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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, June 12, 2002****Members Present**

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Please be seated. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 46-14(5): Social Agenda Working Group Report**

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, progress towards the implementation of the social agenda represents a significant step forward for the people of the Northwest Territories in addressing the social issues and priorities of our Territory. I am pleased to inform the Assembly the Social Agenda Working Group has produced its report, Social Agenda, A Draft for People of the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, the publication of the report recognizes that social development complements the work being done in the political and economic arenas. The GNWT believes that all three areas must develop cohesively and concurrently as part of the government's broad agenda, Towards a Better Tomorrow.

The Premier and Minister Handley met and worked with the members of the working group on a number of occasions during the past year. The working group also met with MLAs on two occasions. I think we have all been impressed with their dedication to work towards improving the quality of life of northern residents. Through the guidance of the working group, the people of the Northwest Territories have a draft social plan that makes concrete and achievable recommendations about how to improve the overall system within which policy decisions are made and programs delivered.

Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to see that the working group developed a small and manageable set of ten recommendations. These recommendations are clearly stated and link well with the overall issues identified at the Hay River conference.

The social agenda is moving from a development phase to implementation. Implementation of the social agenda will require a more hands-on approach within the GNWT. For this reason, the formal responsibility within the GNWT for responding to and directing the implementation of the social agenda has been assigned to the Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Minister of Health and Social Services. To coordinate cooperation and collaboration within the GNWT, an interdepartmental working committee has been established. Minister Miltenberger will be making a statement today as well, outlining in more detail the process which the GNWT will undertake to formulate a response to the draft agenda in a timely manner.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to understand the significance of the efforts and energy of the working group in producing the draft agenda. The agenda has been developed by a group of representatives working on behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories. It is not a government produced document, nor a government social development plan. To improve upon the quality of life in the Northwest Territories, everyone has to take responsibility for their part in improving social conditions. This means individuals, communities, aboriginal and public governments and non-government organizations. This is the critical component of the social agenda. I thank the working group for their efforts in identifying the role that everyone in the Northwest Territories has in making our society a better place to live.

Mr. Speaker, stakeholders are reviewing the draft agenda and preparing responses. Like citizens of the Northwest Territories, we look forward to discussing the recommendations and participating in the implementation of the social agenda. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Minister's Statement 47-14(5): GNWT Response to the Social Agenda Report

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to briefly outline the process that the GNWT will undertake to formulate a response to the report from the Social Agenda Working Group.

The people of the Northwest Territories are our greatest resource. Continuing development of the North, whether it is social, economic or political development, is dependent upon the strength of our northern community. The social agenda report recognizes the need to develop a long-term plan to improve social conditions and to support healthy, self-reliant Northerners who can fully participate in the opportunities that the North provides.

The report is a result of the efforts of the Social Agenda Working Group. The report includes ten broad-based formal recommendations that apply to all levels of government and the non-government sector. As the lead in developing this government's response, I have formed an interdepartmental working committee to review the recommendations and develop a detailed draft response for review and approval.

While the working group's report includes multi-sector recommendations, the Government of the Northwest Territories can only respond to those items within its mandate and authority. Since many of the recommendations call for shared

action and require a broader, multi-party response, we are committed to discussions with other parties.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to meet with members of the Intergovernmental Forum, the Special Joint Committee on Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs and the legislative committees to determine the best approach to take.

Mr. Speaker, even though we recognize there are fiscal limitations, there are things that can be accomplished within the existing resources of the GNWT. We can support projects that test new approaches, such as multi-year and block funding of wellness programs, integration of the interagency concept and one-window service centres, and cooperation with other funding agencies to integrate our approaches to project support.

The GNWT's response to the social agenda report will build on the linkages with extensive activities that are underway through existing GNWT strategies and initiatives, including the Health and Social Services System Action Plan, Active Living Strategy, Early Childhood Development Strategy, Housing Initiatives and the Seniors Action Plan.

We have many opportunities before us, Mr. Speaker, and with the support of this Legislature, I look forward to releasing a detailed public response to the Social Agenda Working Group's recommendations, and an implementation plan by early fall.

Our response will represent the GNWT's commitment, but we will continue to work in partnership with other levels of government and non-government organizations to advance the Social Agenda and bring about positive social change for the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Public Service, Mr. Handley.

Minister's Statement 48-14(5): National Public Service Week

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, June 9th to the 15th has been declared National Public Service Week. As the Minister responsible for the Public Service of the Northwest Territories, it is my pleasure to recognize the contributions made by the men and women who make up our public service.

Every day we count on the energy, commitment and abilities of our employees to provide high quality programs and services to the public of the Northwest Territories. These services encompass everything from the delivery of health care and social programs to educating our children and managing our resources and maintaining our infrastructure. I am proud to say that our public service continues to be characterized by high standards of integrity, professionalism and dedication to service.

Mr. Speaker and Members, please join me in thanking the men and women of our public service for their outstanding work in celebration of National Public Service Week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Ministers' Statements 46-14(5), Social Agenda Working Group Report, and 47-14(5), GNWT Response to the Social Agenda Report, be moved into committee of the whole for discussion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. We have a motion. The motion is in order. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. The Ministers' statements are moved into committee of the whole for discussion.

Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Passing of Beaufort-Delta Residents

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Floyd Roland, and myself, and with the concurrence of the respective families, I would like to take this opportunity to make my Member's statement in memory of the following three individuals from the Beaufort-Delta who recently passed away.

I am speaking of the late Lawrence Simon who passed away in Whitehorse in May of this year. He worked for the Council of Yukon First Nations as their board coordinator. Lawrence was adopted by the well-known and respected Gwich'in elder Sarah Simon. He is survived by his wife, Rosie Elias, eight children, and his maternal mother, Catherine Mitchell of Inuvik.

As well from Inuvik, the late Roderick Darryl Simon, also known as Kaliak, who recently passed away in a drowning accident. Kaliak just got on permanently with the Department of Transportation. Prior to that he worked for ISGL and Westwind Recreation in Inuvik. He leaves behind his wife, Erin Alunik, and two young children and his maternal mother, Dorothy McLaren. Kaliak was predeceased by his adopted parents, Sadie and Isaac Simon.

As well from Inuvik, Donald Charles Smith, also known as Danny. He was one of the early reindeer herders, a railway worker and a special constable. Danny is survived by his wife, Fabie, and eight children.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of knowing Lawrence Simon, Danny Smith and the family of Roderick Simon. I would ask this House to join me in sending our condolences to their family and many friends here in the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Our condolences do go to the families. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Member's Statement on Social Passing Policies in NWT Schools

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during our last session, I spoke and questioned the Minister of Education extensively on the system of delivering education.

Currently, we have a system that promotes students with their age bracket and not based on their qualifying for the next grade level. Test results show that a good percentage of the students are hitting the wall at around grade 9 and we are seeing a large drop-out rate at that level. The Ontario government, when Premier Harris first became elected, seeing that problem area - - and the system in Ontario at that time was the same system we have today -- if we make the changes that Harris made, we could change our system so that students are promoted based on their achievements.

I will be asking the Minister of Education what has been done since the last session to address this problem area. It is a problem area that is recognized by the Literacy Council. It has been a problem area that has definitely been recognized by industry. We do not seem to be matching our education system with the needs of the economy. As a result, Mr. Speaker, we are seeing a lot of our young people not benefiting from the opportunities that are available in the Northwest Territories.

As an MLA representing small aboriginal communities, I receive a lot of complaints that the mines are hiring people from the south and flying them over to go to work when they need workers. The mines are clearly saying for a lot of reasons, and safety being one of the major ones, they are not educated enough and they are not qualified. Why are we not providing an educational system that ensures our children and our young people will qualify for the opportunities we have in the Northwest Territories?

I will be asking the Minister of Education whether anything is being done to change the system we have, because clearly, it is not working. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Acknowledgement of Queen's Golden Jubilee Story Contest Winners

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to acknowledge and thank those students from Mangilaluk School in Tuktoyaktuk who took part in the Queen's Golden Jubilee Story Contest.

Mr. Speaker, elementary school students from across the NWT were invited to write stories about what they would show Queen Elizabeth if she visited their community. Four grade 6 students from Mangilaluk School in Tuktoyaktuk won awards.

Kate Ann Jacobson and Dana Panaktaluk tied for second place in the grade 4 to 6 category.

Ryland Anderson won third place and Nolan Felix received an honourable mention.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues in this House to join me today in congratulating these students and thanking their

teachers as well for encouraging them to participate in the contest. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Professionals

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is the number one issue for Canadians and for the NWT, along with the rest of Canada. Talk to constituents, read the paper, look at the help wanted ads, health care is the number one topic and concern of perhaps everyone but the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Whether the Minister realizes it or not, the foundation of the NWT health care system is approaching a crisis. The Minister can reorganize the department and tinker with the board structure, but the foundation of the health care system, the doctors, nurses and allied health care professionals, may not be there to operate it.

The territorial government funds 60 medical physicians. Fifty-one are now staffed, Mr. Speaker. The NWT Medical Association advocates that there should be as many as 83 positions staffed in the NWT. That is 32 more than we have now. Whether we need 73 or 83, the point is that we are not even close to the number of our fully funded positions.

Mr. Speaker, recruitment and retention plans are not cutting it. Can the Minister substantiate that the medical system, whether it is here or in Tuktoyaktuk or Fort Smith, has the health care professionals that should be in place? What additional costs are we facing by not adequately managing the basics of our health care system? The Minister is quoted as saying that we rank up there fully well in terms of benefits and salary, but why is the intensive care unit at the Stanton Regional Hospital closing? Why are waiting times to see general practitioners increasing? Why does it take so long to see other health care specialists?

Many existing professionals are being called upon to do unreasonable overtime. There are limits in the number of hours that truck drivers or pilots can work. Is there a limit on the hours we ask our health care employees to work and still provide competent service?

Doctors are telling us that we are not going to attract new recruits or even MDs on even a temporary basis. While we do not have to be at the top end of the salary and remuneration scale, Mr. Speaker, we do have to look at where we sit relative to all the jurisdictions.

The Minister needs to focus efforts on immediately resolving the situation with doctors, nurses, and allied care professionals. Unless there is prompt action, the Minister can count on continuing questions concerning health care in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Consultation in Aboriginal Communities

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I wish to raise the issue of consultation and the impact it has on our communities when not undertaken properly and consistently. What is the meaning of consultation? How do we achieve it? What are our obligations to aboriginal communities when resource activity takes place?

Mr. Speaker, this issue was important enough to be recognized and considered by the Supreme Court of Canada. In that decision, the Supreme Court stated there is always a duty for consultation, for which the nature and scope will vary with circumstances. It went on to state that consultation must be done in good faith with the intention of substantially addressing the concerns of aboriginal people whose lands are at issue.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to review a report entitled, Aboriginal Communities and Non-Renewable Resource Development, a report prepared by the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. The report used the North as a case study because we illustrate the many complex issues affecting aboriginal communities throughout Canada.

The report touched on many issues, one being the importance of consultation in aboriginal communities. Four important principles for successful consultation were identified in this report, which I feel are important enough to bring to your attention:

1. Consultation should occur early in planning;
2. Parties' expectations need to be clarified at the outset;
3. Differences in language and culture must be taken into account; and
4. Adequate funding for aboriginal participation is required.

It is important that this government support our communities when support is requested on the matter of consultation. We have to take the issue of consultation seriously because when we do not, we hear and see the negative impacts it has on our communities.

With potential increasing resource development activities in the North and the impact it will have on our lives, our communities, our land and our waters, it is important and imperative that we ensure any consultation process consider these four principles.

Consultation requires a systematic approach that allows for full and effective participation by all parties. It is important that all parties in the consultation process understand the roles and responsibilities, and these roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined in order to avoid uncertainties.

When an imbalance of resources required to address issues must be considered, where necessary, adequate resources and support from this government must be made available in a timely manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Inuvik's Rising Housing Costs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about an issue that is looming in the community I represent. It is not something that is new but it comes around in cycles, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, economic booms have their own side effects and some of them are not positive ones. That is what we are finding in the community of Inuvik. It is in the area of housing, Mr. Speaker. As the business community has become very busy and as the market has tightened up, rents have increased and there has been difficulty for those trying to find accommodations in the community of Inuvik.

I was recently contacted, Mr. Speaker, by someone who was given notice that their rent would rise or go up by approximately \$500 a month come September. Mr. Speaker, that is a huge increase for someone in a one-bedroom apartment. It is these kinds of messages that go out. It seems like the community is successful and everything else, but with the housing market tightening up, we are having more and more of a difficult time keeping professionals and keeping long-time residents in their own units. Those who were able to take care of themselves and support their own needs are now going to be in the position of having to go to Education, Culture and Employment for income support to find out if they could qualify, for example, for hardship allowance.

I do not think any intention was out there for success to bring this kind of impact to any communities but, Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Minister of the Housing Corporation to find out if there are any things in place that would protect those who find themselves in a rental market from increases, and what is there for them to look at when these things come around? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Member's Statement on Hay River Play School Auction

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is not everyday I get to rise and make a good news statement but today, I will make a good news statement.

It is my distinct pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to have attended and taken part as the emcee for the 9th Annual Hay River Play School Auction held in Hay River on May 11th. Mr. Speaker, the parents of children attending the Hay River Play School have undertaken this event for the last nine years in order to raise funds for a new building for the Hay River Play School. The present building was in deplorable condition and the state of the building was causing the parents grave concern for safety reasons.

Mr. Speaker, the Play School Auction this year raised approximately \$21,000. This is truly a testament to the hard work of all of the parents. My sincere thanks also go out to the numerous citizens and businesses of Hay River who donated goods and services to the auction.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, it gives me great pleasure to publicly thank the Honourable Roger Allen, Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, for his department's generous donation of two housing lots in Hay River to the Hay River Play School.

-- Applause

These two lots were made available so they may build a new building to house the play school.

Mr. Speaker, this has been the dream of the play school parents for a number of years. The parents have single-handedly raised tens of thousands of dollars towards this initiative. With the equity in the existing property and building, they will be able to reach their goal. I am pleased to report, Mr. Speaker, that plans are currently underway for the new play school and construction is to begin this summer. This is very welcome news for Hay River, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to commend the parents of the Hay River Play School for their diligence and conviction in seeing this project a reality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Dogrib Land Claim and Self-Government Negotiations

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Dogrib land claim and self-government negotiations have been going on for close to ten years now. According to media reports, negotiators are on the verge of making an important step. I understand the next important step is the initialling by the negotiators for the three parties, the Dogrib, the GNWT, and the Government of Canada. Once a final agreement is initialled, each of the three parties will be recommending the Dogrib Agreement to their respective associations.

The government negotiators will seek the approval of their legislators. The Dogrib negotiators will bring the agreement to their people for a vote. The Dogrib negotiators have said that they would like to initial the final agreement at the 11th Dogrib Assembly in Wha Ti this coming August.

The Dogrib Agreement includes land ownership and self-government powers. It will be the first of its kind in the Northwest Territories. It will be a reality in the Northwest Territories and within Canada as a whole.

Finally, this meeting will mark an historical moment for the Dogrib as well as for the Northwest Territories. Political direction and support is needed to guide the territorial negotiators through this critical period. At the appropriate time, I will have questions for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Improving Benefits and Working Conditions for Health Care Professionals

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the statement from the Minister responsible for the Public Service celebrating National Public Service Week, and about how we count on the energy, commitment and abilities of our employees to deliver essential services. Given the dire situation in our health care field, I have to wonder if this government really means what they say when they say they value their employees.

I have to also wonder if this government is willing to show as much dedication and commitment as these workers are being asked to give to their employers and the public that they serve.

As we speak, Mr. Speaker, the health care workers are urging their fellow members of the UNW to reject the latest collective agreement. There is talk of a walkout by the workers at Stanton Hospital at noon tomorrow in protest against the lack of movement in improving benefits packages and working conditions.

Under this package that has been negotiated, we will not be able to attract any new health care professionals and chances are that we will continue to lose the workers we already have. We have a shortage in every area of health care delivery, Mr. Speaker. We have a shortage of specialists, a shortage of doctors, nurses, physiotherapists -- the waiting list is six months long, and yet we have a government and a Minister of Health who seem to be deaf to the voices of these people.

Mr. Speaker, I have to ask, what would it take for the Minister to understand that our health care workers are operating in a crisis mode? The closure of the ICU is not a small matter, Mr. Speaker. It is not where the elective work is done, or where people can go and take their time going there. This is where people go when they have a heart attack. Right now, we have the only intensive care unit in the whole Northwest Territories closed. The nearest place is Edmonton, or Fort McMurray, which we have already been invited to use. Our patients have already been sent there.

I understand that ICU and surgery have tried as long as they can to operate, and they have had to avoid a near disaster...

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Lee, the time for your very important statement has ended. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to continue with her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may continue, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the Minister has to do more, that the health care system cannot wait for him to implement a health action plan in the year 2003 or whenever. The time is now and I expect action from him. I will be pursuing questions with the Minister on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return to Question 136-14(5): NWT Economic Development Advisory Forum

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Oral Question asked by Mr. McLeod on Tuesday, March 5th, regarding the mandate of the NWT Economic Development Advisory Forum.

The NWT Economic Development Advisory Forum was established by the Intergovernmental Forum in January 2002. It is mandated to provide advice and recommendations to the Intergovernmental Forum on pan-territorial and regional economic development issues. The advisory forum will have an important role to play in providing advice on the setting of priority directions, informing policy development and influencing program design and implementation related to economic development in the NWT.

The objectives of the advisory forum are to:

- increase the participation of aboriginal people in economic policies;
- enhance the quality and effectiveness of economic programming in the NWT;
- provide for NWT input and meaningful participation in the development of federal economic policies;
- find more collaborative approaches in addressing economic development issues; and
- ensure that the decisions made respect cultural diversity, land claims and sustainable development.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Minister. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a number of people here in the gallery today whom I would like to recognize. First of all, I would like to recognize Rita Cazon, a long-time resident of Fort Simpson. She is accompanying Tammy, her daughter, and her husband, Brent Squirrel. They are awaiting the arrival of their first child. Mahsi.

-- Applause

Also, Mr. Speaker, I have five other individuals here as well: Donat Savoie, Rachel Dubois, Pierre Landry, Roch Taillefer, Monique DuFour. Mr. Speaker, Donat Savoie and I go back a long ways. He and I were involved in coordinating the Papal visit in 1984 and 1987 to Fort Simpson. He is currently working on a claim in Makavik in Northern Quebec. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. I am sure they will be able to appraise my French. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to welcome to the gallery two people from Tuktoyaktuk, Mr. and Mrs. William Nasogaluak. William and his wife, Eunice, are the previous owners of Canadian Reindeer Limited, the only commercial reindeer herd in Canada. William is also a past member of the Tuktoyaktuk Hamlet Council. I wish to welcome them to the gallery.

-- Applause

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the university student I have working out of my office this summer, Jeremy Jaud, a Yellowknife resident. He is going into his final year of university and he is a nationally ranked swimmer and an invaluable asset to the office. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the people in Lutsel'k'e and Fort Resolution, even though they are not here. I would also like to recognize my constituency assistant, Mr. Steven Norn, who is also a university student at the University of Lethbridge. He will be joining my office for the summer to represent the constituents of Tu Nedhe and the people of the Northwest Territories. Welcome, Steven. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Although they are not here in person, they are here in spirit. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Thank you for coming to your Legislative Assembly. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 235-14(5): Appeals of Rental Increases

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following on my Member's statement, I would like to know from the Minister of the Housing Corporation, what is in place today that would help those who find themselves in rental situations where they have concerns that their rents are going up by too much? Is there anything in place at this time that they can go to or check into? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 235-14(5): Appeals of Rental Increases

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In our research, we are finding that there are no legal statutes that

govern rent control in the Northwest Territories. We understand there are certain statutes in other jurisdictions, which we would like to take time to review. This question came upon us suddenly. We are not prepared because in our consultation with the numerous developers in the high impact zones across the Northwest Territories, the developers are saying not to interfere with rent scales. That is my reply, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 235-14(5): Appeals of Rental Increases

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I understand the Minister's situation of not having a lot of information when it comes to rent control or something of that nature. What I am looking for at this time is, is there anything in place, existing today that individuals can check into to find out how they can work with either landlords or this government to lessen the impact on themselves? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 235-14(5): Appeals of Rental Increases

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not aware of anything specific. I believe the Tenant Relations Act may have some components in it that would try to circumvent the increase in rents. I believe that the relationship is normally between the landlord and the tenant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. No further supplementaries? Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 236-14(5): Social Passing Policy

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Education, Mr. Joe Handley. Mr. Speaker, the system we use in the Northwest Territories is called social passing, where students are promoted to the next grade based on their age and the age of their peers. As I said in my Member's statement, that sets them up for failure. We are graduating more students but we are educating less.

I would like to ask the Minister, what is the department doing to address that very fundamental concern in our system? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 236-14(5): Social Passing Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue the Member raises is a very controversial one and one on which there is a lot of debate. I agree, social passing means keeping students with their peers regardless of them having achieved the grade level. That is not good. Also, holding them back has proven not to be good either, and we find a lot of students who

are held back for a long time never really catch up with their peers again. They are doomed to most likely drop out of school.

In spite of that, the department has done a number of things to try and address this problem. I can go to the detail on some of them if the Member likes. We have a School Improvement Pilot Project. We have done a lot of work on early childhood education, both in working with parents and young children to give the young children a good start. We are dealing with class size issues and also looking at our high schools. I would be prepared to go into some detail on all of these if the Member wishes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 236-14(5): Social Passing Policy

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if the Minister answered my question. One of the bigger challenges we face in the education system is imposed by outside influences. FAS/FAE is becoming a major problem in the Northwest Territories. We all know students who are suffering from FAS/FAE are slower in learning. This social passing is going to be a hindrance because those kids are going to be holding other students back and it is not working.

I would like to ask the Minister, is the department looking at anything different than what he has mentioned? The social passing is not the way to go. Anything different, anything new? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 236-14(5): Social Passing Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, in Education, we do not even use the term social passing. We try not to think of it as just social passing, but more one of trying to keep students where they are comfortable with their peers.

First of all, on FAS/FAE, we do have support for inclusive schooling. That support this year has gone up to 15 percent as it is worked into the formula. We have increased the support to help with students who are having difficulties learning. A lot of our classrooms have classroom assistants and other supports, special needs teachers as well, to help the teachers.

We also require the teachers to report back to the parents accurately on what grade level the student is working at, regardless of which classroom they are sitting in. If someone is 15 years old and only reading or doing math at a grade 3 level, we want the teachers to be honest with the parents and tell them exactly where the student is performing at.

We are working with our teachers to make sure they have a full range of skills in the school wherever possible and also, all the specialized program support they can get their hands on to work with those students.

The amount of money that has gone into helping children improve in school has increased considerably. We have also

lowered our funding from the department to the schools down to using a formula of 16.5 students per teacher. That will go down to 16 next year.

There are a whole range of things we are doing as a department to try to help those students who are having difficulties working at a grade level appropriate for their age. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 236-14(5): Social Passing Policy

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my riding in the community of Fort Resolution, seven students were sent by their parents down to Edmonton to attend a school that is not sponsored by this government or any government because the students could not participate in the classroom. They were constantly getting suspended.

They were taken down to Alberta. They have a system where they work with the children using the Alberta curriculum. I have just seen the results of their marks. Their marks have gone up by almost 100 percent. Those students could not function in our school system and they are able to do it in Alberta.

Why are the students getting suspended from schools and are not able to get through the process of graduating to the next level in our system but are able to do it south of the 60th parallel without funds from this government? Why, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 236-14(5): Social Passing Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not familiar with the program in Alberta that the Member is referring to. It might be a special program. In any school system, what we do in the school has a big impact on the children. Also, the activities and things that the students are involved with in the community have a big impact. It takes both the community and the teachers to work together in order to have a successful student.

I am not familiar with the program in Alberta and how they deal with those issues, but as part of the mandate of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, we do look at the family and try to work with the family to be able to deal with those issues. Often there are social issues that cause students to either leave school, be sent home from school or suspended from school, or whatever things might be happening that make learning impossible.

I would be interested to know more about the school in Alberta and what their successes are. We do have a school improvement pilot project that is intended to look at things like that. School education authorities can apply for funding to try out some of these new ideas. If the Member would share with me the name of the school and what its programs are, I would be interested in giving it to the education authorities and telling them to give us a proposal on how they might improve their school similar to the Alberta one. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 236-14(5): Social Passing Policy

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the school in question is called SICES in Edmonton. I will provide that information to the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, industry in the Northwest Territories, such as BHP, is doing a lot for literacy. Literacy is the key to education, according to industry. Throughout the North, the Minister is working with industry to make the curriculum consistent with the needs of the economy in the Northwest Territories. If we do not match that, then we do not really have an economy. An education is almost an economic process.

Is the Minister in contact with industry to ensure that curriculum is developed to achieve the needs of not only the people of the Northwest Territories but the economy of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 236-14(5): Social Passing Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I personally have not had a chance to be in contact with industry with regard to education specifically. I do know that the department has been working closely with industry for a number of years now at the college level in particular to try to design our program to fit the needs in industry.

We are also looking at the school improvement program, the successful schools project and a number of other initiatives to see if there are ways that we can make our schools more successful. Success means students going on to further training and jobs, so that ties in with industry.

We have been doing a lot of work on adult basic education. We are doing some work with youth employment. There is a whole range of areas we are working with. I am not familiar with the detail of each of these specific programs right now, but I will assure the Member that we will continue to work with industry. If there are ways of improving that, then we will do it.

I have personally been involved with community mobilization, for example, the young people who run an organization called Nexus, to do this and draw that link between industry and young people. I find a lot of those initiatives through the private sector are the way that we have to take a lot of our schools. Thank you.

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

Question 237-14(5): Dogrib Treaty 11 Land Claim

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Honourable Jim Antoine. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, the Dogrib Agreement has been in progress for ten long years. It is only

natural and expected that one day, a final agreement will be reached. Through the commitments from the negotiators for all three parties, that day is reported to be near. I would like to ask the Minister if the territorial government is committed to helping to wrap up the Dogrib Agreement for the important step of initialing this summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 237-14(5): Dogrib Treaty 11 Land Claim

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, the Dogrib Treaty 11 negotiations have been going on for quite a number of years. We as a government have our own negotiating team at the table. We have been doing everything we can over the few years to try to move this claim forward.

Although negotiators are working very hard to initial a final agreement this year, there remains some very difficult issues, including the issues of who will pay for incremental costs, the whole subject of certainty provisions, which is the old extinguishment clause. Certainty provisions have been a big issue. The decision on certainty is expected from Canada very soon.

Of course, there is the whole issue of the Dogrib and the Akaitcho First Nations having not reached an agreement over the boundary and overlap issues, which is also a very big issue, which I identified early on was going to be a big issue and it is. The Akaitcho have recently gone to court over this issue. Whether or not an injunction is granted with respect to the Akaitcho Dene First Nations settlement of claim could have an affect on when negotiations are concluded.

There is still a great deal of work to be done but the negotiators are working hard to conclude negotiations as soon as possible. There is another negotiation session slated to be next week, for about a week to ten days in Ottawa. At that time, we will have a better indication of where we are at. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 237-14(5): Dogrib Treaty 11 Land Claim

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for the extra information that he has given us, but I would like to ask the Minister, if the federal government and the Dogrib are ready to initial, will the territorial government be ready? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 237-14(5): Dogrib Treaty 11 Land Claim

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, negotiations are still going on at this point in time. Like I said, there is a negotiation session next week and we will have a better indication at that time of where we are at. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 237-14(5): Dogrib Treaty 11 Land Claim

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if he can tell us, the information that he has given us, is that the only thing that is holding back the negotiations from being initialled? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 237-14(5): Dogrib Treaty 11 Land Claim

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is the matter of the court case that is out there, as well as the other major items that are on the table. In talking and discussing with the Akaitcho First Nations, there is a possibility of going after an MOU with the federal government that we are currently working on with DIAND and Minister Nault.

There are things in the works at this point in time. To come out and say whether we are going to initial at that point or not is very difficult. I do not think the Dogrib could say at this point in time that they will initial in August because all of these big subject areas of uncertainty and the incremental cost, the full financing issue has not been settled. It is very difficult for any party to say at this time that they will initial in August. Thank you.

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

Question 238-14(5): Community Consultation for Resource Development

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I talked about the importance of community consultation when it came to resource development or resource activities, and stated that it was imperative that four principles be recognized when dealing with community consultation: that consultation occurs early, that expectations are clarified at the outset, differences in language and culture are taken into account, and adequate resources and funding are in place.

I want to ask my question to the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. I would like to ask, can he tell me what the department's policy and process is for community consultation when it comes to resource development in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 238-14(5): Community Consultation for Resource Development

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has regularly consulted with the public on the issues in a variety of different initiatives and we have also provided funding to assist

community capacity and consultation, so we have done a lot of consultation in a number of various different areas.

For example, in the interim resource management agreement, the development of the Wildlife Act and species at risk, and core funding, we have done a lot of consultation. The exact policy, how it is laid out, whether we comply with the honourable Member's principles -- I could say that yes, we are very sensitive to the different principles that he has laid out, but I would have to ask the department if there is a policy that they follow per se, a written policy. I have to get back to the Member on this one. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 238-14(5): Community Consultation for Resource Development

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to know if the Minister could tell me, further to the policy, if there are any resources, be they financial or human, that are earmarked to assist communities. Are there any programs or identified funds for communities to take advantage of to deal with resource development, or is it ad hoc and the department gives it to whoever, first come, first serve, or whoever seems to need it the most? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 238-14(5): Community Consultation for Resource Development

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, RWED does provide the funding to different interest groups, different community groups in certain areas. We have contributed annually to the different groups in regard to the interim resource management agreements that we have had. As well, when we are developing the Wildlife Act and Species at Risk Act, we have also made funds available to communities to provide consultation. We also have core funding to the Hunters' and Trappers' Association to provide administrative support to the association on an annual basis.

There are different categories of funding that we have in RWED that go out to the communities. In certain areas, I think in the resource development, we do not have contribution funding per se, but we do allow for an application-by-application review. We have funded different communities in the past based on that. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 238-14(5): Community Consultation for Resource Development

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my opinion, the funding for resource development for communities to access is kind of hit-and-miss, ad hoc. It is really a problem in the communities where we need expertise, resources and advice.

I would like to ask the Minister, would his department be willing to enter into standing agreements with forums that could do just that; provide research and do the advising to the

communities, providing them with resource development information in a timely manner? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 238-14(5): Community Consultation for Resource Development

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, we will entertain reasonable requests for looking at the different expertise that is out there to provide all the help that we can get into the communities if we cannot provide it through the department. Thank you.

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

Question 239-14(5): Recruitment of Health Care Professionals

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger. He was recently quoted in a newspaper story about the health care situation that everything is in hand here, we are taking care of business in difficult times. Indeed, times are difficult, especially when we see our neighbours in the Yukon, who have increased funding for physicians to the extent of 43 percent.

My question for the Minister is, what is our competitive position in recruiting doctors and nurses today relative to other jurisdictions in Canada? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 239-14(5): Recruitment of Health Care Professionals

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to first point out that I am the Minister of Health and Social Services, and that means the entire system from the 60th parallel right up to Holman.

Mr. Speaker, I indicated to the press last week that we are in a competitive position. That we are in, it is my understanding, the top 10 percent when it comes to nurses. We are competitive, though not at the front of the class, when it comes to doctors.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out at this time, as this House is sitting and we are in the capital, there are currently union agreements being ratified and there are negotiations with doctors underway. I am not in a position, nor do I think it is appropriate, to comment on issues relating to that particular process. It is clear that there is some unhappiness at Stanton but there is a ratification process underway as we speak, and I think we should respect that. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 239-14(5): Recruitment of Health Care Professionals

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, I too want to respect any bargaining positions and situations that are going on out there, but my question is really in relation to our ability to attract and retain professionals. I would perhaps pose another related question, and hopefully one that the Minister can respond to. This is in relation to the number of doctors that are funded in the Northwest Territories.

Currently, we fund 60 positions, about 51 of them are staffed. My question is, given that we could recruit to our fully funded allotment, is that number adequate to fulfill and sustain the multitude of needs that are on our doctors and our medical professionals today? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 239-14(5): Recruitment of Health Care Professionals

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, clearly if we could attract and recruit additional line doctors that would fulfill our complement, that would be a singular accomplishment and it would help to ease the stress on the system.

Mr. Speaker, we are also in the process of recruiting nurses. We have some graduates coming through the system this year, approximately nine, I understand. There are nearly 30 in the final year for next year. We are also actively recruiting in all of the other allied health professions.

Mr. Speaker, if we could fill those positions that we have funded, it would be, in my opinion, a singular achievement and would help relieve the stress and burden on the system. Are 60 doctors adequate? The Medical Association would say that we need possibly another 20 to 30. That is a number that is very high, in our opinion. We are close on a comparative basis and our initial goal is to just try and get our full complement staffed, which we have already funded. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 239-14(5): Recruitment of Health Care Professionals

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In relation to the overall cost and budget area, there are discussions underway with our partners in the Capital Health Authority in the Edmonton area. We rely on this organization to supply a number of the specialty services that we cannot fulfill here. Can the Minister advise on the status of those negotiations and our continuing reliability on the Capital Health Authority? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 239-14(5): Recruitment of Health Care Professionals

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are close to a final agreement with the Capital Health Authority. There are some final details being worked out. I have been informed that we do have a long history and a good working relationship and a contractual arrangement with the Capital Health Authority. I am fully confident that we will be continuing that relationship. It has not been renegotiated since 1996, so we are trying to be as vigilant and diligent in terms of the costs as is possible. We fully anticipate that we will have an agreement in the next few weeks. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 240-14(5): Suspension of the Business Incentive Policy

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we had quite a bit of discussion in the House about the Business Incentive Policy. We have heard that Cabinet can waive the Business Incentive Policy when it suits them and that they did this because they think they are going to save money. They are not going to change their mind about this. That is what we have heard to date.

That being the case, it would appear that there is a new policy now that the BIP can be waived at the discretion of Cabinet. Seeing as this door has now been opened for this case-by-case, ad hoc consideration of application of the Business Incentive Policy, I would like to ask the Deputy Premier if Cabinet will now entertain other proposals to waive the BIP to save money. Thank you.

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

Return to Question 240-14(5): Suspension of the Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the North Slave Correctional Centre second phase is the only project where there was a Cabinet decision to waive the BIP. That is the only one at this point in time. The intention is not to entertain any other projects at this time. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 240-14(5): Suspension of the Business Incentive Policy

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It would seem that the Cabinet does have the discretionary ability to waive the BIP when it involves taxpayers' dollars and they can save money. That is what they have been telling us. Why would they not consider other applications to waive the BIP where it would accomplish the same thing? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 240-14(5): Suspension of the Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if we come into another situation, such as we did in the second phase of the North Slave Correctional Institute, and the Department of Public Works and Services, which is administering the project on our behalf, makes the recommendations to us as Cabinet, then we will entertain that. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 240-14(5): Suspension of the Business Incentive Policy

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are elected to represent our constituents here in this Legislature. Is the Deputy Premier saying he would not allow or would not have the various Ministers responsible for departments bring forward such possible decision papers to Cabinet on behalf of their departments? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 240-14(5): Suspension of the Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we certainly are open to discussing this with AOC, these possibilities, but at this point in time, the issue is the North Slave Correctional Institute. The first phase of it had a cost overrun. We were told that the estimate for the second phase was also going to be a cost overrun.

To come back to the Legislative Assembly for additional supplementary appropriation, we did not want to do that. When we were trying to look to see all the other options, to see if we could bring the costs down, we decided to waive the BIP policy on the second phase to hopefully save money. That is the only reason we have entertained this and made a Cabinet decision as such. It is the only decision at this point in time. There are no other projects that we are looking at to waive the BIP at this time. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 240-14(5): Suspension of the Business Incentive Policy

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, maybe the Deputy Premier could tell me if the Business Incentive Policy is under review by this government at this time? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 240-14(5): Suspension of the Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the Business Incentive Policy has been under review since January 2001. There has been a lot of consultation that has

gone to the businesses. There has been a lot of feedback. The Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development is bringing forward a decision paper to Cabinet at the end of this month to see if it has any support there. There are definitely going to be some changes, if it passes through Cabinet, to the Business Incentive Policy. Thank you.

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

Question 241-14(5): Review of the Business Incentive Policy

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is also on the cancellation of the BIP policy. I do not know which Minister to ask now because there have been a lot of different Ministers answering it. Maybe I could follow up with the last question to the Deputy Premier.

Are we to understand that in the government's review of BIP that there is a possibility of scrapping this altogether? Is there an indication of that there? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 241-14(5): Review of the Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question is are we going to totally scrap the Business Incentive Policy? No, we are going to be revising it according to the recommendations made by the consultation process that we have undergone for the last two years or so. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 241-14(5): Review of the Business Incentive Policy

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answers that the Members here have been receiving from Cabinet have done nothing but cause more confusion and dismay by the public. I received calls this morning from the Construction Association asking whether or not it is even worth it to have this meeting when the Cabinet has already decided on their position and there seems to be no room to budge.

I would like to ask the Deputy Premier whether or not there is any openness for any kind of input from the Construction Association, or anybody else who is at the meeting, to get out of this situation without cancelling the BIP? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 241-14(5): Review of the Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our intention is to go ahead with the meeting with the Construction Association. We have not received any formal request not to have this meeting, so at this point in time, we are still going to have this meeting. The intention is to listen to them. We also would like to state to them clearly the reasons

why we are doing what we are doing as a Cabinet in regard to waiving the BIP on the second phase of this project. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 241-14(5): Review of the Business Incentive Policy

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am still not hearing from the Minister that the government representatives who will be at the meeting are open to alternative suggestions in a real way, and not a case where the government is going to tell them what they think and that is that and the meeting is over. In which case, why bother? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 241-14(5): Review of the Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to meet with the Construction Association myself and hear direction from them, their concerns, and they could hear directly from us our concerns. The meeting is still going ahead, as far as I am concerned.

This is a Cabinet decision, so we have to stick by this decision. The bids are out. We will know by the end of this month what kind of response there is to these bids. We are talking close to the \$20 million range. Not too many companies up here could operate at that level. There are very few. It is a 15 percent advantage we are talking about here. We would like to see what is available in the market.

I think the Ordinary Members would also like to see that. We talk about numbers and we are talking about deficits. We are talking about a lot of things here that are very important to us. We are talking about public money. We are trying to do the best we can here as a government, to see what kind of dollars we could get out of the process we are trying at this point in time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 241-14(5): Review of the Business Incentive Policy

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday and today, the information we heard from the government is that there is really no proof or facts or evidence to show that the BIP is the problem. Would the Minister have any better information of what the impact of BIP is on this proposal that led them to cancel it for their own benefit? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 241-14(5): Review of the Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue is dollars here, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, the history of this

project, it started off as a \$35.2 million project. We just came here to the House a couple of months ago for another \$5.6 million for the first phase. We are told that the estimates for the second phase, we might have to come back here for another \$4 million or \$5 million. We knew it was very tough to do that last time, so we have to look at all the options.

One of the options is to try taking the BIP policy away for this one-time shot to see what kind of proposal, what kind of bids we receive, not only from the northern companies but from the southern. This does not preclude the northern companies to bid as well. They are available to bid if they want. Thank you.

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

Question 242-14(5): Business Incentive Policy

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in response to one of the questions asked by my colleague, Mrs. Groenewegen, on this BIP policy, I heard the Minister answer that this is a North Slave Corrections issue. I would tend to argue with that.

I would tend to argue that this is a BIP policy issue. You cannot take the BIP policy and just set it aside and make it a North Slave Corrections issue, no more than you can make it any other issue. There are other issues at stake right now with the BIP policy that nobody is wanting to look at because supposedly, our hands are tied by the BIP policy.

Now, either we have a BIP policy or we do not. If we do not have a BIP policy, then no BIP policy should be used in the contract, and just say it only applies to this one project because that is very unfair to the whole of the Northwest Territories.

We are expending taxpayers' dollars, and if we can justify spending extra money to keep the BIP policy in place in one area, we can do it in other areas. Is the BIP policy in place or is it not, Mr. Speaker?

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Since there was no direction as to where this was going to go, I will direct the question to the Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 242-14(5): Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I take the honourable Member's point. I understand it very well. I have to stand by the Cabinet decision at this point in time, but yes, the BIP policy still applies. For this one part of the North Slave Correctional Centre, the phase two portion of it, we have waived the BIP. It was a Cabinet decision to do that to try to entertain what kinds of bids we would get. At the end of the day, we may not get what we had hoped to get. We still may have to come back here for a supplementary appropriation anyway, but we just wanted to try this on this one issue.

The Government of the Northwest Territories has been strongly demanding and encouraging companies doing business in the Northwest Territories to spend in the North and buy in the North, and we will continue to do so. We have always done that. We will continue to do so. The Government of the

Northwest Territories has and will continue to promote northern business in its development.

However, these agreements are not intended or written to be applied at any cost. Is it applicable at any cost? We have to ask that very important question. If northern companies cannot or fail to be competitive with certain parameters, then Cabinet should have that authority and obligation to take necessary actions at that point in time.

At this moment, we have decided that the numbers are estimated to come high, so let's waive the BIP and see what kind of bids we will receive. The bids will be received at the end of the month, so at that point in time, we will know if what we are trying to do is going to work and save us some dollars here in the North. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 242-14(5): Business Incentive Policy

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the answers to these questions, we seem to be getting more confused. On one hand, we are saying we are doing this to try and save money, but on the other hand, we are going to review every project now to see whether we are saving money by using the BIP or not using the BIP. That is what I am hearing.

Right now, we are not willing to look at any other project except this one. There is a contradiction here. The public has to know, are we spending extra government money to keep this BIP in place? Why should this project be different than any other? If it is only a matter of spending extra money because we want to keep the BIP in place, then I guess that is our policy. However, if it is wrong for one project, it should be wrong for all of them, so let's do one or the other.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. There was not a clear question there, but Mr. Deputy Premier, it is directed to you.

Further Return to Question 242-14(5): Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier to the previous Member on the BIP policy review, because there is a review underway and there is a decision paper that is going to Cabinet at the end of the month with the changes with the revised Business Incentive Policy, I would ask for your patience in awaiting this new, revised BIP policy. There will be opportunity, if a Cabinet decision is made, that we will share this information with you on the other side of the House for your comments and perhaps some suggestions at this stage.

I agree. It is a BIP policy. It has been around for a number of years. The intent in the beginning of this Business Incentive Policy was to help, enhance and protect our companies that are in the North, but we have a booming economy here in Yellowknife and certain areas, like in Inuvik. We have to review it very carefully. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 242-14(5): Business Incentive Policy

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of this government, I would gladly offer my patience to the Minister in waiting to try to get this thing addressed, but the people who are phoning me constantly on this issue do not like that answer when I say be patient with me, trust us, we will do a good job of it. It just does not work that way.

In another area of the BIP, I would like to have the Minister define what local means. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 242-14(5): Business Incentive Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is probably some real, more defined way of doing it someplace in the government's contracting policy, but for me, I would have to ask the appropriate Minister of Public Works and Services to provide me with the proper definition of what local means in terms of the BIP policy. I would like to get back to the Member on that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 242-14(5): Business Incentive Policy

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to also have an explanation as to how the 15 percent is administered under the BIP. Is the 15 percent taken on one particular bid and then applied to all tenders, so that the 15 percent is actually affecting every bid in the same way, or is it taken on each individual contract and 15 percent from there? It seems to me it would be more fair if whatever percentage they used, whatever bid they used, if that same amount is applied to every contract so that every contractor is affected the same way.

I would like an explanation as to how that 15 percent is arrived at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer this to the Minister of Public Works and Services. He is more hands-on with this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The question is referred to the honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Public Works and Services, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 242-14(5): Business Incentive Policy

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will try to respond to the Member's questions. The way the system works is that as the bids come in, a local bid is allowed 5 percent more than a territorial bid that is not local. In other words, a local bid would be allowed a 20 percent preference.

As an example, Mr. Speaker, if we received a bid from down south that was lower than any bid we received in the Territories, the territorial bids would then be calculated to see if they qualify for a 15 percent reduction or 20 percent reduction, and then those totals compared to the southern bid to see if in fact the territorial bid is lower. That is how it works. It does not necessarily apply to every portion of a contract that is under an umbrella project.

For instance, if the project is managed as this one is, although it is a \$20 million project, it consists of a number of smaller contracts, which could be from anywhere from \$100,000 to \$4 million or \$5 million. The local contractors, in some cases, find themselves bidding on a million-dollar contract, which to them is quite large. That is where we find that there is a possibility that the southern contractors may give us a better bid on portions of the contract.

I hope I am not confusing the thing, but that is basically how this contract is being handled. Thank you.

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

Question 243-14(5): Cabinet Response to House and Committee Motions

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday my colleague for the North Slave spoke about consensus government and how we should work towards improving that system. One of the tools that we have at our disposal is to pass motions in this House or in committee of the whole. Since I have been elected, I have seen the debates take a lot of time and energy and a lot of discussion. At times, there are motions passed. However, I have also recognized that some Ministers choose to ignore the motions that are passed.

I would like to ask the Deputy Premier if there is a protocol or a requirement for Ministers to act on motions that are passed in committee of the whole or in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 243-14(5): Cabinet Response to House and Committee Motions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the motions that come to the House from Ordinary Members are reviewed by government and the different departments that they are directed to. If appropriate action needs to be taken on those motions, then the decision is made at that time. Yes, every motion is considered and taken very seriously. Whether they are acted upon or not, depending on the nature of the motion, is another thing, but yes, they are taken by government and reviewed. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 243-14(5): Cabinet Response to House and Committee Motions

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I question whether some Ministers take these motions seriously. There are motions that have been passed and some have not received a response for

quite some time. I would like to ask if there is a time frame when we could expect some kind of recognition that there is some action being taken on these motions. Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 243-14(5): Cabinet Response to House and Committee Motions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a government, once a motion is made -- again, depending on the nature of the motion -- if it is for the government to take action on certain programs or certain initiatives that require funding, then we take those into consideration when we do the business plans. If it is a matter of concern that does not deal with financial issues or changing programs, then we try to make the necessary changes and we try to respect the nature of those motions.

As for a time frame, again, it depends on the nature of the motion. I think we are obligated, we should be obligated as a government to reply as soon as we can. If not, then the honourable Members should make note of that and let us know in which areas things should improve. I would like to say on behalf of the government that we are open to that. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 243-14(5): Cabinet Response to House and Committee Motions

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly agree with the Minister that this government should be obligated to respond. I would like to ask if there is any one person from Cabinet, be it the House Leader, the Premier or the Deputy Premier, that is tracking some of these motions that have been passed. Are there Ministers who are delinquent on some of these motions that have been passed either in committee of the whole or in the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. There are two questions there and the honourable Deputy Premier can answer whichever one he chooses. Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 243-14(5): Cabinet Response to House and Committee Motions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, each motion is tracked by each department, and the different Ministers are responsible for the type of reaction and response to these motions. As a total government -- I have to check on this and see whether it goes through the Premier's Office or not -- but as a line department Minister, I know that whenever motions go into the different departments, the Minister is responsible for responding to those motions and trying to act on those. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 243-14(5): Cabinet Response to House and Committee Motions

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. That may be part of the problem, that the Ministers are allowed to police themselves when it

comes to processing the motions. We have no mechanism and we have no real way of knowing if those motions are taken forward to Cabinet. Will the Deputy Premier consider a mechanism that will allow us to also be able to track where the motions are in terms of proceeding to Cabinet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 243-14(5): Cabinet Response to House and Committee Motions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the motions from the Ordinary Members are usually motions of recommendation, so it is really up to the different Ministers and departments to take these motions, review them and try to incorporate them into their operations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 244-14(5): Local Preference Provision of the BIP

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following up on the questions from my colleague for Hay River North, maybe the Minister of Public Works and Services could answer for me a question about the definition of local when it comes to BIP.

We have heard a lot of discussion today in the House about creating an equal playing field between southern companies and northern companies, but when the local percentage is applied, now we are talking quite often about competition and competitive bids between two northern companies. Then the issue of what is the definition of a local company becomes very important. I will give you a couple of examples.

For example, the headquarters for the departments of the government are all located in Yellowknife. It would stand to reason that those departments would do purchasing on behalf of numerous communities at a time. They would put something out to tender and following that logic that a Yellowknife company would be given local preference, but that does not mean that the product or service consumed is being used in Yellowknife. It could be redistributed across the Territories, and yet it would put Fort Smith, Hay River or Inuvik at a distinct disadvantage.

The issue of local preference is big too, so I would like the Minister of Public Works and Services to tell us what the definition of local is. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Before we go to the Minister, I would like to just remind Members about the use of long, detailed questions expecting long, detailed answers. Perhaps some of those are better as written questions and allow question period for much shorter questions. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Public Works and Services, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 244-14(5): Local Preference Provision of the BIP

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to accommodate the Member by being able to respond at this point in time. However, I do not have a copy of the Business Incentive Policy in front of me. In the Business Incentive Policy, there would be the specific definition of local. I am going to have to take this question as notice and supply the Member with an accurate description of what is meant by local. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The Minister is taking the question as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 245-14(5): Impacts of BIP Suspension

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is on the cancellation of BIP again, and I think I am posing my question to the Deputy Premier. He has indicated that Cabinet is free to make the decision to cancel a policy like the Business Incentive Policy whenever it deems it appropriate, necessary or whatever. I am assuming that Cabinet is free to do so with every other policy, I do not know. This is creating chaos rather than clarification.

The information we have right now is that there is no information on how much the Cabinet or government will benefit. It could be possible that Members on this side of the House may be able to accept this decision if we can be shown that by lifting or cancelling this BIP policy, the government stands to gain millions of dollars or whatever, but we do not have any evidence of that. Could the Minister provide that please?

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

Return to Question 245-14(5): Impacts of BIP Suspension

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question was to see what kind of savings or what kind of proof we have that there are going to be some cost savings. Like I said in my earlier statements, Mr. Speaker, we would like to wait until the bids are closed to try to gauge the amount of bids coming in. We will determine at that time whether what we are doing here is the right move.

The idea here is to try to finish this facility here in Yellowknife that is needed. This facility is needed in Yellowknife. The current facility has already exceeded its optimum life. That is the original intention here and we want to keep on doing that but we are just trying to find a different way to see if we can do the same thing for the price that is within our budget. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 245-14(5): Impacts of BIP Suspension

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It does not matter how many times we ask. What we are getting is because it is costing too much and the cost is out of control, we have to throw this policy out the window. It is missing the middle part.

They have to be able to say because throwing this out the window will show us that we are going to save \$2 million or \$3 million or \$4 million. What is really alarming is that Cabinet is not even establishing any criteria on what basis they will throw a policy out the window. Would they throw the Affirmative Action Policy out the window, for example, hoping that maybe we could do something better?

What other policies are there? There are hundreds of policies in government, and we have Cabinet saying, "We are going to throw it out the window but we do not know what the benefit would be, but we know it is going to help. We think it is going to help. Let's just see what happens."

What is the criteria on this government throwing out a policy?

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

Further Return to Question 245-14(5): Impacts of BIP Suspension

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the project, the North Slave Correctional Facility, which is in Yellowknife, we have funded the first phase of it. We came back here to the Legislative Assembly two months ago. We asked for another \$5.6 million in supplementary funding towards the overall price of this project to date.

The importance and the need for this facility in Yellowknife dictates that we may do so again, if we stuck to the BIP, and the estimates of the second phase also indicates that we are going to be way above our budget. That dictated that we were asked to come back to this House for additional dollars to finish this facility here in Yellowknife.

We cannot do so in good conscience without first assuring the honourable Members that all possible options have been explored. The decision to remove the BIP was made to increase the competitiveness of this bid and to broaden the base of companies bidding on the completion of this project.

There are very few companies in the North who could bid on these huge projects, very few. Some of them are grandfathered. Due to the boom in the economy, southern workers and southern supplies are used by the BIP companies anyway, so why do you not have faith and let's try this out? Are we all stuck on BIP?

That is the whole debate. Should we keep BIP or not? Like I said in my other statement, yes, we are reviewing the BIP policy. I think it is one area, one project that we see as Cabinet, let's try this method. We cannot prove to the honourable Member how many dollars we are going to save in this process. We have told you that a number of times already in the House. It is not confusing. Things are not in chaos. Things are under control. We are going to finish this facility here in Yellowknife. That is the intention of this government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. A short supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 245-14(5): Impacts of BIP Suspension

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know this is going to be in Yellowknife and we will get it done somehow. Mr. Speaker, costs in changing a policy like that has to involve more than just dollar costs. Look at the flip-flop. Why is this project made in such a way that it is so huge, it is \$20 million, and the Minister keeps saying only one or two businesses in the Territories could do it? Why was it done that way? Why could that not have been done any other way so more northern businesses could take advantage of it?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, details of why it was not done in a different way I think would be better explained by the Minister responsible for Public Works and Services, so I will refer the question to him. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Public Works and Services, the question has been referred to you, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 245-14(5): Impacts of BIP Suspension

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe we said yesterday that we did it in this manner because it was a fast-track project. We decided that we would hire a project manager for this project. It is not an all-inclusive type of contract or tender that was let. It includes a number of different aspects of the project. Both phases are the same.

In phase one, it could have been as much as 20 different tenders put out for different aspects of the work. It was not just one or two. There were one or two large portions to it, but overall, it was broken down into quite a few different tenders. These tenders were put out by the project manager, PCL.

Some of these projects were in the million dollar range and they were quite large in relation to what is normally handled by local contractors, so therefore, they found themselves having to go south for materials, having to go south for manpower, for everything, because of the already inflated market. Everything became higher cost -- everything.

That is where the overall aspect of this is, that we are hoping that by waiving the BIP, we will get more bidders on the broken down portions of the contracts. Tenders will be let, and they are already let.

Some of these portions of the project, Mr. Speaker, there is no expertise in the Territory for that type of work. These people are coming from down south. We do not expect to gain anything in that aspect of the work. However, we feel that we may gain something on the electrical or the mechanical aspects of the projects, things like that where we may receive better bids. That is why we are doing what we are doing, but it is not one or two large contracts. It is broken down into many portions of the project. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The time for question period has ended. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns 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 Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 35-14(5): Social Agenda: A Draft for People of the NWT

Tabled Document 36-14(5): Northwest Territories Social Programs and Services, A Living Inventory

Tabled Document 37-14(5): Northwest Territories Recommendations on Social Issues, 1988-2002

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents, entitled: Social Agenda, A Draft for People of the Northwest Territories; Northwest Territories Social Programs and Services, A Living Inventory; and Northwest Territories Recommendations on Social Issues, 1988-2002. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Tabled Document 38-14(5): Yellowknifer Article Entitled "Stanton Staff Speak," June 12, 2002

Tabled Document 39-14(5): Yellowknifer Article Entitled "ICU Closes Early," June 12, 2002

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table two articles from the Wednesday, June 12th edition of the Yellowknifer. One is entitled Stanton's Staff Speak, and the other, ICU Closes Early. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 10-14(5): Tabled Document 35-14(5) into Committee of the Whole

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, June 14, 2002, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Tabled Document 35-14(5), Social Agenda, A Draft for People of the NWT, be moved into committee of the whole for consideration. At the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today.

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

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 10-14(5): Tabled Document 35-14(5) into Committee of the Whole

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Tabled Document 35-14(5), Social Agenda, A Draft for People of the NWT, be moved into committee of the whole for discussion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Bill 3, Bill 6, Bill 11, Minister's Statement 46-14(5), Minister's Statement 47-14(5) and Tabled Document 35-14(5), with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I will call committee of the whole to order. We have a number of items before the committee today; Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act; Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act; Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act; Minister's Statement 46-14(5); Minister's Statement 47-14(5) and Tabled Document 35-14(5). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The committee would like to consider Bill 3, Bill 6 and Bill 11 in that order, time permitting. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. We will take a short break.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I will call committee of the whole back to order. We are dealing with Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act. Does the Minister have any opening comments? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, schedule A of the Public Service Act sets out who is included in the public service. We are proposing an amendment to update schedule A of the Public Service Act to reflect changes in other legislation and regulations.

Prior to the fall of 2000, Ecole Alain St. Cyr fell under the Yellowknife Education District No. 1 Board, which is not part of the public service. Regulations pursuant to the Education Act created the Commission Scolaire Francophone de Division as a separate education body. Under these regulations the commission is part of the public service. This change would affect the French teachers.

The commission was created in this manner for three reasons. First, this enables the commission to have programs in different communities in the same fashion as divisional education councils. Second, the commission more closely resembles the divisional education councils as opposed to the two Yellowknife boards, which both receive funding from local taxes. Third, the commission does not have the capacity to be a separate employer, which would include costly administration, payroll and financial functions.

At the time the commission was established, a consequential amendment to the Public Service Act was overlooked. The proposed update to schedule A of the PSA will merely rectify this. The proposed changes confirm that the employees of the Commission Scolaire Francophone de Division and the president of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation are included in the public service of the Northwest Territories. The president of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is currently treated as a public service employee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. I call on the deputy chair of the Accountability and Oversight Committee for comment.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight reviewed Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act, at its meeting on May 6, 2002. This bill amends schedule A of the Public Service Act to add Commission Scolaire Francophone de Division as a portion of the public service and to delete the exclusion of the president of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

The committee would like to thank the Honourable Joe Handley, Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, his officials and those of the Department of Justice, who appeared before the committee to present the bill and respond to questions raised by the committee.

Schedule A of the Public Service Act sets out who is included in the public service. The bill proposes amendments to update schedule A to reflect changes in other legislation and regulations.

Mr. Chairman, these amendments were passed by committee. This concludes the committee's comments on Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Would the Minister care to bring in any witnesses? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, I would.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me today I have Lew Voytilla, secretary to the Financial Management Board, and Diane Buckland, legislative counsel with the Department of Justice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. At this time, I will open the floor to general comments. Is the committee ready for detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Is the committee ready to go clause-by-clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Please go to tab 3 in your binders. Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree that Bill 3 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill 3 is now ready for third reading. I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses for appearing. As previously agreed, we will go to Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act. Does the Minister have any opening comments? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, currently indemnification for employees and former employees is contained in policy and collective agreements. The indemnification policy provides that if legal action is brought against an employee or former employee for acts undertaken within the scope of their employment, the GNWT will provide legal counsel and any associated costs, so long as the employee was not negligent in their duties or their conduct does not constitute a gross disregard of his or her duties as an employee.

Recently it was discovered that technically, this is not permitted by the Financial Administration Act. The proposed amendments will permit the indemnification of public service employees.

The proposed changes to the Financial Administration Act do two things. First, the amendments will clarify that all indemnities that have been made in the past for employees will be deemed to have been legally made and will remain in force.

Second, the amendments expand the current provisions under the FAA to authorize the Minister responsible for the Public Service Act to indemnify, on behalf of the GNWT and upon recommendation of the Financial Management Board, future public service employees.

These proposed amendments have minimal impact in that they are consistent with current practice and will ensure the Financial Administration Act clearly provides authority to the government to indemnify its employees. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. I will call upon the deputy chair of AOC for comments. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight reviewed Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act, at its meeting on May 6, 2002. This bill amends the Financial Administration Act to clarify the authority of the Government of the Northwest Territories to indemnify members of the public service.

Mr. Chairman, currently indemnification for employees and former employees is contained in policy and collective agreements. Indemnification is the agreement by the Government of the Northwest Territories to provide legal counsel and associated costs to employees who may be sued while they are properly carrying out the duties associated with their jobs. The Financial Administration Act has been found to be deficient in providing the authority for the government to indemnify public service employees and indemnities. To be effective, it must be contained in an enactment.

This amendment will also provide that all indemnities that have been made in the past for employees will be deemed to have been legally made and it will provide for the indemnification of future public service employees.

Members questioned the Minister regarding the impact of this amendment and its retroactive nature to the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Minister assured the committee that it was expected that the amendment would have minimal impact, since the legislative changes would be consistent with the current practice and will ensure that the Financial Administration Act clearly provides authority to the government to indemnify its current and future employees.

Members also received assurances that indemnities will not apply for unlawful acts of an employee, but only for acts or omissions in the course of and within the scope of his or her employment. Members may have further questions for the Minister during the review of the bill.

The committee would like to thank the Honourable Joe Handley, Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, his officials and those of the Department of Justice who appeared before the committee to present the bill and respond to questions raised by the committee.

Mr. Chairman, these amendments were passed by the committee and this concludes the committee's comments on Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Would the Minister care to bring in any witnesses? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, with me are Lew Voytilla, secretary to the Financial

Management Board; and Diane Buckland, legislative counsel with the Department of Justice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. At this time I will open the floor to general comments. General comments? Are we ready to go clause-by-clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. We are going to tab 6 in your binders. Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree that Bill 6 is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill 6 is now ready for third reading. I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses for appearing. As previously agreed, we will go on to Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act. Does the Minister have any opening comments? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The purpose of Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, is to address a conflict between the Liquor Act and regulations under the Lotteries Act with respect to gambling in licensed premises. This conflict was brought to my attention last year. Charitable organizations that have been holding raffles for years in their premises to raise funds for community causes may have been doing this in violation of the Liquor Act.

Bill 11 was introduced to deal with this conflict. The intent of the bill is not to encourage gambling or otherwise to legitimize new forms of gambling in licensed premises, but to legitimize existing practices. Specifically, the bill would:

- allow raffle tickets to be sold or drawn in licensed premises; and
- allow service clubs which hold a liquor license (such as the Elks, Royal Canadian Legion) to sell or draw raffle tickets and to sell Nevada tickets in their licensed premises.

Mr. Chairman, at present, the Liquor Act prohibits gambling in licensed premises. However, the regulations under the Lotteries Act allow for the issuance of lottery permits to charitable or religious organizations to conduct and manage

lottery schemes. The lotteries regulations prohibit the sale or consumption of liquor in an area where licensed gambling is being held, except in the case of raffle, Nevada tickets or sports lotteries held by religious or charitable organizations.

The lotteries regulations were put into place to regulate gambling while at the same time assisting service clubs and charitable or religious organizations in raising funds through various forms of raffle lotteries. Service clubs and charitable and religious organizations perform a very useful function in our communities and contribute greatly to the volunteer effort among our residents.

Under Bill 11, all licensed premises would be treated the same with respect to the sale of raffle tickets. The bill does not distinguish between types of licensed premises and would allow raffle tickets to be sold in all licensed premises. The raffle would have to be licensed under the Lotteries Act. However, Bill 11 would allow service clubs but not other licensed premises to continue to sell Nevada tickets in their licensed premises. Since access to service clubs' licensed premises is restricted to members and guests only, allowing these organizations to continue to sell Nevada tickets in their licensed premises is less problematic than allowing more widespread sales in licensed premises. Again, Mr. Chairman, these changes to the Liquor Act will only legitimize existing practices.

Mr. Chairman, in response to recommendations and comments received, an important provision of Bill 11 would allow communities that have been delegated authority under the Lotteries Act to impose more restrictive regimes if they wish to do so. I recognize that residents should have the ability to control events within their communities and to reflect community priorities. Organizations wishing to conduct all forms of raffles or lotteries or to sell Nevada tickets will have to obtain a license under the Lotteries Act to do so.

Mr. Chairman, I will be glad to answer any questions that committee members may have regarding this bill. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. I will call upon the deputy chair for the GED Committee, Ms. Lee, for comments. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development reviewed Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, at its meeting on May 9th, 2002. This bill amends the Liquor Act to permit raffle tickets to be sold or drawn on licensed premises. The amendment will also allow raffle tickets to be sold or drawn and Nevada tickets to be sold or drawn on licensed premises where the liquor license holder has a lottery license to do so. In this case, the liquor license holder is required to comply with the Lotteries Act and regulations.

The committee would like to thank the Honourable Joe Handley, Minister of Finance, his officials, and those of the Department of Justice who appeared before the committee to present the bill and respond to the issues raised by the committee.

During discussions on Bill 11, some committee members expressed concern regarding the apparent piecemeal changes that were being proposed to the Liquor Act. Committee members may have additional comments or questions on this legislation during the review in committee of the whole.

During the public hearing, a motion was proposed and the Minister concurred with the motion to further clarify the definition of lottery license. This concludes the committee's comments on Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Would the Minister care to bring in any witnesses? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me are Margaret Melhorn, deputy minister of Finance; Joe La Ferla, manager of policy and planning for Finance; and Diane Buckland, legislative counsel with the Department of Justice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. I will open the floor to general comments. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to make a short comment. As the Member for Range Lake in Yellowknife, I was one of the Members who was contacted by members of the general public who had learned, by a visit from the liquor inspector, that something they had been doing for a long, long time to raise money for a social cause was deemed to be illegal. I believe it had to do with the raffling off of a turkey for Easter in one of the licensed premises in my riding.

I am in complete agreement with the purpose and spirit of this legislation and the fact that something that everyone believed to be something very benign and a legal act was deemed to be illegal, and this will now make everyone law-abiding citizens.

I would just like to state my support for this legislative amendment and also thank the Minister and his staff for moving quickly to correct what appeared to be a legislative gap or misunderstanding in the legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. No questions there, but would you like to respond to any of those comments, Mr. Handley?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, no, I do not have a response. I appreciate the comments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you. General comments. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, one thing as this was being considered and through comments from the committee, as the Minister stated in his opening comments, there was a concern that in communities where they have the authority under the Lotteries Act, they can establish more restrictive regimes if they felt it was necessary. I think this was an important move to recognize that communities in some cases might not want to see something like this and they will have the ability to impose it.

One thing I wanted pointed out from the Minister and probably his staff is an important part of the provision of Bill 11, as the Minister stated, that will allow communities that have been delegated authority under the Lotteries Act to impose more restrictive regimes. Under Bill 11, as I read the amendments, it is reflecting the purposes of the tickets, the raffle tickets and so on. Can we get clarification on that?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will have my deputy, Margaret Melhorn, answer that question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Ms. Melhorn.

MS. MELHORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under clause 2, where it refers to: "The following is added under subsection 98.2" 2.1(b) indicates that it is allowable unless the sale is otherwise prohibited under the Lotteries Act. If a community has been delegated authority under the Lotteries Act and passes a more restrictive bylaw, that would then otherwise be restricted under the Lotteries Act, or prohibited under the Lotteries Act.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Melhorn. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the department for that. So then already existing in the Lotteries Act is a regime that is set up so that a community that has been delegated the authority can bring in a more restrictive regime. That is already built into the Lotteries Act as it sits? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ms. Melhorn.

MS. MELHORN: That is correct.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): General comments. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would be remiss if I did not express some of my colleague's concern when it comes to the Liquor Act. I know this particular bill is responding or reacting to the act that does not allow for liquor establishments to help the social causes of the community, but it is a reaction and a piecemeal solution to an overall need to revisit the entire act.

Mr. Krutko has said many times in the House and in committee, and I concur with Mr. Krutko, that the act needs to be a little more flexible to allow communities to decide how liquor will be consumed in the communities. The act needs to reflect the desires of the community. I believe 60 percent of the population of a community is going to have to turn out to vote in favour of any changes to the Liquor Act or bylaws associated with the consumption of alcohol in the communities. That is one part.

The other part, which I will take this opportunity to express my concern on, is the lack of facilities in the Northwest Territories where people can go and get assistance in getting off their dependency on alcohol. As a government, we can very easily tax alcohol so that we could use the revenues for whatever reason in the Northwest Territories. It is easy to tax things like cigarettes and alcohol because socially, they are not that

acceptable, so it is easy to get the consensus of the people, the masses.

If we are not going to do good with those revenues, such as establishing more treatment centres and staffing them adequately, then as far as I am concerned, Mr. Chairman, we are using liquor as just another easy form of revenue generation. I think this is one area that could be targeted. If any revenues from taxes on liquor and/or cigarettes can be put towards helping people deal with their alcohol problems, which are systemic in a lot of social issues such as lack of housing, lack of education, poor quality of health, children not being able to graduate or do well in school, those could all be targeted towards the consumption of alcohol and the inadequacy of the programs that we deliver as a government.

I would like to ask the Minister, are there are plans by Cabinet or by the government to review the Liquor Act so that we can utilize that act more effectively for the betterment of the people of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. I would suggest that we have gone a bit beyond the scope of this bill here, but I will allow the Minister to respond. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Member is right in that this is responding to an inconsistency in our legislation and is something that we had to do as soon as we could in order to make existing practices legal. The question of revising or reviewing the whole Liquor Act is a much bigger one. I am certainly taking direction from the Legislative Assembly on our priorities for legislation.

Last December, I believe it was, we met in Hay River and we looked at all our legislation and prioritized them, and this one did not make it near the top of the list. If the Legislative Assembly changes its mind and insists that this one be bumped up to the top of the list, then we would bump something else back. My feeling is that this is a very complex piece of legislation. It is late in our government to really take on a full-fledged review of this act, but it is something that has to happen at some point in the near future. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. General comments. Does the committee agree that we are ready to go clause-by-clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree that Bill 11 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill 11 is now ready for third reading. I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses for appearing. Thank you, Mr. Handley. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Roland.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): 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. The Chair will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of the committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering: Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act; Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act; and Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, and would like to report that Bills 3, 6, and 11 are ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake seconds the motion. The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, meetings of the Special Committee on the Implementation of Self-Government and the Sunset Clause immediately after adjournment today; tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight and Cabinet House Strategy; Social Programs at 10:30 a.m.; and of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development at noon.

Orders of the day for Thursday, June 13, 2002:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions

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 15, An Act to Amend the Real Estate Agents Licensing Act
 - Bill 16, Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act
 - Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2002-03
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Elections Act
 - Minister's Statement 46-14(5), Social Agenda Working Group Report
 - Minister's Statement 47-14(5), GNWT Response to the Social Agenda Report
 - Tabled Document 35-14(5), Social Agenda, A Draft for People of the NWT
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act
 - Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act
 - Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, June 13, 2002, at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

