the resources required to ensure that the government's goals, set forth in *Towards a Better Tomorrow* and incorporated into the department's strategies, are successfully carried out.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

-- Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Does the committee reviewing the department's estimates have any comments? Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development met with the Premier and departmental staff to review the 2000-2003 business plans and 2000-2001 main estimates on Thursday, June 1, 2000. The committee noted a \$1,962,000, or 24 percent increase in total operations, or Operations and maintenance expenditures between their 1999-2000 main estimates and the 2000-2001 draft main estimates. Committee members also noted an increase of two positions, for an overall increase of three percent in staff since the presentation of the 1999-2000 main estimates.

Change in Vision Statement

The committee noted that since the previous business plan, the Department of the Executive has made changes in direction within its business plans. The vision statement has changed to:

"Our vision is to contribute to governance within the Northwest Territories by providing superior service to Cabinet, sound advice to departments and innovative, results-oriented leadership within the territorial public service."

Previously, the vision was:

"A healthy population served by a stable, effective, and efficient government that is consistent with Canadian democratic traditions and is respectful of the needs, potential, and aspirations of all residents."

Members indicated that they perceived the change in vision as a shift in focus from people towards a departmental job description.

Goals-Strategies-Measures-Outcome Measures

The goals, strategies, measures and outcome measures of the department have also changed significantly from prior years. The committee is of the mind that while it is good for the department to refocus, the focus may have become too centered on limited activities within the department and does not speak to the government as a whole. After all, the mandate of the Premier and department is to provide overall management and direction to the Executive branch of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

As is the case of many other departments, the committee reiterates the need for outcome measures to be measurable, and suggests that the department may want to revisit these to make them measurable. The committee discussed the need for timelines with the Premier and the department, and recognizes that some goals may take longer than the length of this government to achieve. The Premier indicated that the department was in the process of creating a timeline for government. The committee looks forward to reviewing it.

Sectors of Government Involved in Intergovernmental Negotiations

As stated earlier in the review of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, the committee has grave concerns in regard to the numerous sectors of government that are involved in self-government, land claims, devolution and resource revenue sharing negotiations. In the past year, the Department of the Executive has added the intergovernmental forum secretariat to coordinate the GNWT participation in aboriginal, territorial and federal government discussions, such as devolution, resource revenue sharing, oil and gas developments, the fiscal relationship with Ottawa, and northern control over northern resources. Another section added to the Executive, intergovernmental affairs, assists in the preparation of strategies to address territorial, national and international issues. There are also sections in the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and other government departments involved in intergovernmental negotiations.

It is the opinion of the committee that with so many pockets of government involved in intergovernmental negotiations, there is a definite inefficient use of people and government funds; funds that could be better spent on infrastructure or other essential programs or services for the people of the Northwest Territories.

Further to the significant cost of the pockets of government

involved in negotiations, the committee is uneasy with the lack of clear lines of authority. Committee unease was confirmed when the Premier admitted that there was no clear authority for the intergovernmental forum secretariat, intergovernmental affairs and the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

The committee supports the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight's recommendation that the department establish clear lines of authority and mandates for all sectors of government involved in the negotiation procedures, and do so without prolonging any of the processes of government. Efficiency and effectiveness of government should be considered above the need to increase and sustain bureaucracy.

Regional Reorganization

There is a review of regional organization underway. The committee encourages the government to consider current political initiatives, but exercise caution. Regions should not be so small that they have insufficient resources for services and programs.

Committee members request that the government keep the committee up to date on this initiative.

Human Resources

As the corporate human resources services section resides within the Department of Executive, the department was asked for, and agreed to supply, government-wide statistics at the departmental level for the Affirmative Action Policy. The committee also raised concerns regarding possible adverse effects of the Staff Retention Policy on the Affirmative Action Policy. Other areas of discussion included the need for consistency as to what qualifies as a managerial position, the loss of employees to private industry, and the inability of PeopleSoft to track casual employees.

Financial Implications

The committee has noted the increase in expenditures in the operations and maintenance side of the executive offices, particularly in the Cabinet secretariat.

The committee requested and since received a description of the changes to the operations and maintenance funding from the 1999-2000 Main Estimates to the 2000-2001 Main Estimates.

The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development repeats its warning that during present times where there are limited financial resources, when more money is spent on bureaucracy in government, it is necessary to make cuts in other areas. These areas include capital items, programs and services for our communities. That concludes the committee's report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Braden. At this time, I would like to recognize the people in the gallery and thank them for coming. Welcome.

With that, we will take a short break.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call the committee to order. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister if he would like to bring in any witnesses.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my left is Liz Snider, the deputy minister of the Executive. On my right is Carl Bird, director of corporate services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. General comments? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the committee review, we raised a number of issues with the department, the Premier and his staff, regarding some of the growth, as we pointed out in the committee report. During the review, we requested more information as to the Department of the Executive's changes that had occurred. I must thank the Premier and his staff for providing that information.

Based on that new information, I have some comments. We had seen a significant change in the mission statement of the department, and where it went from there. The previous mission statement was focused on the people and how the Executive would impact people's lives in the Northwest Territories and so on.

What we found this time was the mission is turned internal, more to the structure of government and how it can support government. One of the concerns we raised was to question the intent of it. If it is in fact just a shift, instead of a department focusing on people, it was focusing on Cabinet and Ministers and so on. That would seem to make sense in that area. However, then it clouded the area a little bit. Many people in the Northwest Territories look at the Executive as being Cabinet and the lead in government and changes and new initiatives. That was an area of classification.

What we received here is a copy of what is in the book. That does not really explain some of the changes or the intent of the changes. I think overall, we have been through the budget during the interim appropriation, and there has not been significant changes one way or another since that time.

We did press the issue again of the growth and the need to review and substantiate it, in light of our fiscal situation. Decreases in other departments, mainly Municipal and Community Affairs and, as we will see with Transportation as it comes up. Mr. Chairman, I will save the rest of my questions for when we get into detail. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Premier.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The intent of the shift the Member refers to is in fact to comply with the wish of the committee to be more specific, and to state the goals and objectives more specifically, so achieving those can

be measurable. Giving broad, general, generic statements, people-oriented statements are difficult to measure. While we still adhere to those by endorsing Towards a Better Tomorrow, the Department of the Executive is taking to articulate very specifically what the role of the department is. That is what is reflected here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like my colleague, Mr. Roland, the refocusing in the department's vision statement is a fairly significant piece of work. I personally tend to support the direction this department is taking to align itself in a more business-like fashion.

It has been an interesting exercise, at least in the committees, or in the departments that have been reviewed through the committee I sit on, the Economic Development Committee. Various departments seem to have different ideas about what a vision statement is, goals and strategies. Perhaps through the lead of this department, there will be some further alignment and tuning of other departments. Again, what I would support is a more business-like orientation.

The growth in the department was naturally a focus of attention. It is a consequence, as the Premier has point out, of some forced growth, some layers of government and administration being taken on into the department and some new initiatives. I guess for me, there is a good side and a bad side to this.

There is a concentration and a subsequent growth in the Department of the Executive. It signals a couple of things. That this department has the lead, political, trouble-shooter, take charge, take initiative in government. It is the one that is certainly closest to Cabinet. It has a responsibility to be fairly innovative and move aggressively on important items. We have gone over these several times, Intergovernmental Forum, the change in regional orientation, significant moves for this government. I support them.

There is a balance in what we are seeing in many other areas, and overall erosion of public investment at the community and regional level on the ground. Two examples there, Mr. Chairman, are the cuts to municipal block-funding and the steadily declining investment in capital spending. While the Minister has indicated he has listened to the committee and has gone in and found some more dollars and some more streamlining, there is a concentration and subsequent growth in this department that tends to catch attention and will continue to do so. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is all for now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Braden. That was more of a comment than a question. Next on the list is Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have one specific question at this point, an issue I would like the Premier to speak to, plus some issues I will touch on as we get into a more detailed review of the budget.

Overall, our main concern about the growth in the budget at the headquarters level at a time when I have indicated repeatedly in the House, communities are expected to embrace some cuts, or at the very least having to hold the line in spite of rising costs.

The one issue I would like the Premier to speak to is the issue of accountability. He references it on page 2 of his opening comments. I look at that, and I look at his comments to me in the House on June 22, 2000, where he indicated there is no clear, measurable way by which to make this government, Ministers and deputy ministers, accountable. It is an issue that has caused me some significant concern. I have asked every Minister that has appeared before the House to speak to the issue. As a Premier and head of the Executive, I would like the Premier to speak to that issue. If there is no clear, measurable way to achieve accountability, how does he intend to address that issue as Premier? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Premier.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have noted in discussion with some Members that in some countries, managers are told if the 12 of them cannot perform well, one of them would not be there the following year, and that is the motive for working really hard, trying to achieve everything the dictator would lay on them.

In our system, which I am not totally familiar with yet, but I am engaging in, we have deputy ministers and we have senior managers. We have legislation such as the Financial Administration Act. We have policies. We expect deputy ministers and senior managers to conduct themselves and work in a way that adheres to the legislation and the policies of this government, as well as the goals and objectives of each specific department. The point of it is if a department makes no difference in change on achieving better statistics in pursuit of affirmative action, what do you do to the deputy minister?

That is what I meant by there being no way to make them accountable. They are accountable. There is no doubt about it. For instance, the deputy minister manages in a way that is acceptable to the Auditor General and Cabinet, but does not make any significant improvements within the department for affirmative action, what do you do? I am trying to explain the context of my statement. There are many things that have to be considered when you are making Members accountable, and senior managers as well.

Presently, there is a system where there are, I think, annual interviews done, discussions with deputy ministers and, as the Premier, I am sometimes expected to engage in the process of doing assessments and evaluations, performance appraisals. I think it is important to go back to something that Mr. Nitah said yesterday, which is, the fact that four years from now, we may very well be sitting here complaining about the same things, noting concerns about the same things.

That is a very real danger because, since we have been elected, we have been running flat out, Members as well, trying to keep business going the way it has been going for many years. There does not seem to be any concerted effort to find a way to look at how this government operates and functions and see if there are better ways to get the job done. I think that is a question that we all have to address.

We do things like review main estimates in standing committees and we go through them again, sometimes in question period, and then we do it again, in grand style, here in the committee of the whole. However, there is a limit to the ability of the Legislature to look at the fundamental way in which government and departments operate and the programs

that are designed. So, in my view, it seems to me that we need to focus, as a Legislature, on taking the time, and maybe that session that we are slating in Inuvik in September will serve to do that.

I agree, we must be accountable. We need to take time to decide, what is it that we are doing and to get that information out and let the public know as well. We have done many things. We are not able to do everything, so looking at ways in which we can become better accountable is one of them. It is all tied in the process of trying to keep the machinery going, trying to decide what are the priorities and how we are going to get those done, and what are the best ways to measure the things that we are trying to do.

I do not know how much time we need to spend on trying to measure the things that we do not agree we should be doing in the first place. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Premier indicated, do we want to be sitting here in four years, talking about the same kinds of things, and it is an interesting comment. I pulled out a copy of the special committee on the Northern Economy from 1989, and there are three items that came immediately into my vision.

One of them was the need to establish a commission to take a clear look at the human resource practices of the government. A recommendation to establish a Public Service Commission and a call for a review of the Affirmative Action Policy. So it is not four years in the future that we are looking at and saying the same things. Now, we are saying the same things that were said 11 years ago.

It is an issue. The Premier's comments, I do not want to focus just on the deputy ministers. The Premier indicated that it was government, Ministers and deputy ministers. The Premier has indicated that he is accountable, and it is good to hear that. As the Premier, and a man with extensive experience in Cabinet, I would just like an indication on how he intends to deal with the issue of accountability if it in fact is still somewhat fuzzy and unclear. As a government, how do we do that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it is difficult to be accountable if you are not doing anything, so there has to be some confidence that we can do new things and do them with the knowledge and support of Ordinary Members. We set out with an agenda that we took time to develop with every Member in this Legislature, and we made a commitment that we would not come up with new initiatives and try to involve Members of the Legislature in everything that we do as much as we can.

If we have the confidence that we can go ahead and do new things, initiate work and conduct ourselves without always wondering whether we are going to get hit in the Legislature with a motion on confidence or reprimands from the Ordinary Members.

That would go a great extent towards making us accountable, because we would be initiating work and moving ahead with some things.

Being accountable means we have to let the public know what it is we are doing. As well, setting targets for ourselves and applauding those things that we achieve. It means Members need to openly support us, even though they may not feel like it, because that is what the public expects.

We need to say when we are doing things right, when we have done things that are notable and achievable, because that is all part of the process of accountability. Silence can be deafening sometimes. We have our senior managers and deputies that work very hard all across government. I like to think that our employees are dedicated, hard working and committed to the tasks that are placed in front of them. We have to let them know that we are aware of it. We know what it is they are doing, and we are there to support them and applaud them when they do good work. Ministers and Cabinet are no less in need of that as well.

So that is all part of accountability, as far as I am concerned. In my view, we have, our four years to do some things, and the 14th Assembly can take the time in September to decide what is it that people are going to look back on, and ourselves included, in ten years, when perhaps we may be onto some other things.

To say we have left our mark, we have made a significant contribution, a historic mark that said the 14th Assembly was a reality that made a significant contribution and a significant mark in the history of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There were a number of issues that were raised by the Premier in his opening comments that I would like to address. One of them is the second key strategy to support a collaborative intergovernmental approach to political and economic development in and for the Northwest Territories.

He also talks in his opening comments about the need for improved accountability and increased opportunities for public participation in government. In talking about the second key goal, he also talks about the need to identify the interests and move forward in partnership with all residents of the Northwest Territories.

I have certainly heard from a few of my constituents that they are wondering, in terms of political development in the Northwest Territories, what is happening constitutionally. They see talks taking place, this government, the federal government, and the aboriginal governments, at self-government tables and they see political development taking place in a regional basis because of that.

Their interest is, how are we, as a whole, talking about political development of the Northwest Territories, given that it is happening on a regional basis, and how does the public get involved in those talks? We do not have a constitutional working group or a CDSE or Western Constitutional Forum. There are numerous other processes up until now.

What a number of people see is political constitutional development and constitutional development taking place in isolation in some portions of our society.

So how does this second key strategy tie in the average person who is not represented at one of those self-government tables into constitutional development in the Northwest Territories?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I spent some time talking to Mr. Dent's constituents as well, and also people in places like Hay River, Fort Smith and Inuvik. It is my view, in general assessment, that the people of the Northwest Territories are optimistic and feeling invigorated about the agenda that we have set out and the message that we have been putting out to people, that economic development is happening and it is going to continue to pick up and that we are committed to partnerships. We are committed to working hard to make those tangible for people at the community level right across the territories. We have the beginning of a positive working relationship with aboriginal governments, the federal government and industry to do that.

There has been almost no discussion, no call for a Northwest Territories wide constitutional development process at this time. In the agenda of the intergovernmental forum, which has been set up, there has yet to be any discussion of that as well. There may be, but that has not happened.

There is no process right now for the public, for this government, or anyone to have a forum for the constitutional and political future of the Northwest Territories as a whole, which could be addressed in a clear process that would be result oriented.

The Member is right. There is no question. As far as I know, there has been no call for it from any quarter. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no doubt that Mr. Kakfwi talks to some of my constituents, and I am glad that he does. My role is to represent them here, and I can say that I have heard from constituents who have expressed some concern about the process and what the public involvement will be as we look down this road.

Now, I do not know that anybody is calling for another Constitutional Development Steering Committee or Constitutional Working Group, but I think that there is a concern about the constitutional development happening on a regional basis without there seeming to be an overall vision or discussion of where we are headed as a territory.

I think my constituents would agree that they are optimistic about the future and welcome the talks that are going on. This is not intended to try and indicate that there is anything wrong with those talks continuing. I have heard from them that they do want to know that there is going to be an opportunity for their involvement in what the political future of the Northwest Territories looks like. For instance, before the government signs a self-government agreement, are those agreements going to be presented in this House for ratification?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Premier.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Cabinet would be prepared to discuss with Caucus in September if there is an agreement that some sort of a statement will be reassuring and needed at this time to the general public about

the political and constitutional future of the Government of the Northwest Territories, and the future of the Northwest Territories as a whole, then we should put that on the agenda for the Caucus in September, and we can do some preparatory work for that.

With a statement would potentially...a lot more aboriginal and public citizens would become unsettled. That has been my experience. While there is always a need for assurance to be given to some of the people some of the time, sometimes it is better to try not to say something that would try to assure everybody, because you may not be able to achieve it. If the Member feels strongly about it, we welcome some discussion about it in Caucus. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not looking for a commitment to move the discussion to Caucus. After all, Caucus is a secret meeting of Members around this table. I think the Premier has talked in page 2 of his statement about the need for improved accountability and increased opportunities for public participation. The public probably gets that when they see what is going on. That is why I think that a commitment to present issues before this government in the public forum like this House for ratification at some point. I am not saying to negotiate in public. I am saying that after the negotiations are concluded, there should be a willingness to publicly present whatever it is that the government is prepared to sign. They have to be accountable through this House to the public. That is all I am asking. Is there a commitment to be accountable through this House to the public for documents that this government intends to sign? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Premier.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few questions for the Premier on his opening comments for the department. The first thing that caught my attention is the discussion of the Staff Retention Policy. The Premier indicates that the intent here is to further foster support for the strategy of strengthening the public service, and I think that this is something that we all agree is critical and necessary. I think that is why there was discussion around this table the other day of the creation of a Public Service Commission, which is not something new as Mr. Miltenberger indicates. It is something that has been batted around for the last ten or 12 years.

The Premier indicates that a component of strengthening the public service is this money, this development fund for staff training, internal Government of the Northwest Territories staff training. An investment of \$250,000 has been earmarked for this fund, and corporate human resource services will administer the fund, look after it, and handle staff training and development.

One of the concerns I have, and I guess we all have, is that we have seen these kinds of things and money earmarked for these purposes in the past. Past governments have let funds lapse and not access them.

Some of the comments from people in the department over the last few years had been that yes, there is money there, but the conditions and the administration, in order to access the funds and use the programs, are so onerous and so difficult that we just have not bothered. That is one of the reasons that some of this money has lapsed.

I am wondering if the Premier can tell us why this will be handled differently now, or what improvements, what things are being put into place to make sure that we do take public service training seriously and do make sure that this money is used? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Premier.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: I will ask Ms. Snider to respond.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you Mr. Premier, Ms. Snider.

MS. SNIDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Member indicated, there has been a new policy developed, the Staff Retention Policy, and the intention of that policy is to make sure that we support our employees and try to make sure that they have continuing employment in the Government of the Northwest Territories, and see the Northwest Territories not only as a source of continuing employment, but as an employer of choice.

The policy sets out clear guidelines on the intention to make sure that departments are accountable in making sure that employees are retrained and if there is a change in the kind of employment they would do it within that department, that there would be training made available to support that change in employment. In addition to that, and I know that he mentioned that procedures are sometimes quite onerous, but there have been procedures developed involving all of the human resource managers from all of the departments to try to make sure that the criteria for accessing those funds, if in fact the department cannot find employment within their own department, is not onerous on the employee and that there is some assistance in figuring out how to access those funds.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. I would like to thank the deputy for that. I think it is critical that not only is this program and this pot of money administered from the Department of the Executive, but work is done at the line department level, because really when it comes down to it, that is where the bulk of the positions will be. If they feel it is too difficult to access the funding or there are too many conditions placed on the funding, they simply will not bother. The motivation has to be there at the departmental level or our public service will simply suffer.

She also mentioned hoping that the Government of the Northwest Territories would become an employer of choice, and I agree that is something that we need to strive for. I think one of the things I would like to reference is that we start our residents here and we invest a lot of money in them through the years, and presumably we send them away to university with adequate student financial assistance, and then we bring them back and we hope to find employment for them. Obviously, the main employer in the Northwest Territories is the government.

Students are finding it difficult to access summer employment in some areas, harder in some areas more so than in others.

There are cases that students feel that they go away to school, get their education and come back here and there is no employment for them, or the government does not do enough to help them find employment. I do not think that anybody is looking for a handout here, or a guaranteed job or anything like that, but I think the people that we invest all this money and time in, and the people who grew up here, those are the people that we can count on staying here. I think it makes a lot more sense to devote attention and time to these kind of people than to worry about trying to recruit people and import the talent we need. So when we do have homegrown talent, I think it is important that we employ them. The Government of the Northwest Territories is a major employer.

I was encouraged to hear that there was a student working group set up on student and graduate employment underneath the umbrella of the corporate human resource services. I do not mean to be too detailed, here but I hope the Premier can give me some indication of why this working group was set up, how he sees it going forward, and if there have been any results to this time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell, Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have set up a working group as the Member has noted, of students, northern students, students that we are employing at this time. And we have asked them to discuss how they may help look at the possible improvements to the way that we hire students and how we employ them, how we get to provide the opportunities to them, and the students have agreed. They are going to look at recommendations that they can make, currently looking at devising a process at which they can deliver something to us by the end of August. So the students themselves are being engaged to look at our employment practices with students and graduates. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. I hope the Minister will keep the House apprised of developments in this area, because some indications coming to me have been that they have felt the summer student hiring process alone, not to mention trying to employ Northerners once they return from school, may not have been set up or given the most thought before it was set up.

Somebody mentioned to me they felt the department was simply a receptacle for resumes for summer hiring. The line departments were not involved until after the fact. When they had actually hired a student, they would report back to the main department. I think there are some problems here. I think it is something that needs to be streamlined, so I hope the Minister will keep us informed and let us know how the working group is going as there are developments.

The last thing I would like to touch on is the Intergovernmental Forum process. I have to say, Mr. Chairman I was thrilled to be invited to the first meeting in Hay River. I think it is a great process. I think it is something that we need to pay a lot of attention to, and I think it is critical for the development of the Northwest Territories.

However, I have to state, again, and we have all made comments to the Premier in this regard, that the one level of government that is sorely missing is municipal government.

I think there are key economic decisions and strategy and planning that will be coming out of this process, and while I do recognize that it is a very sensitive process and there are things that need to be worked out, I think that at some point, we have to look to involve municipal levels of government. I think we need buy-in right across the Northwest Territories with all of its citizens, not just some.

So I hope the Premier will keep in mind that municipalities have called and asked to be included in this process. I think they have a valid concern. I think they want to be involved. They do want to buy in to this, and I hope we will look at involving all levels of government in this process sometime, in the near future.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, and I would like to thank the Member for his positive remarks. The Association of Municipalities conveyed a very clear message to us, at their annual meeting, which was attended in Fort Simpson a month ago. I made a commitment at that time to meet with their executive as soon as possible. I think we have a tentative agreement to meet in August, but it is definitely before the middle of August. I intend to assure them that we will do what we can to make sure that they are engaged in whatever process is there to support them in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities that are set out for them.

Whether it is providing municipal services to constituents, to working as an association, to dealing with concerns and interests they may have in processes, like the Intergovernmental Forum. I am looking forward to that meeting, and it being finalized so we can have some discussion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to continue on with the issue of accountability for a few more minutes. Mr. Chairman, I have come to learn and accept that there is an inherent distrust of government and politicians by the people, so the issue of accountability is significant.

In my role as an MLA from my constituency, I have a clear role to play: to represent my constituents, to work in this House, through Caucus and through standing committees to lay out strategies, and then once those directions are set and Cabinet is doing the work of government, to question them, to work with them, to give praise where praise is due, but definitely, to ask hard questions when necessary.

My job is not, as the Premier indicated, in my opinion, to openly support Cabinet, even if we do not want to because that is what the public expects. I can tell you very clearly, Mr. Chairman, that my constituents expect a balance, yet we want a productive working relationship. We all have our roles to play.

So the Premier has made some statements on accountability. It is difficult to be accountable if you are not doing anything. It is probably the easiest way to be accountable, say nothing, do nothing, get re-elected, is a phrase I have heard used. I do not think that is the intent of this Assembly or the Premier.

So the issue of accountability is very important, and I will ask all the Ministers about accountability. I have a question for the

Premier though, regarding a comprehensive human resource strategy. Could the Minister indicate what type of work he is going to instruct to be done prior to our meeting in September, so that when they come in Inuvik, we will have something to look at? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is a new government and a new legislature and the things that we want to be accountable for are, first of all, trying to make sure all of us are going after the same things and finding, and agreeing, to a way on how we should try to achieve those and letting the public know.

That is exactly what it is we are trying to do and to make sure that, in four years, those of us that wish to do so, can go to the polls with absolute confidence that we have done a great job. That is the greatest accountability of all. I have been doing it for a number of years, and it feels great. There is no other way to be more accountable than that.

-- Laughter

Employees and senior managers of government are encouraged or blessed with that. We need to do some work to let the employees know that we are going to set out goals and objectives that are realistic and achievable. That we are supporting them, as good employees, and we are going to find some ways in which to work on making accountability mean something.

The Members have passed a motion in support of a Public Service Commission, with some Members saying the Public Service Commission could mean a whole number of different things. We note that previous Legislatures have looked at it and have decided, for various reasons, to not do that.

We have committed, as I have said, to have Cabinet prepare for consideration in Caucus in September, a full discussion on what the population breakdown is as best we can. The percentage of aboriginal people, age groups, how many people have more than a grade 9 or 10 education, and how many have management positions. I do not know that we could do it. However, we note that there are other large employers now, such as BHP Incorporated, and Diavik will soon be on stream. Oil and gas companies will start to hire some of our people as well.

We do not know how many of our aboriginal people are in the private sector, but we know that Members want this government to show some marked progress, improvements in the number of women and aboriginal people, covered by the Affirmative Action Policy, to show some better results.

I do not know that they are possible. We, first of all, have to know that they are out there. One of the questions will be, is the Public Service Commission, with the resources that it is going to require, willing to be able to give Members assurances that, with the Public Service Commission established, the percentage of aboriginal people in senior management positions in the government is going to climb and accelerate dramatically? Is it going to deliver on increasing the number of women hired and employed at the senior management level as well? Is it going to increase the improvements made in the regional centres and in our communities?

So that will be brought to the Members of the Legislature as well, an estimate on what a Public Service Commission would cost. I note that in the Yukon, it is roughly between \$7 million and \$8 million. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Yukon model, of course, is much broader than a Public Service Commission that I think this motion entertains, so it is very misleading when you say that it is \$7 million to \$8 million, because it has a host of other functions.

Every Member in this House, Mr. Chairman, is accountable to their constituents and is given a clear mandate through the election process. The accountability being discussed today is much broader than that. It is much more complex. We are Legislature. The Premier is in charge of running a government that spends almost a billion dollars a year and has a tremendous amount of programs and services delivered on behalf of all the citizens of the Northwest Territories.

So it is a little glib just to say every four years we are accountable to our constituents. We are here in a process of accountability to spend public money the tax payers have given us. So I have concerns with some of the general nature of these comments.

In the information that is going to be prepared for Inuvik, will there also be information prepared on the affirmative action program? There was considerable work done, and I reviewed the committee report that was prepared in the 13th Assembly, as well as the government response, which was basically put on the shelf. It is tied into the human resource issue, and it is something that has to be addressed. It was brought up, as I indicated, in 1989 and I hope that the government's information on a Public Service Commission is not going to come in, so clearly biased against, that it will be set up so that there is no chance that it will be accepted because the picture painted will not be objective and unbiased. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Public Service Commission in the Yukon is the closest one that is in existence, and so I recall the motion that was moved by Members asked for a Public Service Commission.

While the name means many things, the motion does not define what it is. So, in the absence of it, we just looked at the budget of the Public Service Commission, which is what it is called in the Yukon. If I recall, the operating budget of it is between \$7 million and \$8 million a year.

It may do many great things, and it may be doing many great things in the Yukon. We have asked to have the Yukon Government share that with us, and we will bring that to the Members in Inuvik. There will be research done to look at the many forums that a Public Service Commission takes, because it may very well be that a Public Service Commission will do all those things that we will want to have done.

So the decision will be made after some good discussion by Members in Inuvik. There is work to be done, and I think the Member points out that he has learned, personally that people

out there have an inherent distrust of government and politicians. I have never shared that view at all, and I have been through many more years in public service than the Member has.

The people that I served and the public that I have engaged in have had disappointing periods in our history of our government, but I can never say that there has been and that there is an inherent distrust of politicians and government in our public. I do not think I am so naive and oblivious to it that I have missed that.

I think it may very well be that as we sit in office, the public may grow weary of us. They may feel that we are not delivering on the things that we said we were going to, but that is not distrust. That is disappointment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have heard much of accountability in this Legislative Assembly, and it started right from day one, as 14th Assembly Members came together and spoke of what their goals were and aspirations. I guess with some concern, I raise this and I hear the Premier when he spoke and answered in some response about trying to be more positive and work together. I agree we cannot always be negative and looking for the bad things. However, a couple of the responses I have heard today are concerning me.

One, the Premier just stated accountability, and this is the way I look at it. Accountability comes once every four years. And he enjoys that, he said. It seems that is the way things are being pushed to go to the Caucus route, where there are in-camera meetings where no one can be held accountable for what is being said or what is being planned. Public accountability for each Member does come once every four years, Mr. Chairman, but public accountability also comes through this forum, this Legislative Assembly.

Through questions and answers, through motions put through the House to try and achieve something. Yes, we need to talk in Caucus to suggest some ideas and so on, but I think unless we are going to open that forum up to the public, then we need to focus on what work is being done through this forum.

Mr. Chairman, the Premier made much about being principled and I pulled this out from his speech to Members when he was running for the position of Premier:

"These are the kinds of people I want to see on cabinet. Strong people, people that do not owe anybody anything out there. People that are not going to be patronizing friends. People who are going to work for the interest of everyone, who will be committed to being accountable and being strong Members of a team."

As well, Mr. Chairman, the closing speech says:

"I want to work so that we have a good future. We do that through making sure this government is a good government. We make sure this government is accountable."

Mr. Chairman, that raises concern. Because there are a number of things that happened, and I have tried to take a

balanced approach of not being overly negative, but at the same time, as the Premier had asked, sometimes we need to pat Cabinet on the back. I said I would gladly do that when we have something to go with. I think Members have pointed out some of the good work that has been done to date. One of the principles of a democracy is the fact that we have a forum to discuss things, put things to those who put their names forward to the high office of Cabinet. However, what I hear here today is concerning the Premier of the Northwest Territories suggesting that accountability comes once every four years. He talked about being principled and about patronizing.

I was going to save this question until later, but I feel now is the time to address it, since we are talking about these issues. The Premier previously had an executive assistant. Now that person has moved up to the chief of staff. If that does not go in the area of patronizing, I do not know what is.

I want to work for the benefit of the people of the Northwest Territories. I believe that is what the Premier wants to do as well. I believe that is what all Members want to do. It is time to put it clearly, this is the only forum that I am aware of, besides committee systems, which from time to time are bringing in the public for public review of what is being put forward in bills and legislation, not to go behind closed doors and discuss the issues of the Northwest Territories and the large issues that are before us like self-government.

The area of a Public Service Commission, affirmative action, those are working documents that we need to give to the staff to give them direction. So, Mr. Chairman, for the record, I would like the Premier to state what his definition of accountability is. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you Mr. Roland. Before we go to the Minister, I would like to recognize on behalf of Mr. Miltenberger, a couple of Fort Smith residents in the audience, Ethel Chalifoux and Tracey Bird. Welcome to the Assembly.

-- Applause

Mr. Premier.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. I am going to ask for a dictionary so I could give them something that is universally accepted as a definition of accountability. I think some Members are taking great fun in quoting me. That is accountability. The more I say, the more I am accountable for, which is right.

The Financial Administration Act and some of the policies and guidelines of government require us to be accountable, to sit here in standing committees and the committee of the whole to account for the money we have asked to get approved, so we could spend it.

Cabinet Ministers are accountable to Members of the Legislature and the public for how we spend the money. There is an element of time. We say we are going to do things in a certain timeframe. We are accountable for whether we meet that or not. Why are there construction delays and carry-overs from year to year? Because the system in place right now, for accountability. There is also accountability if you have ten things to do and you have only spent enough time to do one thing. You should be called to task for it. That is accountability as well. There is a limit to the amount of money you have and

the time and so you need to measure how effective you really are.

You know, if the Legislature wants us to do 30 things and there is only enough time and money and resources to do ten things well, then we are accountable. Is doing ten of those things, the ten most important things and doing them well okay? Or are we to be turfed out because we did not do the other 20? I would say that is a question that would probably be decided later.

We know that, and I think the Member is inherently inclined towards being positive all the time, though he is critical. I would say it is difficult for him to be negative. Because I think part of being a leader and a representative of people is people have to expect you to feel positive. If it is raining, then you have to tell people you absolutely believe the sun is going to come out. They are not going to follow you, and they are not going to want to support you if you just keep saying everything is doom and gloom. If you have nothing positive to say, then people shun you. That is accountability.

You need to be accountable for the attitude that you carry and you project. Not only in this Legislature, but in the public, and in the way you conduct yourself. Being a team player, making sure that the interests of the Legislature are respected, as well playing your part. You know there is accountability in that.

The fact that Cabinet is expected to work as a team. I am sure everybody in the Legislature is expected to do the same. So being effective is difficult to measure. There is accountability for that as well. The ways in which we can be accountable, as asked for by the committee, will be worked on by this government. We will bring your suggestions forward to the discussion in Inuvik in September on accountability. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the area of human resources, government has announced the Staff Retention Policy that they put in place. I stated that I have some concerns with how this policy will overlap with an existing policy, which is the Affirmative Action Policy, which has been in place for some time.

What my concern is, because of the different criteria for the Staff Retention Policy, which does not really open up doors for people under affirmative action, it sort of shuts it. Because of the differences between the two policies, where you are protecting people within but not allowing people from outside to get jobs within the government, especially using the Affirmative Action Policy, which was a tool to allow the public service to be reflective of the political makeup of the Northwest Territories.

So I would like to ask, has the department looked at how this new Staff Retention Policy is going to work in-line with the affirmative action, or is there going to be a joint policy so we meet the criteria of both policies? Now we have two policies, before we had the affirmative action, now we have added another policy. So can the Minister state what are they doing to ensure that the Affirmative Action Policy is still going to be adhered to and not overlooked by this new policy?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Premier.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am going to ask Liz Snider to respond to that specific question. I just want to make a comment in regard to appointments made by this Cabinet, made by myself as a Premier.

When I was elected, when we sat down as a Cabinet for the first time, the Ministers and I agreed that appointments such as the principle secretary to cabinet, who would be the deputy minister, secretary to cabinet, including the appointments of executive assistants down to executive secretaries, would be done together. It was new. It is the first time that this type of thing was done by agreement.

It is the prerogative of the Premier to appoint all senior managers in government, deputy ministers, principle secretary, secretary to cabinet, chief of staff now that is created. In this case, I have shared that responsibility and that decision with the Cabinet. In turn, they have shared with me the people that they have asked to take on the jobs of being their executive assistants and executive secretaries.

So I want that to be on the record, because the Member made a comment about that, and he should know better. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Ms. Snider.

MS. SNIDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess in terms of the Member's question, the employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories are really the workers that carry out the direction of this Legislative Assembly and of Cabinet. They are very critical to the success of those actions actually being implemented.

What we were hoping to do with the Staff Retention Policy was to look inward, first at the employees that we already have and to show them that they are valuable members of our team. In the event of a person finding that the employment they have at a certain point in time is no longer there, we were hoping to find them other sources of employment within the government.

In terms of the Affirmative Action Policy, we do not see it necessarily as a conflict when you are looking at employees from within the government. If you had a number of employees that were affected, the Affirmative Action Policy comes first and the affirmative action employees would be considered in advance of other employees if they were looking at a job.

The other thing about the Staff Retention Policy is that it looks at our employees, including our affirmative action employees, and says to them we would like to keep them in the government and provide them with training in order to do that. There has been some talk about employees leaving the Government of the NWT and taking jobs elsewhere. I guess we are hoping that this will keep employees with us, including the affirmative action employees.

Overall, we see the corporate human resources as a framework, and there are a number of policies underneath that framework, and one of them is the Affirmative Action Policy, one is the Staff Retention Policy. There are requirements for training and all sorts of other things that come under that framework as well. We look at ways that those policies can work together.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Snider. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just want to make it clear for the record that I did not make any statement that meant the Premier mentioned, that my comments on appointments and what not. I did not make reference to that in my statement. That could have been done by someone else, but, for the record, I did not mention that. My question was more about the human resources, the Affirmative Action Policy and the Staff Retention Policy. So I want to make sure that that is on the record.

One of the other areas that I have raised with the Executive, it has been some time since we have had these positions. They were done away with in the 13th Assembly, the whole area of regional directors in the different regions, where they were the person that was the coordinator of the departments in the different regions.

Yet we are talking about regional capacity. We are talking about different regional self-government negotiations and developments that are taking place in our different regions. I am wondering, has the department considered the possibility or reinstating these positions, or something like that in the different regions? So that we can have someone in the regions that we can go directly to deal with issues that may be tri-partite in nature, where we are dealing with different departments or the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and what not?

So has the department looked at reinstating that, considering the government has made reference to the Opening Address in the business plans, where it does talk about regional capacity building and what not. Has the department considered looking at that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the idea of looking at regional capacity building and redefining of regions is a great idea. It is time to do it, and so far we have said that this is something that we want to do. We have the endorsement of the Legislature and we have made a commitment to work with the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight to develop that idea.

Hopefully, the credit will be shared between this government and the committee in a balanced way, so we can move on to working with the aboriginal leaders and regional institutions that need to engage on it.

The idea of having one person, such as the former regional director position, work with this government from these regions is one idea. There are a number of other ideas that will come forward. So it is not discarded. It is one of them, but it will be there for sure. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question about the Minister's opening comments, but before that, in response to questions from Mr. Miltenberger, the Premier launched into a discussion about the recent motion in the House on the Public Service Commission, and talked about how Cabinet was prepared to bring information forward to Inuvik and share that.

I have to say, what sort of commitment is there, really, for involvement, if the campaign has already started to say that it

is too expensive, because that is certainly what it sounded like to me.

The Premier mentioned the cost in the Yukon. Well, you may want to do some research, because the cost in Manitoba is millions of dollars less than it is in the Yukon. There is an incredible range of costs that you could get into with something like this. I do not think that starting the campaign now to say that it is too expensive is a realistic way to say we are working together to examine our priorities.

For instance, in the Yukon, \$2 million of the \$10 million is for staff development, not just \$250,000 like we have put into staff development, and \$2 million of their \$10 million goes into Workers' Compensation Board payments. Those are the costs that we are going to have in any case, so they are not necessarily costs that are in excess from running a Public Service Commission. In fact, if you look at the Financial Management Board Secretariat, under labour relations and compensation services, without those two expenses, which amount to \$4 million, we are already budgeting \$8.5 million.

I think we need to go into this with an open mind and recognize that one of the primary reasons for wanting to push for this was to make sure that we had an independent agency, one that the public had confidence in, that was not subject to political pressure and one that would follow the political direction of this Legislature in implementing its policies, but would not be subject to the whims of an individual politician.

Mr. Chairman, I had not intended to go into that, but I had to respond to the Premier's comments.

In his opening comments, he refers to one initiative which is not in the budget, so I would like to just follow up on that before we get to detail. The rest of my concerns, I can follow up there. In his opening comments, on page 8, he announces that the Government of the NWT is committed to funding \$333,000, or one third of the 2000-2001 cost of \$1 million, for aboriginal government participation in the Intergovernmental Forum.

I am just wondering if the government has looked at whether or not this could perhaps put us in a situation where the argument could now be made, and it is one that we had resisted until now, that this government bears some responsibility for the implementation costs of self-government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The monies that we are committing to provide are so that the Intergovernmental Forum, which we have just recently agreed to establish, will have the resources necessary. So the federal government and the Government of the NWT and the aboriginal governments can engage in the forum with sufficient resources to make it workable, in effect. Do not hold me to those words, but the governments need to provide some resources so this process and this forum can be effective.

It does not reflect on the self-government initiatives that are taking place at the self-government negotiating tables. Just for clarification on the points earlier, I know the Yukon Government actually shows in its books Public Service Commission, \$10 million a year. What I said is, I believe the Public Service Commission in the Yukon requires between \$7 million to \$8

million. That was my own estimate based on what little I know of it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I am asking about the funding for the Intergovernmental Forum is just it seems to be on the same one third, two thirds formula that had been used previously to fund constitutional discussions. One of the arguments there that the government said that, when agreeing to a territorial government contribution to constitutional discussions, was that they covered everybody in the Territories.

We have long maintained that the federal government has a fiduciary responsibility to fund the setting in place of aboriginal governments, which is something that the resourcing of which we are talking about at this table for Intergovernmental Forum. That is why I am wondering, have we at least made the case in offering this funding? Have we taken the step of making sure that we reiterate that this government does not or should not have to bear the cost of implementation, and that in fact it is a fiduciary responsibility of the federal government? Where they opened the door, by precedent here, to now falling into the trap that the federal government could have been setting here to say we do have some responsibility? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The federal government is providing two thirds of the funding and we are providing a third. We are one of three parties involved in this process. The agenda is emerging at length on very specific things such as the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline, revenue sharing, and devolution. Three issues that are of fundamental importance to this government, and to the public of the Northwest Territories. So there are no rights per se at the table here. It is in large part the agenda is items that will impact on the self-sufficiency and the economy of the Northwest Territories. So it is in our interest to support such a forum, and to make sure it is adequately resourced. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to be clear. I support the Intergovernmental Forum and the process there, and certainly hope that we are able to reach an agreement with our partners at the table on moving some of those controls of the resources and some of the monies north, instead of continually seeing the royalties headed south.

My concern really is one that we have not just by accident put ourselves in a situation where three or four years down the road, the federal government is going to be able to come back and say well, you accept your responsibility here, that was a precedent, and therefore we are going to, as they have been insisting for a number of years, your government is going to have to pick up some of the costs for implementation. They are not on record as saying they will not consider implementing self-government unless this government kicks in already.

I just want to know that this government is making sure that we are protecting ourselves from that sort of situation, and would hope that the Premier would, with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, take a look at the situation and perhaps, if necessary, put in writing to the federal Minister just that stipulation to our provision of the funding in this situation. I am not speaking

against the funding, I just want to make sure we do not get stuck holding the bag at the end of the day because of missing something. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Yes, we will do that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Detail, commissioner's office. Department of the Executive, page 2-13, operations expense, total operations expense, \$184,000, agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 2-15, Minister's office, operations expense, total operations expense, \$3,463,000. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just when we were reviewing the Department of the Executive on March 21st, the interim appropriation, I had asked the Premier about the number of executive assistants upstairs, and on page 202 of Hansard at the time, he said that if the Premier were to give up the Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development portfolio, there would be no need to have an executive assistant assigned to the office.

I notice that he has passed on that responsibility to Minister Handley. I know that there are nine offices up there in the Cabinet side. I have walked through them and I have not seen an office empty yet since that transfer. I was just wondering if I could get a bit of an outline as to what has happened please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ms. Snider.

MS. SNIDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The executive assistant in the Premier's office for the Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development portfolio has been deleted and no longer exists in the books.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Snider. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am having trouble understanding why all nine offices then opposite the Ministers' offices are still filled. Could I get some explanation of that please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ms. Snider.

MS. SNIDER: I cannot speak for the Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development, except that I can tell you that it is no longer an executive assistant position.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Snyder. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had assumed when I saw under the activity description that this activity includes salaries and operational expenses for the Ministers and the staff, that this would be the appropriate place to ask about numbers of executive assistants. Am I wrong?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. I do not think so, no. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The position of executive assistant for the Department of

Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development, that has been deleted. That is the response. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just awhile ago, in response to a question from Mr. Roland, the Premier said that the Minister has now worked through the Premier's office to coordinate the hiring of executive assistants, so could we get a listing of how many executive assistants we have in the Minister's offices now and the Premier's office, and to which office they are assigned? In other words, to which Ministerial office they are assigned. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. I understand what the Member is getting at. The government employee who performed the job of being an executive assistant to me because I was responsible for Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development is no longer working with me as an executive assistant.

That person has reverted to being an employee of the Department of Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development and is now performing a function in the same office of supporting the new Minister of Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you. So Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development is now maintaining an office in this building is I guess what I can take that answer to mean. It certainly sounds like an executive assistant position, but I would ask the Premier again. Will he provide this committee with information on the numbers of executive assistants employed in the Premier's office and the Ministers' offices, and advise to which Ministers they report please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Yes, I would be very happy to do it, and I would be even more happy if the Members would provide us as well with the staff that are filling their side of the offices, just so we keep a level playing field. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that is on our phone list right now, but I would be happy to coordinate putting that together and delivering it to the Premier's office this afternoon. I hope he will meet the same schedule. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Minister's office, operations expense. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under Ministers' offices, can the Premier or his staff provide information as to the area of accommodations for Ministers in the capital? Can they provide a list of how many Ministers are receiving that allowance? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Chairman, we are not clear on what it is that the Member is talking about. Perhaps he could rephrase the question or ask it again?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will gladly ask it again.

Under the Ministers' offices, it includes salaries and operational expenses for Ministers and their staff. I am aware that the Ministers, as was tabled in this House by the government, the handbook on Ministerial...for example, the housing allowance that Ministers from out of the city would have to move to the city are allowed. So I am asking for the number of Ministers who are receiving that housing allowance. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland, Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Chairman, I believe there are four Ministers who are considered out of town that may be provided with that support available. I am not sure how the Member wants to be informed of that, by letter, or can we just tell him when we see him? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If he has the information and he sees me now, then can he tell me, I guess. He did make reference to four Ministers from out of town. Is that all the Ministers receiving housing allowances? Is it just the four? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. My understanding of it, in looking at my little team here, I think there are four of us who are considered from outside of Yellowknife who are not residents of Yellowknife. That is why I say it is four. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I went through the tabled document, it was my understanding that it was Ministers who have had to re-establish their residence in the capital because they have taken on the role of Minister. Can the Premier provide the Members of this House with a list of those Ministers who are receiving a housing allowance? The Premier did state that there were four of us. Is that including himself? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. We could have just gotten to the point four questions away. No, I am not receiving any of that. I never have. We will give the Member that number and if he wants the names of the Ministers.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: I look forward to receiving that information of Ministers who do receive the housing allowance. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Minister's office, operations expense, total operations expense, \$3,463,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the briefings that were held, we were told there were five people within the Executive who were paid over and above the executive wage table that is in place for the different positions. I would like to ask the Premier how much are we over in regard to the cost of these positions?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. We will have to request some time to see if we can get that information to the Member. We do not have it readily available.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister give me any idea of when we can receive that information before we conclude this department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. The Member is not leaving town, I know, so we can get it to him this afternoon, in the next couple of hours anyway. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Can we receive that information before we conclude this department or should I make a motion to have this particular page deferred until I receive this information?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: There is no need to get that extreme. If he wants it right away, we will get it to him right away. We would like to be finished here very soon. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it is possible, can I possibly have that information before we conclude this department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you. Detail, Minister's office, operations expense, total operations expense, \$3,463,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Page 2-17, Minister's office, grants and contributions, grants, \$123,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Contributions, \$445,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total grants and contributions, \$568,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 2-19, Cabinet secretariat, operations expense, total operations expense, \$6,082,000. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated in my opening comments, the committee was provided some information regarding the growth in this area. I have a breakdown here of the net change between 1999-2000 main estimates, and 2000-2001 Main Estimates, which totals a net change of \$1,421,000. In the information provided, there are a number of notes attached; corporate human resources, \$587,000. It also says the transfer of training development funds previously budgeted in there for compensation and benefits to other Operations and maintenance. Can we get clarification of that? There are a number of areas. I may as well provide the list instead of doing it one at a time.

Increase number 2 was intergovernmental affairs, \$108,000, resulted from an Operations and maintenance reallocation for additional responsibilities. There was corporate services, which says, Operations and maintenance reallocation, that was \$75,000. Communication increased as a result of a new initiative, and \$167,000 Operations and maintenance funding transferred to the amalgamation. Then the other two are new initiatives. The ones that had Operations and maintenance transferred, can I get a clarification? Is there a corresponding decrease from another area? Because it sounds just like an internal allocation, so it should not have been shown as a growth. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Bird.

MR. BIRD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member is correct. Those areas where there was Operations and maintenance funding transferred, it has been transferred out of other areas. The one for communications specifically is the transfer of the public affairs function for accounting purposes out of the Ministers' offices and into the Cabinet Secretariat.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bird. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: So was that, Mr. Chairman, an equal reduction on that side? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Bird.

MR. BIRD: Yes, Mr. Chairman, there is.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bird. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We seemed to have passed that page, but he has made a reference to it. As I look at the numbers, total operations expense on the previous page has not reduced. That is the question I have. Plus he made reference to one area. Are all the other Operations and maintenance transfers in equal reductions in other areas? There is the development funding previously budgeted in error from compensation and benefits to other Operations and maintenance. Increase resulted in Operations and maintenance allocation. That was intergovernmental affairs. The first one was corporate human resources. The fourth one, which was \$167,000, was communications. All of those have resulted in an equal drop from the area they were transferred from. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Bird.

MR. BIRD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The CHRS budget error-correction referred to, yes, the amount was originally budgeted to compensation and benefits in error, and was subsequently transferred during the re-jigging of the budget from

compensation and benefits to operations and maintenance. There was no increase in that area. It is just an offset within that area. The same goes with the inter-activity transfers from compensation and benefits. Where savings have been recognized in some compensation and benefits areas, the savings are transferred to offset the Operations and maintenance costs within the same division, and therefore overall there is no increase in the divisional funding for those transfers.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Bird. General comments. We are on cabinet secretariat, operations expense, total operations expense, \$6,082,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Cabinet secretariat, contributions, \$50,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total contributions, \$50,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Public Utilities Board, operations expense, total operations expense, \$401,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Information item, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Detail of work performed on behalf of third parties.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Another information item, lease commitments infrastructure.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving back to page 2-11, program summary. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to state the concern stated by the committee in the area of the overall growth that we have seen in this area, in light of the reductions in other departments that affect communities and regions. We hope that this growth has seen its apex, as I hear it being said to me here, and that it will be capped at that. Maybe as things streamline and we move forward, we will see a reduction in this area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Let me just say that we have the best of intentions to adhere to that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. Mr. Premier.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Chairman, there was a piece of information requested earlier. Before we move to conclude, if I could call Mr. Bird up to provide that information now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bird.

MR. BIRD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question was regarding the positions where individuals are paid over and above their normal salaries. We have eight positions, five of which are executive assistants. The total amount of pay in excess for the normal pay of that is \$34,101.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Bird. General comments. We are on page 2-11, executive offices, program summary, operations expense. Total operation expense, \$10,130,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before we do the final conclusion here, I look forward to receiving that information from the Premier regarding Ministerial benefits, the housing allowance and who receives that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Yes, we have committed to providing that to the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Program summary, operations expense, total operations expense, \$10,130,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Department of the Executive does not have any capital involved in it, so this is a portion of the department. We are concluded with this portion of the Executive. I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Thank you. Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. We will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will now come back to order. Item 20, report of committee of the whole. The Chair recognizes Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 1, Appropriation Act 2000-2001, and Committee Report 2-14(3), and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Do we have a seconder? The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Great Slave. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, meetings on Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, July 4, 2000:

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
 - Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Adoption Act
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 1, Appropriation Act, 2000-2001
 - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act
 - Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, No. 2
 - Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act
 - Committee Report 1-14(3), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plans and 2000-2001 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 2-14(3), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plans and 2000-2001 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 3-14(3), Standing Committee on Social Programs Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plans and 2000-2001 Main Estimates
20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. By the authority of Motion 4-14(3), this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, July 4, 2000, at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

