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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2001****Members Present**

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Good morning, colleagues. Bonjour. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 47-14(3): Death Due to Tuberculosis in the Northwest Territories**

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as Members of this Legislature know, a resident of Fort McPherson died from complications arising from tuberculosis in July, 2000.

I would first like to express my sincere condolences to the family. They have raised a number of questions and concerns about the death of their loved one, and they deserve answers.

Shortly after being advised of this death, the chief medical health officer recommended an independent review of this case, as well as the overall delivery of TB programming in the Northwest Territories. We wanted to know what actions were taken to address the medical care of this individual and whether there were improvements or changes that needed to be made to prevent such a tragedy from happening again.

This independent review was led by Dr. Anne Fanning, a respected international expert on TB. Dr. Fanning's final report is expected next week and I look forward to receiving her recommendations. I will make copies of the terms of reference for the review available to all MLAs.

In addition, I have recently contacted the chief coroner to request an independent investigation under the Coroner's Act. This request is in response to the needs of the family members who wish to have their questions answered by an individual who is independent of the health and social services system.

I want to clarify to Members that the scope of the coroner's investigation will include the cause of death and circumstances surrounding this death. Following this initial investigation, the coroner is empowered to conduct, through a coroner's inquest, further investigation if he feels this is warranted. This inquest is a formal legal proceeding that involves witnesses and a jury, and that is open to the public.

The coroner's investigation complements the review done by Dr. Fanning. This will provide us with better understanding and insight into the events surrounding this tragedy, as well as how we can improve TB prevention, screening and treatment in all communities. The outcomes of both investigations will be made

available to the family, the Legislative Assembly, the health and social services boards and the public.

I look forward to receiving Dr. Fanning's final report and the results of the coroner's investigation. In the meantime, the department will continue to work closely with the Inuvik and other health and social services boards to ensure that standards in TB program delivery are met.

Mr. Speaker, I am giving this issue my utmost attention and wish to assure Members that I will continue to share as much information as possible on the outcomes of these investigations, recognizing of course that we must respect the privacy and confidentiality of the individual and family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Justice, Mr. Antoine.

Minister's Statement 48-14(3): Development of Victims Services in the Northwest Territories

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, across the country, victim advocates and governments have been working to provide better services to victims of crime and to include them as meaningful participants in the justice system. In the North, we, too, are making progress in this area. Today, I would like to provide the House with information on some exciting developments in the area of services to victims of crime.

In recent months, the Department of Justice has been meeting with victim service providers and community resource workers. As a result, we are now planning a territorial victim services conference at the end of March. Participants in this conference will have the chance to share information, ideas and concerns, and raise awareness about victims' issues. The department will also be seeking their guidance on the future direction of victim services in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, by bringing together agencies, organizations and community support groups, we anticipate a more integrated and coordinated approach to victims' assistance. We also plan to improve training for program coordinators and volunteers and develop more opportunities for them to exchange ideas. We hope that these activities will lead to improved services for victims and strengthen the relationship between the department and the people who provide services in the communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice has also recently made changes to the territorial Victim Impact Statement Program to make the forms easier to understand and to complete. The new

victim impact statement packages are available from any RCMP detachment.

The victim impact statement gives the victims of a crime a chance to tell the court how a crime has affected them. We hope that people who have been victimized by crime will take advantage of this program. The department will arrange help for anyone who has difficulty with the forms for any reason.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to report on expanded victims' services in Hay River. The Department of Justice already funds organizations in Fort Smith and Yellowknife to provide crisis response, personal support, follow-up assistance, information and referrals for victims of crime. The Hay River Community Health Board has received a contribution from the Victims Assistance Fund to implement a similar program. We will begin consultations in the Beaufort Delta to determine if there is a need and a commitment from potential community partners to establish a victim services program in that region.

Mr. Speaker, services for victims of crime are provided by dedicated staff and volunteers who contribute long hours to assist people in their communities. On behalf of the department, I would like to end my statement today by expressing my sincere appreciation to them for their dedication and service. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Minister's Statement 49-14(3): Health and Social Services System Action Plan

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to update this Assembly and the public on some recent actions I have taken to address concerns about our health and social services system.

Concerns about the sustainability of the health care system are constantly in the news these days, not just in the Northwest Territories, but across Canada and internationally. There are many external pressures on our system, pressures like the shortage of doctors, nurses and other medical personnel, the increasing costs of pharmaceuticals and new technologies and the health challenges presented by an aging population, to name but a few.

All of these issues have a direct impact on our Northwest Territories system, but we also have some concerns that are closer to home. Since I assumed the Health and Social Services portfolio just over a year ago, I have been increasingly concerned with a number of problems that have been brought to my attention by the department, by health and social services boards, by members of the health and social services professional community, and by Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to outline some of the issues that are challenging our system.

- We have a very complex, fragmented system with multiple boards serving the needs of our 42,000 residents. This results in duplication, overlap and the loss of economies of scale.

- Accountability relationships are also fragmented. The separation of the legislative and policy responsibility from operational functions makes it very difficult to enforce standards of care.
- Significant downsizing in the department over the past years by previous governments has eroded our capacity to monitor and enforce standards, and provide administrative and clinical leadership and oversight.
- An increasing number of health and social services boards are running operating deficits, yet are not able to provide us with accurate and timely financial information.
- Concerns have been raised about the capacity of some boards to handle complex administration functions such as pay and benefits.
- Finally, as you are all aware, the question has been raised repeatedly about whether the current structure of nine health and social services boards is the most effective and efficient approach. This issue was highlighted as a priority for action in the report of the Minister's Forum on Health and Social Services just over a year ago.

In addition to these financial and administrative issues, there are pressing concerns about the delivery of core health and social services programs. For a number of reasons, some of our health and social services boards are having great difficulty delivering all of the core programs for which they are funded and some programs are not always being delivered to standard.

I do not take these concerns lightly. As Minister, I cannot ignore concerns about the quality of service delivery, for which I am ultimately accountable. Nor can I ask this Assembly to approve budgets or supplementary appropriations if expenditure requirements cannot be accurately identified.

Mr Speaker, these concerns are not new, and over the past two years we have taken some pro-active steps to address them. Accountability requirements for boards have been strengthened, roles and responsibilities have been clarified and a business planning cycle has been introduced for the boards.

Given the increasing number of boards with deficits last year, however, it was clear that immediate action was required, and I have taken action.

- Last fall, I requested the territorial Audit Bureau conduct an audit on the pay and benefits function in selected health and social services boards. Those audits are underway and the first report is expected in a few weeks. As a result of the initial audit findings and an agreement between the department and the board, pay and benefits authorities have been transferred

to the Financial Management Board Secretariat.

- In December, I contracted a consulting firm with a proven track record in the field of health care governance and administration to undertake a system-wide review. The review is focusing on four key areas: governance structures, accountability, service delivery and financing. One component of the review is an operational audit on the finance and management function in all health and social services. I have asked the consulting team to provide not only a detailed report on these functions but also practical, concrete recommendations for needed changes to our health and social service system, including recommendations on how the department needs to change its structure and operations to effectively support the system. This report will be completed by the end of June.
- In December, I established a new clinical oversight function within the department under the direction of the newly appointed assistant deputy minister for population health and clinical services. This will allow the department to provide clinical leadership and more direct support and supervision to boards in clinical service delivery. We have already initiated clinical audits in two boards where problems have been identified.

In light of the continuing questions about board deficits, it has been suggested that I should take immediate action, even to the extent of having the department step in and take over the administrative functions from some of the boards. Mr. Speaker, my preference at this time is to continue to work with the boards to resolve these issues. I am of the view that we have very good people working in our health and social services system, but the system has some inherent flaws.

Instead of a knee-jerk, punitive approach, I would like to wait for final audit reports and recommendations from the system review and develop a well thought out action plan. That will allow us to optimize service delivery for our residents.

However, I am prepared to take action when circumstances require it and will respond appropriately to any issues requiring immediate action, as I already have in the case of the revocation of payroll authority in one of the boards.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize that although we face significant challenges, there are also many reasons to take pride in our health and social services system. We have many dedicated nurses, physicians and other staff in health and social services boards who deliver excellent care, often under difficult conditions, giving many hours beyond what would normally be expected of them. We have caring and committed trustees on all our boards. We have dedicated and experienced staff in our department.

Mr. Speaker, we all have the same objective -- to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that our health and social services system delivers the best possible care to all residents in every community. Although the process of identifying the problems is painful and it is tempting to lay blame, we must keep our focus on constructive solutions. I am firmly committed to seeing this process through, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to bringing a clear plan of action to Members as quickly as possible.

In closing, I would like to thank all Members, especially those on the Standing Committee on Social Programs, for their guidance and advice as we deal with these difficult issues. It will be important for us to continue to work closely together to improve the health and social services system for all of our constituents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Déclarations de ministre. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Déclarations de députés. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Income Support and Health Care

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to share a very distressing situation that happened to one of my constituents. This past November, a constituent of mine was diagnosed with cancer. She underwent surgery on December 6th in Yellowknife. After a two-week hospital stay, she returned home to Rae.

She was then sent to Edmonton for further tests. From these tests, medical professionals recommended that she begin chemotherapy on January 22nd in Yellowknife. Since she needed chemotherapy treatments five days a week, this woman wanted to relocate in Yellowknife.

Undergoing chemotherapy is stressful. People get weak from it and there are many side effects. What is most disturbing about this case is that because this woman is an income support recipient, she relies on this government for help, and the government let her down.

On January 19th, every member of the Dogrib Band received \$500 from Diavik Diamond Mines as part of the IBA. This woman used the money to pay her \$300 power bill, her \$80 phone bill, her water bill and to buy new clothes for her three children. Unfortunately, though, the Department of Education interprets this IBA money as income, thereby reducing the money income support recipients receive.

She was not able to access funds in this case. That meant the woman could not afford to get an apartment in Yellowknife. That meant that her chemotherapy had to be delayed for over one month. I am sure that there is no one in this House who would want to delay their chemotherapy treatments if they were diagnosed with cancer.

I do not know how we can justify this to our constituents who are regular income support recipients in need of medical care. I know the Minister is reviewing income support policies and the way IBAs are interpreted. I also ask him to urge income support

workers to examine each case on its own merit, so that these few simple policies do not cost peoples' lives just because they cannot afford to access treatment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Déclarations de députés. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

Member's Statement on Television Program on Aboriginal-Owned Businesses

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to alert Members that a Ndilo business is being featured on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network along with two other aboriginal businesses. Deton'Cho Diamonds, owned in majority by the Deton'Cho Corporation or the Ndilo band, Nats'enelu Furs from Fort Simpson, and ADK Holdings from Fort Liard are being featured on an episode of Venturing Forth, a new program focusing on aboriginal businesses across Canada.

The episode, filmed locally by Yellowknife producer Terry Wolfe, also includes an interview with Premier Stephen Kakfwi. Venturing Forth airs at 1:00 p.m. Sunday, February 18th, and will be rebroadcast at 7:30 p.m. and again at 12:30 a.m. on February 19th.

Mr. Speaker, this program will provide national exposure to three very successful northern aboriginal businesses. I hope all Members have the opportunity to see the program. Thank you.

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

Member's Statement on Inconsistent Government Programs

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I listened yesterday with interest to Mr. Handley's budget speech. There were some very encouraging words. I would like to take a minute to point out some of my concerns about the consistency of some of the GNWT programs that we are talking about rolling out.

We know the Minister is undergoing a review of BIP. He wants to look at levelling the playing field for northern business to make sure we are on competitive footing with southern business. I applaud him for this. We know that Alberta's tax rate is dropping to three percent, Ontario is going to four percent, and even British Columbia is currently at four-and-a-half percent. The Northwest Territories is currently sitting at five percent. This is no longer competitive. Clearly we have to do something for northern business.

On one hand, we are looking to do something about this, as the Minister indicates in the review of BIP. On the other hand, he is now talking about a toll on commercial trucking, which will increase the cost to northern businesses of doing business in the North. Certainly some of that will be passed on to the consumers, but there are situations where businesses cannot simply pass the costs on and will be forced to eat them.

When we look at programs targeted to help the general public deal with the high cost of heating their homes, we have

announced that we will be rebating some money to these people to offset the cost of fuel. That is a great idea, Mr. Speaker, but on the other hand, the tolls we are talking about implementing on commercial trucking will increase the cost of heating our homes in the North. I certainly hope the tax credit will more than offset this increase.

I am sensitive about not being too critical. Certainly we want to see highway upgrades. The only point I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, is that we are going to need to see detail before endorsing these programs.

We have been talking in this House for over a year now about...Mr. Miltenberger in fact mentioned yesterday that he has been talking for five years about the chip seal on Highway No. 5. I think we all realize that we need to see our highway infrastructure upgraded.

I think if you were to tell me that we are going to upgrade our highways but the Minister is going to come and knock on our door cap in hand and tell our families to cobble together \$5,000 each to pave our roads, and say to the son who shows up at the door, "Run to the couch and check in between the cushions, because I think your dad lost some loose change in there and we are going to use that to pave these roads." I do not think many of our constituents would find this acceptable.

It is important that we look at upgrading our infrastructure, but it will be equally important how we do it. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may continue, Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are also currently struggling to get mine employees to move north. If we are talking about anything that is going to increase the consumer price index in the North, we have to be careful. We cannot do anything to make it even more difficult.

As I said, I am sensitive about being too critical. The Premier in the past has often said to this side of the House, "Listen, you want these certain programs. You are quick to criticize, but not very quick to urge us on and congratulate us when we do initiate good programs." I think, Mr. Speaker, I would like it to possibly having a 23-year old son who comes home one day after lying around the couch playing video games for four years telling me he has a job. I think everybody would be excited and happy, but you would want to make sure your son was not sticking up convenience stores and snatching purses, Mr. Speaker.

I am concerned that we need to see detail from this government. If our intent is to, in a roundabout way, get royalties from industry, is this how we are going to go about doing it? What about long-term fixed contracts for northern businesses with these mines? Mr. Speaker, it is highly possible that they are going to have to eat the cost of these transportation increases.

The other day, we were reminiscing about names we had called the Finance Minister from this side of the House. I hope we do not have to add stick-up artist and purse snatcher. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Déclarations de députés. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger

Member's Statement on Future Structure of the Workers' Compensation Board

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to briefly raise some concerns about the Workers' Compensation Board. During the 13th Assembly, there was intense debate about what should happen with NTPC and the Workers' Compensation Board. I have always been and still remain a proponent that we should have our own Workers' Compensation Board and we should have our own NTPC -- which, in fact, is going to happen -- and that they should be split.

My concern, Mr. Speaker, is that the Workers' Compensation Board is going to remain as one organization, one institution between Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. I do not think this is in the best interest of the Northwest Territories.

The other concern I have is that in the Northwest Territories, the government is sitting by and letting Nunavut decide the future of our institution. It was Nunavut who decided to split NTPC, not this government. It was Nunavut who has now decided that they do not want to split the Workers' Compensation Board, and we are docilely going along with that particular direction, which I do not think is in our long-term best interests.

I would hope that this government would in fact take a critical look at what is in the best interest of the Northwest Territories. I know from personal experience of trying to deal with a board that overlaps in the two Territories is very difficult. There are different agendas, different political realities. It is very difficult and it is impossible to try to get together to make any meaningful decisions. There is so much compromise and watering things down that we do not get what we want in the end anyway.

I would have no problem if we split the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Speaker, if in fact we provide it as a contract basis service to our colleagues from Nunavut. I would hope that as part of this broad legislative review that is going to be undertaken and looking at updating the legislation for the Workers' Compensation Board, that this will be one of the issues that is put on the table.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, on this particular issue, I was disappointed to see that all of the Northwest Territories representatives for this very important review of legislation are all based in Yellowknife. While I recognize the realities of having labour and business on this particular panel, there is life outside of the capital. In the hinterland, there are many people who are concerned about this particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, today during question period, I will be asking the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board why we do not split the Workers' Compensation Board and why we are letting Nunavut set the direction for this Territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Yellowknife Environmental Issues

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on January 16th, I was pleased, along with the Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent, to host a community environmental information meeting attended by close to 60 concerned area residents. The issue was arsenic contamination in the Yellowknife area.

Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker, has a 60-year gold mining history. We have enjoyed the economic benefits and endured the environmental and social costs of this mining heritage. In the case of the Rat Lake area in my constituency, the mining activity on the Con lease dates back some 60 years.

At the public meeting, Mr. Speaker, we heard excellent presentations from the GNWT staff, including Municipal and Community Affairs, Health and Social Services, environmental health branch; the mining company, Miramar; and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development also contributed to the planning and the meeting.

We learned that in the Yellowknife area, there is a level of naturally occurring arsenic. To this, Mr. Speaker, we have added arsenic trioxide, a deadly toxin produced by the hazardous product of mining. Our citizens are concerned about the potential danger of arsenic levels in the soils and water of Yellowknife.

Constituents have expressed many concerns, and some of them are summarized as: soil remediation solutions around private dwellings in the area; cancer rates in Yellowknife; integrated land-use planning and land-use administration; concern for the public health; standards for clean-up and standards for soil remediation; and to what extent will the public be consulted in the future.

Mr. Speaker, the Yellowknife Arsenic Soils Remediation Committee is a coalition of all levels of government, mining and aboriginal groups. They are playing a key role. I would like to acknowledge the leadership demonstrated by this committee and the Stanton Regional Health Board. This committee has announced that it is proceeding with an assessment study to determine levels of risk to public health. It is expected later this year. It will also help develop guidelines for remediation and arsenic clean-up standards for the whole Yellowknife area.

We are all cognizant, Mr. Speaker, of our need to reclaim the environment where there have been harmful operations. The federal government clearly has a significant environmental responsibility to live up to and this government must continue to press the federal government to live up to these obligations.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. I am not sure whether you got your thank you in there. I pressed the priority button, as your time had expired. However, you just made it under the wire. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Member's Statement on Program and Funding Support for Disabled Residents

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today in the aftermath of our Finance Minister's bold and ambitious budget in which he announced spending the likes of which we have not seen for a long time, I want to draw some attention to a sector of our society that probably had little to celebrate from what they heard.

I refer, Mr. Speaker, to our residents with disabilities. The difficulty and frustration these people go through just trying to make ends meet is deplorable. As legislators, we should be ashamed for not responding to their needs. Mr. Speaker, if any of them were listening yesterday, they may have gotten momentarily excited when Mr. Handley announced \$300,000 to deliver specialized programs and services to persons with disabilities.

Then he went on to say that amount was also for seniors, for persons in correctional institutions and to monitor, report and promote the use of plain language within government.

Mr. Speaker, a small percentage of our disabled -- less than five percent, according to statistics -- are trying desperately to retain their own homes, thereby holding on to some sense of independence and dignity. In the face of rising costs, especially in heating fuels, this has become impossible for some. They are resigned to the fact, Mr. Speaker, that they must live in poverty.

In January, the Northwest Territories Council for Disabled Persons held a conference as a follow-up to the Northwest Territories needs assessment report, *Living with Disability, Living with Dignity*. This conference was attended by more than 160 people impacted by disability, and they were from almost every community in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, many of the participants have written a personal letter to our Premier expressing the problems and frustrations they experience every day. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that our Premier will take those letters seriously and borrow a line from the budget: it is time to invest now so that they too can have a better tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Optimistic Outlook Presented in the Budget Address

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seeing as how it is Friday, I am going to take a light-hearted approach to my Member's statement. Mr. Speaker, after listening to the Premier's speech in January to the public, then listening to the Finance Minister's budget address, the phrase made famous by Timon and Pumbaa from the Disney movie *The Lion King*, *Hakuna Matata*, comes to mind. For those not familiar with the movie, similar meaning is found in the Bobby McFerrin song, *Don't Worry, Be Happy*.

Mr. Speaker, all looks rosy from this budget address.

-- Applause

The Finance Minister paints a picture that we must move forward. As my colleague Mr. Delorey said, we have seen unprecedented expenditures. As it looks, and as the people have heard, Mr. Speaker, we must look forward to a prosperous new year.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to seeing the Finance Minister use the phrase *Hakuna Matata* a little more often. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Thank you for your translations. Our Swahili translator is not here today, so...

-- Laughter

Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement on Official Opening of the Tsiigehtchic School and Seniors Facility

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on February 8, 2001, the community of Tsiigehtchic in my riding celebrated the official opening of the new seniors unit along with the Paul Niditchie School. It opened last fall, but the official opening only took place in February.

We had the opportunity, along with the chief, Mr. Peter Ross, the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen, and an elder, Pierre Benoit, who is a resident of the seniors unit, who cut the ribbon to make the opening of the seniors unit official. At that time, Mr. Benoit gave us a tour of his facility. It definitely is a unit that feels homely, open and also gives the seniors the respect that they deserve. In Mr. Benoit's words, he stated: "I never dreamed I would end up in a unit such as this, which is so beautiful and so homely."

We moved on to the Paul Niditchie School, where there was another official opening with the Minister of Education, Mr. Ootes, and a young student, Charlene Blake. At the official opening of the Chief Julius School, a lot of speeches were given. People could remember back in 1948 the school that was used just until last year, which the chief and a lot of other people in the community went to. That shows you how much use we received out of that building which has now been converted to a youth and adult education centre.

From there, we went to a feast the community had hosted, and speeches and presentations were given. At that time, I made a speech to encourage the students about the importance of education. It is probably one of the most important ambitions they are going to take on in their lives. I encouraged them to continue on with their education.

With that, I would like to thank both Ministers, Mr. Allen and Mr. Ootes, as well as the community for the opportunity to officially open these buildings. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Member's Statement on Inuvik Twin Lakes Socio-Economic Profile

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share with Members of this Assembly some interesting statistics regarding the Inuvik Twin Lakes riding. These statistics were compiled in a socio-economic profile I had prepared on Inuvik Twin Lakes. The purpose of this profile is to provide both a clear view of the riding composition and its uniqueness.

Some of the interesting statistics for the Inuvik Twin Lakes riding include:

- Nineteen percent of the households receive either employment insurance or income support, which is significantly higher than the territorial average of 8.5 percent;
- Home ownership in Inuvik Twin Lakes is slightly above the territorial average of just below 50 percent;
- Twenty-six percent of the households and 19.7 percent of the Inuvik Twin Lakes population appear to have made recent use of public housing;
- The public housing population includes proportionately high numbers of those who are 65 and over, and proportionately few of those were under the age of 18;
- Sources of income include:
 - Hunting and trapping, which represents 22 percent;
 - Income support, ten percent;
 - Private sector employment, 52 percent,
 - Public sector employment, 60 percent,
 - Private pension benefits, 19 percent,
 - Canada Pension Plan benefits, 10 percent, and
 - EI benefits, 11 percent;
- Twenty-two percent of the households indicate that hunting and trapping is a source of income or food.

In summary, the area is obviously an affluent majority in Twin Lakes, considering those who have regular employment in either the public or private sector, many of whom own their own homes. However, there is a sizeable minority consisting of between one-fifth and one-quarter of the households in the population of Twin Lakes who live in public housing or cheap rental housing, recipients of income support and those who are heavily dependant on EI benefits.

As you can see, as with other ridings in the Northwest Territories, Inuvik Twin Lakes is unique in its own right. As legislators, we must ensure that this uniqueness is recognized in all decision making. Later today, I will be tabling this document in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement on Concerns Regarding Stark Lake Fish Stock Health

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about environmental health concerns in the community of Lutselk'e. People fishing at Stark Lake have noticed abnormal lake trout and whitefish for many years now. When I say abnormal, fish have been seen with cysts on their organs, abnormally large heads, skinny bodies and other deformities. This lake is two kilometres from Lutselk'e.

As a result, people have changed their fishing habits and are not fishing there anymore. It is not known what is causing these deformities in the fish, and that is my concern. Studies have been done that have not pinpointed the problem. One study looked at possible contamination from decades old Stark Lake uranium exploration, but it did not identify what was causing the problems with the fish.

Another traditional knowledge and scientific study will start soon to look at the problem. Habitat specialists will be visiting the community soon as well. They will be looking at long-range pollutants such as toxiphine, a pesticide from cotton crops. Other possible causes for the unhealthy fish at Stark Lake include an overpopulation of lake trout and whitefish with limited feeding habitat. Another concern is that Stark Lake is part of the Snowdrift River system, which connects with Great Slave Lake.

Mr. Speaker, the Stark Lake fish habitat has been on the decline for many years. People used to camp along the shoreline and harvest whitefish and lake trout to feed their families and dogs. They no longer do so. The unhealthy fish with softer meat and lesions is turning away the tourist potential in the area as well. One fishing lodge does not take their people on guided tours there due to the poor health of the fish.

Mr. Speaker, if this is an environmental health problem, it is my hope that it is identified soon so that people know what they are dealing with. It is very unnerving to find fish in this state of defect. It is also unknown what long-term effects this could have. I hope the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development would help in assisting with identifying the problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Recognition of Recently Deceased Elders

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I rise in this House today to honour and remember our elders. Mr. Speaker, we have lost many valued elders over the past several years, and I wish to acknowledge all of their contributions that they have made to the development here in the North, as well as to their families, their traditional homelands and to their communities.

On behalf of the people of Nahendeh, I offer sincere condolences to my colleague, Michael McLeod, on the recent passing of his father. I trust that Michael and his family will

forever remember with fondness the lessons and examples provided to them by their dearly departed father, Angus.

In my constituency of Nahendeh, we have lost several of our respected elders over the past year. I would like to remember their lives and accomplishments. They are Margaret Douglas, Mary Ann Martel, Edward Horesey, Lucy McPherson, Julie Deneyoua, Margriete Edwards, William Cli, Henry Tsetso, better known as ahtzehia, Lucy Cli, and Bernadette Bonnetrouge, who was my aunt as well as my godmother. She passed away on February 3.

As well, Celine Lafferty of Fort Simpson. She also passed away last week. The community and family just recently celebrated her 100th birthday, so she has been with us for many, many years and contributed to the family and the communities.

In the community of Wrigley, Andrew Klugie, who is better known as Andrew Rude. He is my brother, Jerry Antoine's father in-law. He passed away as well this fall. The elder Harry Yendi and Archie Williams of Wrigley. They all leave behind a legacy. Their legacy is by the lives that they have lived among us and what they have shared with all of us in our communities. They will be missed and never forgotten. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. The condolences of the House do go to the families whose members passed away, and certainly the congratulations on the longevity of the elder who celebrated her 100th birthday. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Member's Statement on Support for Health and Social Service Boards

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I listened very intently this morning as the Minister of Health and Social Services presented her statement on the health and social services system action plan. I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that I am somewhat concerned by the tone that is expressed in the Minister's statement.

I hear point after point concerns about the operations of boards; boards represent a complex, fragmented system; accountability relationships are fractured and that it is difficult to enforce standards of care. The real concern, Mr. Speaker, is that as we go through this, it seems almost like the Minister is setting the stage. She has already decided that we do not need boards and should be moving to dissolve them.

I would urge the Minister to be very cautious about that, because I think the majority of people in the North do think that boards are worthwhile. I would point to the example of the education boards and how they seem to be working quite well with the Department of Education and the Minister of Education in order to accomplish the goals that are set for them in statute and by their constituents. I think that we can achieve the same if we find a way to better support the boards.

The way this statement was laid out today would tend to indicate that we maybe should have some concern about the report that the Minister has commissioned. We have had numerous reports done for this Legislative Assembly since the 12th Assembly that I am aware of, and very seldom has the Department of Health responded to the recommendations therein. Had they responded in a timely fashion earlier, I think we would not have had some of the problems we are facing

right now, which I think are largely because the support to the boards has not been provided.

I would like to say that I hope this is not a situation where the Minister has already made up her mind and is moving towards eliminating boards, because I think that boards are made up of good people. People who need support to do an important job. They do not need thinly veiled accusations of incompetence. By and large, Mr. Speaker, they are volunteers who dedicate their time.

They also need to know that they can get a timely response from the department when they propose actions to bring their board's spending in line with the limitations set by the department. They need to know they are going to get a timely response when they propose an annual budget. They need to know they are going to get a timely response when they propose an action to eliminate some of their deficit, and not a continuous amount of study and a statement from the department that no one knows what the spending is.

We cannot wait until everything is done at the end of June. Boards need to know that they are going to be supported by the Department of Health now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Positive Outlook and Initiatives Outlined in the Budget Address

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and celebrate a very positive and optimistic budget delivered by the Minister of Finance yesterday. There are times in this House on this side when it feels very much like we are mired in negative energy and we cannot see what is ahead of us and all of the things that may be good.

Mr. Speaker, I realize I will have a chance to discuss the budget in more detail in our budget review and I hope to make a more detailed reply to the opening address. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I was on the phone all night long talking to my constituents. Once I explained the detail of some of the initiatives of the Minister in the House, the response has generally been positive. In particular, the fuel rebate and the proposal to fast-track Highway No. 3. I want to make note of the fact that this infrastructure money will go to all highways, not just Highway No. 3.

Mr. Speaker, I can also advise you that I talked to a major commercial truck operator in Yellowknife who told me that he saw a lot of good in this proposed highway spending. He is prepared to accept a slight increase in the cost of doing business that may result from the highway toll. I think he understands that this highway proposal money is an investment and not excessive spending without reason.

Mr. Speaker, the most important thing I want to state is the prominence and the attention paid to badly needed spending in social agendas. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the government for coming up with the Literacy Strategy and extra money on early child development and additional money on health care. These are very important and they are exactly the things that our

constituents have been asking for. All the Members in this House have been asking for it for the past year.

Mr. Speaker, I realize we do not have enough money, but that would not be a good excuse for inaction. Mr. Speaker, I believe that this budget is about what we can collectively do for our people as an Assembly, and not about sitting on our hands and talking about not doing the things we need to do because we do not have enough money, or the big brother in Ottawa is not giving us enough.

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Lee, the time allocated for your statement has expired.

MS. LEE: Mr. Speaker, may I have unanimous consent to conclude my statement please?

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

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much colleagues. I just want to conclude by saying that, Mr. Speaker, for at least one glorious day, before we get down to the negative part of the budget, I would like to recognize the courage and resolve displayed by the Members and the Premier for this very ambitious and bold, but at the same time very forward-looking and balanced budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. Order, please. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a constituent and a member of the Stanton Regional Hospital Board, Mr. Joe Auge.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we cannot forget the other people in the gallery. At this time, I would like to recognize the other people who are sitting in the gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 316-14(3): Medical Travel and Relocation Benefits

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, the Honourable Jane

Groenewegen. In my Member's statement, I outlined the dilemma one of my constituents faced by being short of funds and in need of medical attention. Another obstacle this person faces is in her ability to get to and from the hospital while she is in Yellowknife. The policy for medical travel provides for transportation to clients who are from out of town. However, if they relocate to Yellowknife, they are no longer eligible for assistance, even though they may not have access to a car or the money for a taxi.

This situation needs to be addressed, particularly in the cases of life-threatening illnesses. What provisions are there for people needing medical travel who have relocated to Yellowknife for special medical treatments? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 316-14(3): Medical Travel and Relocation Benefits

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it makes a difference if the constituent has relocated on a temporary basis for medical treatment and requires just transportation to and from the hospital for that treatment, as opposed to someone who has relocated here and who lives here. Obviously, we do not provide that kind of service for residents of Yellowknife. I am not certain whether Mr. Lafferty's constituent has relocated to Yellowknife permanently or is just here on a temporary basis. Certainly for constituents who are taking advantage of the Vital Abel Boarding Home, they do receive ground transportation to and from the hospital for treatment. If alternate temporary accommodation is sought while receiving treatment, it would certainly be something that I would consider would be the cost to and from the hospital. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 316-14(3): Medical Travel and Relocation Benefits

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, she asked if the constituent of mine was relocated here permanently. If that were the case, I would not be standing here speaking for her. Somebody else from Yellowknife would be. She is here just temporarily. She cannot access the services because they say she has relocated permanently. She is not here permanently. She is only here to get the treatment she needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen. I am not sure whether there was a question there, but more of a clarification. I do not think a response is...Mr. Lafferty, perhaps you could phrase it in a question. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: I was just trying to clarify my question because the Minister seemed puzzled as to whether the person I was talking about was relocated permanently or temporarily. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, you did clarify that, but there was no question there. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 317-14(3): Income Support and Payments From Impact Benefit Agreement

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up on an issue my colleague, Mr. Lafferty, raised. The question is to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. This is in regard to the decision by the income support unit to consider monies given to Dogrib beneficiaries from the BHP Impact and Benefit Agreement as income, and therefore was taken off of monthly support cheques.

I want to ask the Minister, is this issue something that is under review by the department? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 317-14(3): Income Support and Payments From Impact Benefit Agreement

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, IBA payments, like other income that is not earned, is normally deducted off of income support payments. The regulations we apply and that are in use, and that were instituted years ago, indicates that unearned income must be deducted from income support payments. It has been our policy that IBA payments are considered unearned income. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

With regard to the question of are we looking at this particular issue, there are a number of areas in income support that I feel should be looked at. This is one area that I have asked the department to start looking at. I believe our officials are already doing some work in this end. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 317-14(3): Income Support and Payments From Impact Benefit Agreement

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that the department is revisiting the definition of what unearned income is. In this particular case, I would ask whether the source of this, which is very much linked to the benefits that a First Nation person may receive for activity in their area, is this something that is being looked at in a different light? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 317-14(3): Income Support and Payments From Impact Benefit Agreement

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, I have asked the department to look at a number of areas with respect to income support. The issue of impact benefit agreements is one particular area. We are in the process of looking at this particular area. It has traditionally been an issue of designating it as unearned income. As a result, it is deducted from the income support payments.

The issue is one of interpretation, I suppose, by other individuals. We are fairly clear on our position, but then it comes down to a question of policy on this, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 317-14(3): Income Support and Payments From Impact Benefit Agreement

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think this is all very constructive. I would like to further ask, in the course of this review or examination, would the Minister welcome any input from Members or from other people across the North? Is there a way we might all have some input into reassessing what I think is a very critical piece of work for a number of our constituents? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 317-14(3): Income Support and Payments From Impact Benefit Agreement

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member can appreciate, I would like to get our own work completed first and take that initial step to review the particular issues that I feel would be worthy to look at and then bring it forward to the Members. I appreciate the Member's comments. It will have value to have some feedback on this and some input. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger

Question 318-14(3): Future Structure of the Workers' Compensation Board

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are directed to the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board and are a follow-up to my Member's statement.

Since the start of the debate, I have always supported the need to split the Workers' Compensation Board and the NTPC. To not do that will lead to administrative, legislative and, I think, political nightmares, as we have discovered with the Workers' Compensation Board as one institution for two Territories.

My question to the Minister is, will the government be seriously looking at taking a leadership role in determining the future of the Workers' Compensation Board and take the same steps that were taken with the NTPC and in fact split the Workers' Compensation Board for the benefit of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 318-14(3): Future Structure of the Workers' Compensation Board

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in response to the Member, we are looking at that issue. For

clarification, the agreement that was signed in 1999 between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Interim Commissioner provided for negotiations if either party wanted to extend or change the current agreement. The current agreement does not run out until 2002. We are currently negotiating with Nunavut on a number of issues regarding the extension of a joint arrangement. If those negotiations are not successful, then Mr. Miltenberger may very well get his wish of seeing two separate Workers' Compensation Boards. Hakuna Matata.

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

Supplementary to Question 318-14(3): Future Structure of the Workers' Compensation Board

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on this particular issue, it is hard to accept do not worry, be happy.

-- Laughter

The concern, Mr. Speaker, is that Nunavut seems to be setting the tone and direction here and that the territorial government is sitting passively by, accepting the decisions made by Nunavut as it did with NTPC.

My question to the Minister is, will we in fact take the same kind of leadership role that Nunavut has demonstrated and make a political decision? It is in our best interest to split the Workers' Compensation Board. Why do we not do it now? Do the planning that is necessary as opposed to dragging this out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 318-14(3): Future Structure of the Workers' Compensation Board

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not convinced it is in our best interest to split the Workers' Compensation Board. We have entered into negotiations with Nunavut on the potential of a continuation of a shared Workers' Compensation Board. The assessments I have so far, and I will be happy to share those with the Member, show that it is our advantage to maintain one Workers' Compensation Board in terms of the rates and in terms of the other benefits that are provided through this.

It is a complicated one. We need to look at the number of claims, where the payments are coming from and so on. I would be happy to share that information with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 318-14(3): Future Structure of the Workers' Compensation Board

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it makes no political sense. We were told that it would not be in our best interest to split NTPC, that there would be a five percent rate increase. Now I have heard that division is going

to happen and there will not be a rate increase. I have great suspicion of the numbers and the rationale to keep one large organization if there is bureaucratic survival in this.

Mr. Speaker, my question is, as part of this legislative review that has been undertaken, trying to come up with one piece of legislation for two territories with different political realities, will this issue be looked at? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 318-14(3): Future Structure of the Workers' Compensation Board

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, that issue will be taken into consideration as the review team undergoes public hearings and their own assessment of where we go. At the same time as the review is happening, we are in negotiations with Nunavut. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 318-14(3): Future Structure of the Workers' Compensation Board

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister then indicate what the position is of the government in these negotiations? Is it trying to maintain this forced marriage at all costs or are we taking a look at what is best for the people of the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 318-14(3): Future Structure of the Workers' Compensation Board

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly we are taking the interests of the residents of the Northwest Territories as being our primary responsibility. If there is an advantage to us in maintaining a shared WCB, then I support that. If the assessments that are being done, and I will be happy to share those with the Member, show otherwise, I am happy to do that. I have not taken a stand either way at this time, although the information I have is that from a financial perspective, we are better off with one WCB. Thank you.

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

Question 319-14(3): Aklavik Health Centre

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Health, but if she wants to pass it along to the Minister of Public Works...it is regarding the Aklavik Health Centre. There has been a delay in the construction of the new health centre. There has also been a change in transporting the materials into Aklavik. They are now going to be barged in. Originally, they were supposed to be trucked in over the winter road.

The concern I have, Mr. Speaker, is because of these changes and delays, it is having an effect on the overall cost of the project. Not only because of the delays, but in having over three different people to date handling this project. There are also cost overruns associated with the project management and the engineering architectural designs associated with the construction and design of this building. These cost overruns are having an effect on the quality of the building.

The community's concern is with all of these different people involved, and now they are talking about making cuts and amendments to the building, what will it do for the programs that will be delivered through this new health centre by decreasing the design and size of the building. Could the Minister tell me what the cost associated with these delays and cost overruns to date are because of this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 319-14(3): Aklavik Health Centre

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there have been some modifications to the original program that was set out for the replacement of the Aklavik Health Centre, as the Member notes. In the consideration of the design and some of the components of the facility, I want to assure the Member that no consideration will be given to any measures that would compromise the delivery of the health and social services programs within that facility.

There have been some changes to the budget. The original projected budget was \$3,569,000. The most recent estimate prepared by Public Works and Services is now \$4,360,000. I just want to assure the Member that the way by which the materials will arrive is not going to affect the occupancy date of the facility, as far as we know at this time.

The materials and supplies are now scheduled to be delivered by barge in July as opposed to by winter road, which was anticipated to be in the spring. The change of delivery of transportation does not delay the completion construction date as far as we know at this time. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 319-14(3): Aklavik Health Centre

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me if there have been any increases in the costs associated in delivering this unit because of the change from trucking on the ice road versus barging in the summer? Has there been an increase in that cost?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 319-14(3): Aklavik Health Centre

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether the means of transportation of

the materials to build the facility is affecting the overall cost or not. I do know that the revised estimates include approximately \$360,000 for the replacement of the ball diamond, which is something that we had considered because of the site on which the health centre was going to be built.

As far as the difference in the price between trucking it by road versus barging it, I do not have an answer for the Member on that. I could undertake to get one for him. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 319-14(3): Aklavik Health Centre

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the other concern I had is that there have been three different project managers for this project because of a change in staff. Could that have had a barrier on the increase cost in concluding the construction of this facility, because of having to go through so many different people instead of just having one person oversee the project?

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

Further Return to Question 319-14(3): Aklavik Health Centre

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Health and Social Services, the client department for which Public Works and Services is building this, as far as the project managers on this particular facility, I think that would be a question that perhaps would be better addressed by Public Works and Services. I would like to ask Mr. Steen if he would have any additional information to add. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Groenewegen. As the Deputy Premier, you are entitled to ask another Minister to respond. The honourable Minister for Public Works and Services, Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Public Works' involvement in it is in the design aspect of the facility. There were some slowdowns in relation to the design put forward to keep the designs and the project within budget. However, what I am told is that the final outcome of the completion of the building remains the same. I am not aware that changing the project officer has any relation to the end cost of the building. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 319-14(3): Aklavik Health Centre

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister responsible for Public Works tell me the information on exactly how much money has been spent to date on the project management and the architectural design costs because of having three different individuals handling the project? It moved from one person to another person to another person. There is a cost associated with that, by not having it overseen by one

person. Could the Minister get me the exact cost breakdown of what the departmental cost to date is on that project?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Public Works and Services, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 319-14(3): Aklavik Health Centre

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can provide that information to the Member at a later date. I do not have that with me at this time. Thank you.

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

Question 320-14(3): Fuel Subsidy Rebate

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today goes to the Minister of Finance and it has to do with the announcement he made about the fuel subsidy rebate. As I stated earlier, I was talking to my constituents and a lot of my constituents are very happy about this subsidy, but we all know that you will have to meet the eligibility criteria to get the money. I am just wondering about the practical aspects of this announcement.

The Minister has already indicated that he hopes to have the cheques out by mid-March, so there is a sense of limited timing here. I was wondering if the Minister could advise as to where people should go, who will be administering this, and what the process will be. Where will they fill out the forms?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. There were three questions there. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 320-14(3): Fuel Subsidy Rebate

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we are meeting here, our deputy ministers are meeting to determine which department will be the lead on this. Most likely it will be one of the major departments dealing with housing and energy costs. The forms are being prepared. We will, within a few days, clarify which department is going to handle it and where people can pick up the forms. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 320-14(3): Fuel Subsidy Rebate

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his speech, or maybe in his interviews outside of here, he mentioned that for Yellowknifers, the eligibility line may be a combined family income of \$70,000. I wonder if the Minister could specify as to whether or not that \$70,000 is gross income or net income. Can he give us any more details on the level of income that would meet the eligibility status? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 320-14(3): Fuel Subsidy Rebate

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, the intention is to use the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation core need income threshold scales. Those provide for household income, so it is

gross income. The threshold for Yellowknife is \$72,500. That is total household income. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 320-14(3): Fuel Subsidy Rebate

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the same policy, the Minister stated you have to have paid for the fuel to be eligible for this. That is a good point there. I am wondering about those people who got fuel subsidies from the federal government. Would they also be eligible above and beyond what they got from the federal government? Would that affect the eligibility? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 320-14(3): Fuel Subsidy Rebate

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with the federal government program of fuel subsidies. Unless the Member is referring to the rebates that the federal government has paid. With regard to those, if someone was eligible and received a rebate from the federal government, then that has no bearing on our program. We are looking at ours separately.

The same applies to seniors who may have gotten fuel assistance. They would also be eligible for this one. The main criteria is that the applicant for the household has to have purchased fuel themselves. They cannot have had the fuel given to them by an employer or a landlord. They must have some evidence that they have purchased fuel.

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

Supplementary to Question 320-14(3): Fuel Subsidy Rebate

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to take advantage of the final supplementary then, can I confirm with the Minister that he will be making an announcement in this House with the details of how people can access this program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 320-14(3): Fuel Subsidy Rebate

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I hope to be able to do that early next week. Don't worry, be happy.

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

Question 321-14(3): Contract to Review the Health and Social Services System

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. It relates to contracting practices of the department. In our last Report of the Auditor General that we reviewed in public meeting, we saw there was a disturbing trend in past years towards sole-sourcing negotiated contracts and, in fact, the use of southern contractors.

The secretary to the FMB ensured us that we had taken a look at our best practices and were in fact changing our evil ways and were going to move towards using northern contractors and towards fair competition.

Can the Minister responsible for Health tell me, of the system-wide review she just spoke of, was this in fact a contract sole-sourced to a southern firm? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 321-14(3): Contract to Review the Health and Social Services System

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Yes, it was. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 321-14(3): Contract to Review the Health and Social Services System

MR. BELL: Apart from the obvious, that all of the money basically leaves the North, is that we do nothing to build capacity in the North. So if in fact there was no one here who could do the work, that is one thing, but we cannot expect that in the future there will be if we keep bypassing northern business. Would the Minister agree?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bell, the question to me, from where I sit, does sound kind of hypothetical. Would you like to rephrase that?

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I would like to ask the Minister how sole-sourcing to southern firms helps to build capacity in the North. Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 321-14(3): Contract to Review the Health and Social Services System

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the consultants that were hired by our department to do this particular system-wide review have expertise that consultants in the North would not have. In order to, as the Member suggests, build up this expertise in the North, I am afraid it would take more than just this contract to do that.

This is a very specific area of expertise. It would not have been available in the North. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 321-14(3): Contract to Review the Health and Social Services System

MR. BELL: Thank you. I am aware that it is a very specific area of expertise that is required. I know in the past the federal government, for instance, DIAND, has used a technique where they might have to use a southern contractor but then insisted some of the work be subcontracted out to northern businesses.

I am wondering if the Minister considered that in this instance. Did she consider insisting some of the work be subcontracted to northern business? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 321-14(3): Contract to Review the Health and Social Services System

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, we did not. We relied on the consultant, Mr. George Cuff, to pull together a team of experts in this field that he felt would be appropriate in order to gather the information necessary to review our system. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 321-14(3): Contract to Review the Health and Social Services System

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, and there are a team of experts travelling the North and that is great. However, some of the work being done is interviewing and these kinds of things that probably could be overseen by Mr. Cuff and his team. Would the Minister agree that some of this work certainly could be done by northern businesses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 321-14(3): Contract to Review the Health and Social Services System

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the people who conducted the interviewing had backgrounds in collecting this type of information and with assisting and analyzing it. Hypothetically, could we have asked some of the information to be gathered and interviews conducted by Northerners? I suppose we could have. We felt it was important to give Mr. Cuff the latitude he needed to get to the bottom of these issues through gathering information and conducting interviews. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 322-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, the Honourable Jane Groenewegen. It has to do with the non-insured health benefits that was mentioned in the budget address by the Minister of Finance yesterday, as to transferring the responsibility back to the federal government.

I just want to know if a decision is going to be made, what role will the Department of Health and Social Services have to do with it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 322-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the discussions that have taken place between Health Canada and ourselves have involved the participation of people from our department. We have been discussing the non-insured health benefits and how we might continue to deliver it without having to subsidize the program. We have not come to a final conclusion on that yet, but I can report that the discussions are not indicating that we are going to reach a satisfactory resolve. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 322-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is disheartening to know that this government wants responsibility from Ottawa in the areas of non-renewable resource development, but once a problem becomes too big, they want to give it back. I just want to know when is the Minister anticipating that this responsibility of delivering non-insured health benefits for treaty Indians and Inuit will go back to Ottawa? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 322-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is a contract that we perform on behalf of the federal government for a responsibility which they hold. We did not feel that it was appropriate to spend an extra \$1 million per year of Northwest Territories money in order to subsidize this, which is a responsibility of the federal government. If the administration of this contract and the delivery of these services is taken on by another agency, we will do everything to ensure the orderly transition, with due care given to the fact that we do not want it to affect the recipients of the program. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 322-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess with this thinly veiled suggestion that we might dissolve the health boards, there are no other agents out there. The question was when does the Minister anticipate the transfer for the responsibility for delivering non-insured health benefits to treaty Indians and Inuit be transferred back to Ottawa? When, Mr. Speaker, when?

AN HON. MEMBER: When?

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

Further Return to Question 322-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the exact timing and the timeframe of when this might be taken over by someone else, I do not know. I will take that as notice and get back to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. The rest of the question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Question 323-14(3): Health and Social Services System-Wide Review

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services and they relate to her statement earlier today on the health and social services system action plan.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister makes a number of points in her statement outlining concerns about the operation of boards. I think a big concern I have is mainly to questions among the public about the administration of health in our communities, since all of the administration of the health programs is provided by boards. Is there a reason for public or health safety concern arising from this statement? I think we are led to believe that when the Minister says that boards are not delivering core programs to standard.

The first question for the Minister is are my constituents at risk? Is public safety or public health at risk in the Northwest Territories right now?

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

Return to Question 323-14(3): Health and Social Services System-Wide Review

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, no, Mr. Dent's constituents are not at risk. We are trying to be open and transparent with regard to some of the deficiencies that we are finding in the system by sharing these with you, but these are not intended to cause any alarm about the services that are being provided to constituents in the North. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 323-14(3): Health and Social Services System-Wide Review

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that response, but it may lead to questions from other Members whose constituencies she did not address. In the Minister's statement, she makes a comment that the pay and benefits authorities have been transferred to the Financial Management Board Secretariat, referring to an agreement between the department and the board. Could I receive an explanation as to what this means? I do not think it is perfectly clear from the Minister's statement.

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

Further Return to Question 323-14(3): Health and Social Services System-Wide Review

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the pay and benefits authority in one of the boards has been revoked and has been handed over to the Financial Management Board Secretariat. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 323-14(3): Health and Social Services System-Wide Review

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, is the Minister prepared to inform this House as to which board that would be?

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

Further Return to Question 323-14(3): Health and Social Services System-Wide Review

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to meet recently with the Fort Smith Health and Social Services Board and advise them of a joint action plan in order to address some of the concerns that have come to light as a result of recent audits and reviews that have taken place with respect to that board. It is the Fort Smith Health and Social Services Board that has had the pay and benefits authority transferred to the Financial Management Board Secretariat. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 323-14(3): Health and Social Services System-Wide Review

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the statement today called into question the commitment to boards. I have been told that the federal government insisted on explicit support from aboriginal governments for the transfer of health to the Government of the Northwest Territories. Can the Minister advise the House if one of the conditions aboriginal governments set for their support required the establishment of regional health boards of administration in the Northwest Territories?

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

Further Return to Question 323-14(3): Health and Social Services System-Wide Review

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was not involved with the government at the time that Health and Social Services was transferred from the federal government to the territorial government. I do not know if that was a requirement. Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared to

make any comment to pre-empt the outcome of the system-wide review we are doing right now. Although the Member is making suggestions that we have prejudged the outcome, that is not true. Any question about the outcome of the boards and the existence of the boards as a result of our review is absolutely premature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. Questions orales. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland

Question 324-14(3): Department Spending Levels

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Finance Minister stated that we will be ending this fiscal year with a surplus, a rosy picture indeed. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. I would like the Minister to state whether or not the department had frozen spending in communities during this fiscal year?

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

Return to Question 324-14(3): Department Spending Levels

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has not frozen spending, but they have put in place a spending restraint plan. The department found that with the extensive development, particularly in oil and gas, as well as demands in other areas, it has caused them to come close to spending their entire budget allocation before the end of the fiscal year. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 324-14(3): Department Spending Levels

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, so not frozen, just put on hold. Can the Minister inform us as to what took place that brought this on? Was funding running out at headquarters or in communities? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 324-14(3): Department Spending Levels

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with all of the detail of which areas of the department program responsibilities may have been running short on dollars, or which regions may have been. I can assure you that it was a combination of programs and services we offer. Certainly the money available for business development grants was used up very early in the year. We also found that some regions ran into unexpected demands on their budgets. Quite likely, there were some divisions within the department's headquarters function that found themselves in the same circumstance. The spending restraint program was a measure to limit spending in order to maintain an overall rebalance. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 324-14(3): Department Spending Levels

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister inform us as to whether there was any money pulled back from communities and regions and used in headquarters operations? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 324-14(3): Department Spending Levels

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, very likely there was. That is a common practice in departments. If there is any free money in a program or an area and a shortfall in another one, then it is very often the case that the deputy minister will do these sorts of internal transfers. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 324-14(3): Department Spending Levels

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister inform us when this process started? When did they start slowing spending down, not freezing it, but cutting back? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 324-14(3): Department Spending Levels

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the department has throughout the year maintained a conservative approach to its spending, realizing that the demands are great on the money it has. The money they have is very limited. The serious spending restraint was really put in place in late November-early December. Thank you.

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

Question 325-14(3): Doctor Shortages

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as quite evident today with the Department of Health, health and social issues in the Northwest Territories are very important. I wish I could stand here and say I do not have any concerns in the health and social services end of it, but unfortunately, I do have some concerns.

Hay River has been without a permanent doctor for about a year now. I know the budget that was delivered yesterday addressed health and social services and health care and extra money being put into it. I would like to read from a line in the budget that says: "We will invest \$2.8 million to improve the

primary care model by stabilizing the physicians workforce in Yellowknife."

From what I understand, Yellowknife has approximately 20 doctors out of 24. Hay River has no permanent doctors right now. I was wondering why Yellowknife would be addressed in the budget and not Hay River? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 325-14(3): Doctor Shortages

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Finance Minister referred to the Yellowknife situation, which had required additional funding for taking the physicians from a fee-for-service to a contract basis, and also increasing the number of physicians here as well.

Also, the purchase of the clinics...this is something that has been done in other communities in previous years. The board in Hay River had been assisted in acquiring the clinic in Hay River in a previous fiscal year. That had also taken place in Inuvik previously.

I want to assure the Member the highlight on the Yellowknife situation does not indicate that Yellowknife is receiving a disproportionate share of health and social services funding. I want to also assure him that Hay River does have the ability and the financial resources to recruit physicians. That has not been because of a lack of physicians in Hay River. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 325-14(3): Doctor Shortages

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the past year, Hay River has been operating under locums. An article in the paper showed that in the Northwest Territories, there have been approximately 85 locums over the past year recruited in the health care end of it. I was wondering if the Minister has any idea of the cost of operating under that many locums compared to permanent doctors, the difference in cost?

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

Further Return to Question 325-14(3): Doctor Shortages

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, there are additional costs associated with bringing in locums. Quite often, when we can get them, we are very happy to get them. Sometimes they only come for short periods of time, so there are travel costs, accommodation costs, different things associated with having locums versus permanent physicians.

However, having said that, I think everyone recognizes that the locums were and are continuing to be a short-term solution to the physician shortage. Although it is not ideal, more than a cost concern is the continuity of service. What is lost in terms of patient care when there is not a continuity of service when you have permanent physicians? Although there may be costs associated, there are larger concerns about patient care when

you have to see a different doctor each time you visit the clinics.

Although we have incurred additional costs from locums, we have been very happy to be able to get them, because the other alternative is not to have anyone. It comes down to a matter of trying now to focus our attention on the fact that we do have a good recruitment tool in the present contract we have. We need to standardize that contract across the North and continue to recruit the much-needed physicians.

We are pleased that the pressure on the Yellowknife system has been alleviated with the addition of physicians. Certainly our attention is now on Fort Smith and Hay River. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 325-14(3): Doctor Shortages

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest assets we have had, from what I hear, in the Northwest Territories for recruiting locums to come to the North and fill the gaps, has been Dr. Dahlke. I would like to recognize the efforts she has made to help the North in recruiting doctors. It is estimated that out of the 85 who came to the North, half of them were personally recruited by Dr. Dahlke.

She has announced that she is not going to be doing near as much in the Northwest Territories anymore, as well as Hay River. I was wondering what kind of problem that is going to create for the department. Is there a plan in place to replace the effort she was putting into recruiting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 325-14(3): Doctor Shortages

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the present time, it is the boards who hire doctors. It is the boards who hire locums. The support that Dr. Dahlke provided in identifying people who were willing to come up North is now a function that will be undertaken by the recruitment and retention unit within the department. Where boards need assistance in identifying sources of locums and potential physicians who may be interested in coming to the North who have contacted us through various avenues, we will continue to provide that support to the boards.

Dr. Dahlke's specific function will be undertaken by the recruitment and retention unit in the department. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 325-14(3): Doctor Shortages

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I understand that contracts for doctors are now being standardized across the Territory so that none of the boards have an advantage over one another. What I was wondering about, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister could inform the House, in the contracts the doctors are being offered as a standard contract, do the boards have any leeway as far as offering

extra incentives to doctors to sign a bonus, such as housing or paid vacations? Any incentives outside of the contract that would attract doctors to come to one board or the other? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 325-14(3): Doctor Shortages

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, CEOs and Health and Social Services boards are allowed to offer incentives to attract physicians to come to the North and to take up the contract that was being offered. There were signing bonuses that were allowed.

In communities such as Hay River and Fort Smith, which currently do not have permanent physicians, we are also trying to identify some way of recognizing the fact that if you come into a pool of doctors where you are number 23 in a pool of 26, the pressures on you are not the same as if you are number one coming into what will hopefully be a pool of five, for example. We are looking at a way we can possibly recognize the initial workload a doctor would incur in being the first or second into a community where there should be four or five or six positions. We are analyzing that right now in the department, to see if there is a way of also alleviating physicians' fears that they might be alone or a couple of them might be alone for a period of time when they first come to a community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Merci, Madam Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. Questions orales. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 326-14(3): Department Spending Levels

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are addressed to the Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, to follow up on my colleague, Mr. Roland.

Mr. Speaker, the concern from my constituency is that the regions were given budgets. The managers and people delivering programs in the regions carefully allocated their money. They did their cash flows for the 12 months. What I understand, and I have been told from all corners of my constituency, is that headquarters was broke by September and has since been going out to the regions and basically raiding the regional budgets to help offset the overexpenditures in headquarters, thereby limiting the ability of the people in the regions to do their jobs and deliver the programs at the regional and community level.

I was wondering if the Minister could address and tell me how much was taken out of the Fort Smith regional budget for the South Slave to service and help offset expenditures in headquarters? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 326-14(3): Department Spending Levels

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have that kind of detailed information with me, but I will be happy to get back to the Member with more detail on that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary to Question 326-14(3): Department Spending Levels

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister not taking the question as notice. Therefore, I would like to ask him as well, on behalf of my colleagues from the other regions, if we could be given that type of breakdown by region, so all of the MLAs on this side of the House can see how the money was spent in their regions. Also, if in fact headquarters was broke by September and have been offsetting that overexpenditure with regional money? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 326-14(3): Department Spending Levels

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I intentionally did not take it as notice in order to try to accommodate the Member. We will do what we can to get that to all of the Members to show what constraints have been put on regions and also on headquarters in order to balance out our needs as a department. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 326-14(3): Department Spending Levels

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just to be clear in terms of the information, I would hope that it would be headquarters and the regions as opposed to program costs throughout the length of the department, which would possibly blur the movement of funds, so that it is very clear. I have been hit by many constituents about the loss of ability to have the funds to do their jobs for their programs. Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 326-14(3): Department Spending Levels

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, as I said, I will do my best to get that information. It is not that easy because often money is transferred from one region, one set of programs to another region to meet some shortfall in another program. It is all done legitimately. It is done by the deputy ministers as part of their responsibility. It happens quite frequently in RWED, given the demands on that department's resources. We will do the best we can to show the split between regions and headquarters. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary to Question 326-14(3): Department Spending Levels

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would just ask the Minister if he can give us a date where he would anticipate that this information would be coming up? Would it form part of the information prior to the review of RWED's budget, for example, coming before this House? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 326-14(3): Department Spending Levels

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, while we may not have complete and full information, I will make every effort to have it by the time we do a review of RWED's main estimates. Thank you.

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

Question 327-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services dealing with the non-insured health benefits. Not dealing with the timeline, but process. Does the department have a plan to consult with treaty Indians and Inuit who currently benefit from this program? If so, when will it start? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 327-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the extent of consultation that may be taking place with aboriginal leaders with respect to returning the non-insured health benefits contract and function to the federal government, but I could undertake to find that for the Member. I do not have it in my briefing notes. I believe there has been consultation, but I could not speak definitively to that. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 327-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is kind of unfortunate. It was in the budget address, but there are no plans for consultation. Why is that, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. I am not sure whether the Minister will be able to answer that, however, the honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 327-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We just want to make sure we get the most correct information for the Member as possible. Mr. Speaker, it is basically the same answer as to the first question. In terms of consultation with the aboriginal groups regarding the return of the non-insured health benefits, I would have to find out what communication has transpired and what communication is planned. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 327-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister indicated in her Minister's statement, she is the person who is ultimately accountable for Health and Social Services in the Northwest Territories.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

MR. NITAH: This is a huge program, Mr. Speaker. Why are there no plans associated with the transfer of health and social services for non-insured health beneficiaries back to the federal government? Why is there no plan associated with a plan to consult, a timeline? Why is the Minister not being accountable for this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 327-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Member that I am being accountable. I just do not have the information at my fingertips here today with respect to the consultation process for the non-insured health benefits function. I will get that for him and provide it to him and we will keep the Members apprised of any new news to report with respect to this health benefit. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Merci, Madam Groenewegen. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 327-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to get a commitment from the Minister that there will be a consultation process and that she will report the process of consultation to the Assembly for the people of the Northwest Territories who are benefiting from the non-insured health benefits. Can I have that commitment in the House today? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 327-14(3): Non-Insured Health Benefits

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I have said and I will repeat again, we will ensure that we consult with the stakeholders who are effected by the non-insured health benefits. I want to also remind Members that this is not devolved from the federal government. This is a contract that we administer for them. They are the ones who have the ultimate responsibility for this insurance program. We act as a contractor for them. Yes, we will ensure that people are kept apprised and consulted with regard to this benefit. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Merci, Madam Groenewegen. Mes amis, encores, les temps pour les questions orale c'est finis. The time for question period has expired. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, replies to the budget address. Item 11, petitions. Before I move on to the next item, the House will take a short break.

-- Break

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 5-14(3): Report on the 2001-2002 Main Estimates

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to present the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the 2001-2002 Main Estimates dealing with government-wide issues.

Introduction

Mr. Speaker, The Standing Committees of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories met from January 15 through January 25, 2001 to review the 2001-2002 Draft Main Estimates for the different Government of the Northwest Territories departments. The 2000-2001 fiscal year was the first time that the Government of the Northwest Territories used tangible capital asset accounting. As we enter into the second year of implementation, adjustments within amortization figures continue to occur. The recent collective agreement between the Union of Northern Workers (UNW) and the Government of the Northwest Territories has resulted in changes in all departments' operations expenses since the 2001/2004 Business Plans. Overall, the collective agreement is estimated to cost the GNWT approximately \$7.4 million for the 2000-2001 fiscal year and \$13.1 million in the 2001-2002 fiscal year.

Other partners in the review of the GNWT departmental business plans and main estimates are the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development and the Standing Committee on Social Programs. Each standing committee prepares a report covering the review of departments within their envelope and presents their report to the House. Issues that are government-wide in nature were identified and brought forward for this committee to address.

Cumulative Impact of the Program and Functional Review

The standing committee met at the end of November to study the Program and Functional Review. The committee is concerned that fee increases presented in the Program and Functional Review will have a "trickle down" effect and end up on the backs of the residents who are already facing increased costs of living. Arising from the November meeting was a request for government to complete two assessments.

The committee has received the first assessment on the impact on northern businesses. The second assessment on the impact on individuals and families that reside within the NWT has yet to be received. The committee looks forward to receiving this information and notes that, for some departments, there have already been fee increases arising from the Program and Functional Review, incorporated into the 2001-2002 Draft Main Estimates.

Other Expenses

Mr. Speaker, in the financial reporting for the departments, operations expenses are separated into control objects that include compensation and benefits, grants and contributions, other expenses and amortization. As was the case in the Report on the Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plans and the 2000-2001 Main Estimates, the committee notes the lack of justification supplied for the control object "other expenses".

The committee is of the opinion that the "other expenses" should be subdivided and more detail supplied. For the 2001-2002 Main Estimates, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has identified \$31.3 million and the Department of Health and Social Services has allocated \$29.2 million for the control object "other expenses". These amounts are more than the total budgets requested by some departments.

The committee repeats the recommendation made in its Report on the Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plans and the 2000-2001 Main Estimates.

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends that the government develop more detailed subcategories for the control object "other expenses" to justify the request for funds; and further that, where possible, these categories be consistent across government; and further that, one of the categories should cover items on the controllable asset inventory list that are now, under the new Tangible Capital Asset Accounting system, considered as an Operations Expense.

Forced Growth

Mr. Speaker, as identified in the review of the 2001-2003 Business Plans, the committee again noticed the lack of identification of forced growth items by the departments. It is common knowledge that rising fuel prices will affect departmental budgets. When forced growth items like increased fuel costs are not addressed, it is difficult for programs and services to operate within their budgets. The committee is concerned that supplementary appropriations will have to be put forward to meet budget shortfalls. The committee is of the opinion that this is poor fiscal planning and

would like forced growth areas to be identified and addressed in future budget exercises.

Vacant Positions

As was the case in the Report on the Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plans and the 2000-2001 Main Estimates, the committee again notes that salary dollars from vacant positions are being used to cover funding shortfalls. When positions are held vacant, programs and services suffer. Smaller communities are impacted more when positions are not filled, as there are fewer people to cover off the duties of the vacant positions. This often means that programs and services are offered at a reduced level or not at all. Members feel that monies approved by the Legislative Assembly for salary purposes should be used for such.

Ministerial Committees

During the fiscal overview of the 2001-2002 Draft Main Estimates, presented by the Premier, the Minister of Finance, the secretary to the FMB and the secretary to Cabinet, it came to the attention of Members that three ministerial committees have been formed. One ministerial committee addresses political development, devolution, resource revenue sharing and economic development. The second committee deals with social issues and the third focuses on maximizing employment. It was indicated that the purpose of the ministerial committees was to "develop the ideas, the process, the procedures, then take it forward to Cabinet for approval".

Members and the standing committees wish to be informed of the processes and procedures for the new ministerial committees. There is also a need to decide the reporting relationships between the different standing committees and their ministerial committee counterpart.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight requests a briefing on the roles, responsibilities, processes and procedures for the three ministerial committees. The standing committee looks forward to working with Cabinet to define reporting relationships with the new ministerial committees.

Governance Issues

The committee Members noted that there are many competing processes underway that will determine how health care and social services will be delivered in the future.

Some, such as how self-government or land claim agreements will affect service delivery, have yet to be determined. Another example of a process that may ultimately affect how health care will be delivered is the regional capacity study presently underway. Finally, Members are also aware of considerable interest at the community and regional level in the community service board model of service delivery.

With the announcement of a system-wide review of health care sustainability in the Northwest Territories, which has become known as the Cuff Report, Members are questioning the linkages between all of the competing governance efforts underway. The standing committee can see no indication that there is any coordinated effort within the social program envelope or on a government-wide basis.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight would like to be informed on which government department is

coordinating all of the governance efforts that are presently underway and how the government sees them to be related.

Devolution and Revenue Sharing

The committee is encouraged by advances to date on negotiations between the GNWT and aboriginal groups but also expresses concern that the pace of discussions is lagging. These talks are vital to the GNWT's long-term fiscal stability and program delivery to all residents. The committee looks forward to continuing progress at the next Intergovernmental Forum, expected in March, 2001.

Sport and Recreation

Mr. Speaker, the Members are concerned over the public's increasing dissatisfaction with sport and recreation in the Northwest Territories. The government has decreased its formal support for sport and recreation and appears to be relying on community recreation coordinators, outside agencies and volunteers to deliver programs. It is acknowledged that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is working on a sports and recreation policy framework. Sport and recreation organizations already know what programs, services and funding are required.

The Members hope that the policy framework reflects that sport and recreation in the communities requires assistance, not more regulations. The standing committee will be arranging briefings from the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, the Aboriginal Sport Circle, Sport North and other agencies deemed appropriate.

Hydro Development

The committee observes that the Taltson River hydro project is under the jurisdiction of the Financial Management Board Secretariat. When questioned why the authority lay with FMBS rather than RWED or NWTPC, FMBS replied that this is an overall government issue and it would have a large financial impact. Members are convinced that hydro development is a complex issue and wonder why the government is in such a hurry to proceed. A great deal of research and consultation with aboriginal partners are required before any project can go ahead.

Further, as most of the power will be sold to Alberta, the committee encourages Cabinet to proceed with extreme caution; we do not wish to end up in a predicament similar to the one that exists between Quebec and Newfoundland/Labrador.

Transportation Strategy

During the Main Estimates review, the Department of Transportation introduced its proposed Transportation Strategy to the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development. The strategy would introduce a user fee of five cents per tonne per kilometre for commercial traffic on territorial highways and is projected to generate 15 million dollars in revenue that would be directed specifically for the territorial highway system. A user fee would not affect federal funding transfers to the territorial government. The strategy is expected to cost 100 million dollars over the next four years. User fees would be managed from a dedicated highway investment fund trust and leveraged to meet initial capital requirements.

Due to the significant impact of this initiative upon our northern economy and cost of living, the committee referred this issue to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight in order to extend discussion to other Members of the Legislative Assembly. The Department of Transportation and the Department of Finance has recently given a presentation on the proposed Transportation Strategy and cost of living tax credit for NWT residents to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight.

Conclusion

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has presented a budget of \$783,773,000 for the 2001-2002 fiscal year. An increase of \$26,288,000 from the Main Estimates of last year. Due to the recent UNW collective agreement reached with the GNWT in December 2000, all departments adjusted their draft budgets that were presented during the review of the 2001-2004 Business Plans in October 2000.

In this section of the report, the standing committee has highlighted issues and concerns that have been identified by other standing committees or Members as having government-wide implications. Further recommendations, issues and concerns are contained in the reports of the other standing committees.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the introductory portion of this report.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that the report of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight on the Review of the 2001-2002 Main Estimates be received by the Legislative Assembly and moved into committee of the whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The motion is in order. To the motion. The House is ready for question. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 5-14(3) moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) to have Committee Report 5-14(3) moved into committee of the whole. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Committee Report 5-14(3) is now moved into committee of the whole for today.

Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Committee Report 6-14(3) : Report on the 2001-2002 Main Estimates

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development (GED) met from Tuesday, January 16, 2001 to Wednesday, January 24, 2001 to review the government's 2001-2002 Main Estimates. The GED envelope includes the following Departments: Executive, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Financial

Management Board Secretariat (FMBS), Finance, Public Works and Services (PWS), Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA), Transportation, and Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED). The committee would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the departments and the Legislative Assembly committee staff for their hard work.

Transportation Strategy

The Department of Transportation introduced its proposed Transportation Strategy to the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development during discussions on its 2001-2002 Main Estimates. The strategy is expected to cost \$100 million over the next four years. Further, the strategy would introduce a user fee of five cents per tonne per kilometre for commercial traffic on territorial highways and is projected to generate \$15 million in revenue that would be directed specifically to improving the territorial highway system. User fees would be managed from a dedicated highway investment fund trust and leveraged to meet initial capital requirements. A user fee would not affect federal funding transfers to the territorial government.

The committee, while recognizing the need for a safe and well-maintained territorial highway system, advised the Minister that any user fee would be passed on by the transportation companies to the consumer, northern businesses and government. With transportation costs already high because of our remoteness and the rising cost of fuel, this user fee would significantly impact upon our standard of living.

The department replied that some of the increased costs would be mitigated by a cost of living tax credit for NWT residents. The committee supports this strategy in principle. However, final support is conditional upon the committee receiving and reviewing additional financing and strategy details and assessing their impact upon northern residents.

Due to the significant impact of this initiative upon the northern economy and the cost of living, the Department of Transportation and the Department of Finance agreed to give a presentation on the proposed Transportation Strategy and cost of living tax credit for NWT residents to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, which includes all Ordinary Members. The committee referred this issue to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight in order to extend discussion to include other Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Hydro-Electricity Project

The Financial Management Board Secretariat presented the government's hydro resource initiative to the standing committee during review of the secretariat's 2001-2002 Main Estimates with the committee. The committee pointed out that substantial funding would be required to develop the proposed Taltson River hydro project and connect it to the Alberta power grid.

Committee Members noted that this resource would outlast other resources, including minerals, oil and gas, as there will always be customers for electricity and our hydro-electric potential is almost unlimited. The project and future projects will provide a steady revenue stream to NWT businesses and government, in addition to providing employment to NWT

residents. There is also a potential for energy cost savings for the NWT.

Committee Members acknowledged that timely development is important, but urged a prudent approach to ensure all impacts are considered, including environmental and land claims in addition to economic issues. Furthermore, the committee asked where the money for development will come from, especially in light of the government's proximity to the debt wall. In light of the overall significant impact of this proposed initiative upon our Territory, the committee referred further discussion on this matter to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight.

Program and Functional Review

The committee is concerned that the territorial government's program and functional fee increases will significantly affect our cost of living. In particular, fee increases in the transportation sector including airport land fees, general terminal fees and increased airport leases would be initially borne by the airline companies, but inevitably passed on to the northern consumer, business and government. Committee members note that residents will also be directly impacted by increases to motor vehicle licenses and related administrative fee increases.

The committee further remarked that northern residents would not only be affected by some fee increases, but by rising fuel costs as well. This translates into higher living and operating costs for both the consumer and businesses. In particular, people on a fixed income and businesses that are marginally profitable will be severely impacted. As a result, the committee, in recognition of the wide-ranging and significant effects of this issue upon our entire region, referred this matter to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight for additional exposure and discussion.

Community Governance Capacity

The issue of community governance capacity continues to remain an ongoing concern of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development. As the Government of the Northwest Territories continues its practice of devolving more and more responsibilities to the community level, committee members are concerned these additional responsibilities are not accompanied by adequate funding, technical knowledge, qualified personnel, facilities and equipment. Increasing and already high fuel costs have already magnified operating costs for communities.

The committee noted that in many cases, communities are not involved in decision-making processes at the territorial or departmental level on issues that directly impact them. Committee members are of the position that communities should be and must be involved in any process that affects them.

Further, the committee pointed out to the government that facilities and equipment in most communities require immediate repair, upgrading or replacement. Committee members are very concerned that inadequate facilities, equipment and the shortage of qualified staff to maintain and operate them represents a major safety issue. These facilities and equipment must be brought up to standard. The committee is of the position that the territorial government has to invest more in community infrastructure. This was also mentioned on page 5 of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight's

Report on the Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plans and the 2000-2001 Main Estimates:

"It was brought to the attention of the committee that there appears to be an increase in the percentage of funds being used to increase and sustain bureaucracy - it is the opinion of the committee that these funds could be better spent on infrastructure or other essential programs or services for the people of the Northwest Territories."

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the introductory portion of the report.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that the Report of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development on the Review of the 2001-2002 Main Estimates be received by the Legislative Assembly and moved into committee of the whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 6-14(3) moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and to have Committee Report 6-14(3) moved into committee of the whole. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Committee Report 6-14(3) is now moved into committee of the whole for today.

Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Committee Report 7-14(3): Report on the 2001-2002 Main Estimates

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the 2001-2002 Main Estimates.

General Comments

The members of the standing committee noted that the reviews of the Business Plans and Main Estimates were not combined this fiscal year due to an election and that the business planning and budgetary cycle is back on track. The departmental staff worked especially hard to have the business plans and main estimates ready for committee review, so shortly after the last budget cycle. The committee appreciates the extra effort.

Committee members remain disappointed with the level of cooperation between the departments in the social program envelope. Members note that there has been some progress made in the harmonization of the income support and social

housing programs and in the creation of the Early Childhood Development Action Plan. The real proof of how well the departments are cooperating will fall out from how the departments work together in implementing the strategies. The Standing Committee on Social Programs will be watching with interest how events unfold.

Other Expenses

The standing committee reviews the budgets of each department based on a breakdown by activity. In most departments, the activity breakdowns are small enough that committee members can get a very good sense of what is happening and how the budget is to be used. However, for example, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has very few activities, despite having one of the largest departmental budgets in government. As a result, large pools of money are merely identified as other expenses. Under advanced education and careers, for example, the department shows \$24,692,000 for other expenses, an amount that is almost as much as the entire operational budget for the Financial Management Board Secretariat.

Not only were there large amounts listed under other expenses, but the department was unable to quickly provide detailed information on what items were covered under those other expenses. Although the breakdown was subsequently provided, it was not in time to adequately be considered during the review of the main estimates.

The Accountability and Oversight Committee has previously recommended that a breakdown be provided of these other expenses.

The Standing Committee on Social Programs has requested that the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight provide the government with another recommendation on including breakdowns on other expenses as an information item when presenting the main estimates.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the introductory portion of the report.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that the Report of the Standing Committee on Social Programs on the Review of the 2001-2002 Main Estimates be received by the Legislative Assembly and moved into committee of the whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 7-14(3) moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) to have Committee Report 7-14(3) moved into committee of the whole. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Committee

Report 7-14(3) is now moved into committee of the whole for today.

Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 14: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 101-14(3): Accountability and Oversight Report on the 2001-2004 Business Plans

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight's Report on the 2001-2004 Business Plans. Mr. Speaker, this report contains the committee's views and concerns at the time of our review of the business plans October 10 to 24, 2000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 14, tabling of documents. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Tabled Document 102-14(3): Governance and Economic Development Report on the 2001-2004 Business Plans

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the 2001-2004 Business Plans. Mr. Speaker, this report contains the committee's views and concerns at the time of our review of the business plans October 10 to 24, 2000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 14, tabling of documents. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Tabled Document 103-14(3): Social Programs Report on the 2001-2004 Business Plans

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the 2001-2004 Business Plans. Mr. Speaker, this report contains the committee's views and concerns at the time of our review of the business plans October 10 to 24, 2000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Merci, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 14, tabling of documents. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Tabled Document 104-14(3): Inuvik Twin Lakes: A Profile

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to table a document, Inuvik Twin Lakes: A Profile. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 19: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 19: Appropriation Act 2001-2002

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 19, Appropriation Act 2001-2002, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the Government of the Northwest Territories to make operations expenditures and capital investment expenditures for the 2001-2002 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Is the House ready for the question? Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 19 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to committee of the whole.

Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act; Bill 19, Appropriation Act, 2001-2002; Committee Report 5-14(3); Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the 2001-2002 Main Estimates; Committee Report 6-14(3), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the 2001-2002 Main Estimates; Committee Report 7-14(3), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the 2001-2002 Main Estimates, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call the committee to order. We have Bill 14, Bill 19, and Committee Reports 5-14(3), 6-14(3) and 7-14(3). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, I recommend that we first consider Bill 14, then perhaps move into general comments on Bill 19.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We will move ahead with Bill 14. Does the Minister responsible for the bill have any opening comments?

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act.

The main objective of this amendment is to provide for the establishment of an external board to serve as the final level of appeal for students who disagree with their assessments under the student financial assistance program.

Mr. Chairman, the changes proposed to the act originated with suggestions made by the Standing Committee on Social Programs in March, 2000, during its review of legislation to enable the re-design of the Student Financial Assistance Program. I would like to thank the committee for its recommendation that appeals be heard by an independent body.

At present, there are three levels of appeal for students who disagree with the decisions made under the Student Financial Assistance Program. The first level is to have the decision reviewed by the program manager. If the student is still dissatisfied, the second level of appeal is a review by an internal administrative review committee. The Minister serves as the final level of appeal.

This proposed amendment removes the Minister from the appeal process and provides for the establishment of a student financial assistance appeal board as the third and final level of appeal.

The board will be comprised of five members, one of whom must be a post-secondary student.

The other amendments to the bill are of a minor nature to clarify the existing regulation-making powers and to ensure the legislation is consistent with current practice.

Mr. Chairman, the amendments proposed in Bill 14 will result in a more independent and more transparent appeal process for the Student Financial Assistance Program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Does the committee responsible for overseeing this bill have any comments? Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Social Programs conducted its public review of Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, on January 24, 2001.

The amendment removes the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment as the last avenue of appeal for students who disagree with decisions the department makes about Student Financial Assistance Program eligibility. An appeal board made up of five individuals, one of which must be a post-secondary student receiving student financial assistance, replaces the Minister. This amendment is being brought forward in response to a committee recommendation to remove the Minister from the appeal process made last spring.

A further amendment provides that the department can create regulations to determine the criteria that establishes the amount of funding that each student is entitled to. This amendment is being made to allow for current practices within the department and is more or less housekeeping in nature.

Another amendment allows the department to provide an affirmative action program for disabled students. This would provide for specialized equipment and tutoring to ensure that a disabled student could be successful in their studies.

The written submissions that the committee received from the Northwest Territories Student Coalition and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation indicated general support for the bill.

The Members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs have no substantive difficulties with supporting Bill 14. Individual members of the committee may have comments to make as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. JAKE OOTES: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I will.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my right is Mark Cleveland, the deputy minister of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. On my left is Rebecca Veinott, legal counsel. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Welcome. General comments? Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to ask the Minister to confirm some commitments made in committee on the issue of this amendment. There were two issues of specific concern, and verbal commitments were made. For the benefit of our colleagues and for the public, I would like to raise those issues for confirmation again by the Minister in the House.

The first issue was the make-up of the board, and the commitment that it would have regional representation and not just be comprised of people who happen to live in Yellowknife. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Minister, would you like to respond?

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do wish to confirm the Member's request that the committee will be made up of five individuals, one of whom will be a representative from the post-secondary level, a student advisor. The other four will be comprised of representation from the regional, aboriginal governments. The make-up of that group will not be representation from government employees.

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

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That brings me to the second issue, the necessity for clarification. The concern was, were you talking specifically Education, Culture and Employment employees or all government employees? The concern being that you could be ruling out a significant segment of the population. There was concern about education employees, particularly ones related to the department in this area. Could the Minister clarify that? Our recollection from the minutes was that the intent was to exclude Education, Culture and Employment employees but possibly leave the option open for other departments far removed from this particular program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, very definitely, Education, Culture and Employment employees will not be part of the committee. Other government employees...it is not our intention in that area either to appoint these to this committee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To be clear, the Minister does intend to exclude all GNWT employees from sitting on this board, including board employees of all the boards and agencies? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would exclude employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories. However, I have to remain a bit open on boards and agencies, because we may find there are individuals who are members of DEAs, for example, who would be good individuals to be appointed. We do not wish to exclude those potential individuals. It is not our intent to go that route. However, I have to be concerned when the Member refers to boards and agencies. As we know, there are many good individuals throughout the Northwest Territories who are members of various boards and agencies that somehow have a connection to this government.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just so it is clear, it is not the intent of the committee to try to overly restrict the Minister. That is why we were asking for the definition. Our thoughts were that Education, Culture and Employment employees would be restricted, but people from Public Works or from RWED or wherever, in addition to the other general population who may be good calibre, or board members who may possibly be appointed. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The honourable Minister for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can certainly look at that, to proceed on that basis. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments? What is the wish of the committee? Clause by clause? Tab 14, Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act. Clause 1?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 2?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 3?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 4?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 5?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 6?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that Bill 14 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Bill 14 is now ready for third reading. Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you, witnesses. Prior to agreement by the committee, we agreed to deal with Bill 14 and general comments on Bill 19. Does the committee agree to go into general comments at this time? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, I move we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Dent. The motion is in order. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. We will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 21, report of committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 21: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been reviewing Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, and would like to report progress. Bill 14 is now ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey, as seconder for the motion. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 22, third reading of bills. Item 23, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 23: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, meetings for Monday morning at 9:00 a.m. for the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, at 11:00 a.m. for the Standing Committee on Social Programs, and at 12:00 p.m. for the Board of Management.

Orders of the day for Monday, February 19, 2001:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget Address (3rd of 7 allotted days)

11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 19, Appropriation Act, 2001-2002
 - Committee Report 5-14(3), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the 2001-2002 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 6-14(3), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the 2001-2002 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 7-14(3), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the 2001-2002 Main Estimates
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until Monday, February 19th at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 1:25 p.m.