



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

5th Session

Day 26

14th Assembly

HANSARD

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Pages 947– 980

The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, October 16, 2002****Members Present**

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

MR. SPEAKER: Please be seated. Good afternoon, colleagues. Colleagues, welcome to the fall session. After a summer of work for and in your constituencies. I trust that the next few weeks will be a busy and productive time for all of us.

On behalf of all Members, as Speaker I would like to acknowledge the passing of a former Member of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Mark Evaloarjuk in July of this year. Mr. Evaloarjuk was a three-term Member of this House from 1975 to 1993 and 1995 and 1999. He was also involved in land claims negotiations in Nunavut, a member of the Inuit Taparistat of Canada, vice president of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association and a businessperson in his home community of Igloodik. On behalf of all the Members, I would like to extend condolences to the family of the late Mark Evaloarjuk and to the people of Nunavut on their loss.

We were also saddened yesterday to hear of the passing of Mrs. Agnes Semmler of Inuvik. Mrs. Semmler served as Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories from 1984 to 1987. She was also the first aboriginal woman to hold that position. She also was the first president of the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement and the first aboriginal woman to serve as a northern justice of the peace. These are just a few of the many accomplishments of this distinguished lady.

Myself as a young welder, I first met Mrs. Semmler in 1960 in East 3, which is now Inuvik, where she and her husband Slim ran her first store in that community. On behalf of all the Members of this Assembly, our sincere condolences go out to the family and the many, many friends of Mrs. Semmler.

Colleagues, I wish to advise the House that I have received the following message from the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories:

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories the passage of Supplementary Appropriations Act, No. 4, 2001-2002 and the Supplementary Appropriations Act, No. 2, 2002-2003 during the Fifth Session of the 14th Legislative Assembly.

Signed,

Glenna F. Hansen
Commissioner

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 66-14(5): Dr. Joe Dragon**

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to offer congratulations to a member of our public service, Mr. Joe Dragon, who recently received his doctorate of philosophy degree in wildlife ecology and management from the University of Alberta.

Born and raised in the Northwest Territories, Joe is a South Slave Metis from a well-known family in Fort Smith. Joe, or 'Pinto' Dragon, as he was known when he was growing up, is an accomplished hockey player who left the North to pursue a hockey career while maintaining his educational studies. He played Tier 2 Junior "A" hockey, followed by university, finally playing hockey in the Pittsburgh Penguins organization. Dr. Dragon now coaches youth hockey in Yellowknife.

Joe knows about achieving excellence in school. He was awarded an academic scholarship to Cornell University. While in Ithaca, New York, Joe's focus was to get the most out of the four years that he could academically; noting any hockey success would be a bonus. Joe graduated from Cornell with a Bachelor of Science degree with a dual major in natural resources along with business management and marketing. In obtaining his Ph.D., Joe follows the footsteps of his cousin, Dr. Dan Dragon, who also studied wildlife ecology.

Joe, his wife Leslie and son Max moved back to the North several years ago as Joe continued his career with the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Today, Dr. Joe Dragon is the director of policy and communications for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs for the Government of the Northwest Territories.

We should all be proud that one of our own has taken steps to continue their education at the highest level and the example he sets for future generations. Whether through our education leave program or student financial assistance program, our government has been able to provide options to our youth to advance their education. Additionally, our government has identified the employment of youth in areas that suit their educational background as a priority through our successful intern program and our ongoing summer student program. These programs provide our youth the opportunity to gain employment in their home communities while pursuing an education in the south.

We need to continue to offer opportunities to our youth to ensure that they return to our Territory to assist in building our future. I know that Joe has indicated on many occasions that

his success has been based on the mentoring and support he received while working for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. I look forward to seeing more of our youth gain this level of education. They are our future and we should be proud of their accomplishments. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Passing of Agnes Semmler

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I as well would like to make mention of the passing of Mrs. Agnes Semmler, and would like to thank you for your words of acknowledgement of her work in the Northwest Territories and for the Inuvialuit people and aboriginal people. She served as a positive example and role model to many residents of the Northwest Territories. Many of the leaders we have today in the region have been impacted by some of her work and followed some of her examples.

Mr. Speaker, she had a way of putting words to people that were straightforward and to the point, but she also had tact and diplomacy where she could say these things in a strong way but do it in a respectful way -- something we can all learn from in our role in government.

Mr. Speaker, her involvement has taken place and shown that commitment by an individual can have profound impacts on the people of the Northwest Territories and people within the Inuvialuit group. I would like to just recognize those efforts. Though she has passed, there are many examples that will continue forward for the people of the Beaufort Delta and Mackenzie Delta of the positive example that she put forward and that many of us will hopefully follow -- follow and portray her dedication to the people and also speaking up to the issues. I would like to let the family know that they are in our prayers. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Removal of the NWT Power Corporation Board of Directors

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome everybody back to the House. Mr. Speaker, during the June session, I raised concerns about the way that Cabinet made decisions. I stated that Cabinet was creating strategies and documents without including all MLAs. I stated the practice of consensus government was not being followed in the process of decision making.

Mr. Speaker, in today's newspaper, I learned that Cabinet has fired the Northwest Territories Power Corporation board because the directors refused to withdraw an application for a flat rate. Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation gave direction to the board to proceed for a one-rate zone. Another Minister planned

to publicly lobby against this and then last week, the Premier told the board to drop the review.

Mr. Speaker, the lack of coordination among Cabinet is disturbing. Not only is it confusing, it short-changes Northerners, the 35,000 shareholders of the corporation. With the review shut down, Northerners will not have a chance to explore options for creating fair power rates.

Mr. Speaker, we lack input from the smaller communities who all depend on generated power and who also pay the highest rates in the Territories. This action taken by Cabinet is disturbing and disrespectful. It sends a message that a board must follow Cabinet's inconsistent and confusing direction, rather than act in the public interest.

Mr. Speaker, the board was working in the public interest but it appears that Cabinet is not. Perhaps Cabinet might have been better to consult with other communities and territorial leaders before halting this review. It is an about-face by Cabinet on the direction the Power Corporation needs to go in. People's reputations are harmed and careers are jeopardized.

As far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, any future boards might as well be made up of another set of deputy ministers that are tied to Cabinet. At the appropriate time, I will have questions on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Removal of the NWT Power Corporation Board of Directors

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have grave concerns regarding the removal of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation board by this government. The thing that frustrates me the most is the timing of this reaction by government, where a process was taken to allow for community input, to allow communities to have a say on what they think of the power rates in the Northwest Territories.

This is the first opportunity where small communities have really had a chance to voice their opinion on what is a fair process from small communities to large communities, communities on diesel generators and communities on hydro power. Mr. Speaker, the only way we could have found that result was to ensure public input. The only process that is available to the people of the Northwest Territories is through a Public Utility Board.

The application was put forth under the people whom I represent, especially the Mackenzie Delta, and the municipalities who want to have a say in regard to how power rates are set and have input into a process to determine what those rates will be.

Mr. Speaker, there is a list of interveners, some 60 people who put their names forth to intervene on this process. For me, that shows the public is interested in a one-rate zone process, regardless of if it is for or against. Allow for due process. The interference by this government to pull from under the people of the Northwest Territories and to can a board who did not

have the same opinion of Cabinet and the Premier is unjust, unfair and undemocratic.

We are not in a communist state that determines who rules and who goes. We are in a position by this precedent that we have put in place which is a bad one for our boards, agencies and institutions of government, especially when it comes to a process that allows for public input.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will be having questions for the Premier on this matter later. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Proposed Revisions to the Business Incentive Policy

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is nice to be back in the House with yourself and the rest of my colleagues. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to raise an issue that this government is proposing; revisions to the Business Incentive Policy.

Mr. Speaker, back in 1992, the Business Incentive Policy was instituted by visionary politicians who wanted to give northern businesses an edge in obtaining contracts, and thus ultimately fostering home-grown businesses, capacity and expertise. There have been many examples of the BIP's success, evidenced by the number of northern businesses that have flourished and are operating throughout the Northwest Territories today.

There have also been many issues that have been raised over the years that have identified shortcomings within the BIP, as well as many suggestions made to show how the BIP could be improved. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, in many cases with regard to the BIP, what appears to be an advantage to one company is seen as a disadvantage to another. Since the revisions of the BIP were announced in July of this year, I have been in contact with many businesses in the Hay River area who avail themselves of the BIP in many instances.

The feedback that I have received gives me cause to think that the proposed changes to the BIP have not been given due consideration and have not been adequately consulted with the businesses in the communities.

One of the drawbacks of the proposed changes is that, giving the GNWT has never been able to quantify the costs involved so as to determine the effectiveness of the BIP, what are the benefits to Northerners as a result of this policy? If we as a government cannot determine the costs of the policy and change the policy just for the sake of change, then this government is left with a policy that it still cannot defend.

Unfortunately, the proposed changes to this policy appear to have come about as a result of the actions of this government to waive the BIP on one specific project, and this has done nothing to instill people's confidence in this government. However, this does prove the point that the government had no idea what extra costs were involved as a result of using the BIP.

One of the things I have heard over and over again from business owners is that they feel the single biggest problem with the Business Incentive Policy is interpretation and enforcement of the policy. Too many businesses have created loopholes in this policy to benefit their own interests. One obvious example of this is the number of storefront businesses operating in the NWT.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Your time is up.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

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

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I was very taken aback when one local business told me that he contacted the BIP office to raise his concerns on the proposed changes and was told that he could voice his concerns, but that the proposed changes had already gone to Cabinet and they were not really interested in looking at further change. This, after the Minister had informed us that the process was open for further input until September 30th.

I am very concerned that the changes being proposed do very little to address the fundamental shortcomings of this policy. I strongly encourage this government to take a step back and really take into consideration the concerns of the business community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Proposed Revisions to the Business Incentive Policy

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also want to speak to the issue of the BIP revision process, Mr. Speaker. I certainly have many concerns about the proposed changes, but maybe none graver than the process that seems to have been undertaken here by this government. As my colleague Mr. Delorey has just indicated, we were let known that by September 30th, the government would be receiving input. One of Mr. Delorey's constituents called the RWED staff to offer some input. They were told that is fine, we will receive your input, but basically Cabinet has already done what it is going to do and made its decision.

Mr. Speaker, obviously that is not acceptable. If you look at the RWED website that speaks to the BIP revision, point number seven discusses why thresholds are being introduced, Mr. Speaker. It says that during consultations, the NWT business community -- business community, Mr. Speaker -- expressed the need for a dollar-value cap on the application of BIP bid adjustments. When we met in committee, Mr. Speaker, this did not seem to make too much sense to me, so I asked for minutes of the consultation process. I was looking for transcripts of the detailed minutes. I did not get them, but I did get a summary of those meetings, Mr. Speaker. In going through those, I can find a single reference to that. I can find

someone saying there should be a cap on dollar value for the application of BIP. Do companies bidding on a \$5 million contract really need to have the BIP application? Well, that is a valid question, Mr. Speaker, but in going through the web site, you get the indication that the NWT business community in aggregate expressed this need for a dollar-value cap.

Mr. Speaker, I think we can all see that this is an attempt by this government in imposing these thresholds to save money. Maybe it is a valid attempt and maybe it is something that warrants or merits a lot of consideration.

Mr. Speaker, it is concerning when we do not even know what the BIP is currently costing us. We know that the government is proposing goods contracts will max out at \$25,000 per BIP consideration; service contracts at \$100,000; construction contracts at \$1 million. We are reassured by RWED that do not worry -- 95 percent of all of the contracts that we issue fall within those thresholds anyway, Mr. Speaker. I have no idea how RWED can come up with this and cannot come up with a concrete figure as to what the BIP costs us. If we really do have serious flaws in our contract administration policy, then you would think that there would be no way to know that 95 percent of our contracts meet this criteria. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

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

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So as I said, I am concerned that what seems to be an isolated comment has found its way into policy for the BIP revisions. We do not even know who attended these consultations. It was not clear from the minutes. I have heard from one of my colleagues that in their community, two members of the public were present and a raft of RWED staff. We do not know who expressed these comments. We do not know if a question was not posed, something to the effect of "Do you really think someone on a \$5 million contract needs to be BIP'd?"

I think that we can see that it is not exactly clear what has gone on in this process, Mr. Speaker. You get the sense that government had already knew what it wanted to hear from this process, already understood the outcome it was looking for. It is almost like you are watching, Mr. Speaker, a movie and you see the FBI in a van outside someone's apartment with surveillance going, and when they have decided that they have heard that money is going to change hands, it is time to roll because we know we have something that is going to stand up in court.

Mr. Speaker, this is the impression that this kind of process leaves. In the words of my esteemed colleague from the North Slave, it gives the impression that the whole thing has been a sham, Mr. Speaker.

I hope the Minister will do something to address this and do something to assure us that we have a process here that makes sense and really values the input for Northerners and northern business. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal Awarded to Jane Arychuk

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I wanted to congratulate Ms. Jane Arychuk, the principal of the Deh Gah Elementary and Secondary School in Fort Providence, for receiving the Queen's Jubilee Award for Excellence in Teaching. In light of this event, I would like to share some of Ms. Arychuk's history and accomplishments with the Members of this House and the people of the North.

Ms. Jane Arychuk came to Elizabeth Ward School in Fort Providence as Miss Jane Neal, fresh out of teacher's college in 1980. After four years in the classroom, Jane became the principal in 1984. She has remained in the community as the principal since.

Under Jane's leadership, the school has changed to reflect the culture and the language of the community. In consultation with the community, the school was renamed Deh Gah School in 1992, which means school by the river. She married a resident of the community, Mr. Gordon Arychuk, in 1987, and has two children.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Jane Arychuk was instrumental in many changes for the better that have happened and continue to happen at the Deh Gah school. Through much dedication, commitment and determination, Jane had a vision that was child-focused. Community support is excellent through parental involvement at the school. She, along with other dedicated staff members, have found alternate ways for some high school students, which has resulted in opportunities for the students in career planning and choices. Student and parental involvement is high, as the school fundraises a great deal for the students to explore other parts of the world outside of the Northwest Territories, including the provinces and the United States. One trip was to Florida to see the launching of the space shuttle Columbia. This mission, STS-90, had the Deh Gah School pin in orbit from April 17th to May 3rd and is now hanging in the school along with a picture of Canadian astronaut, Dr. David Williams.

Jane also initiated a proposal for the Aboriginal Head Start Program in Fort Providence and it is now considered a model program. The Deh Gah School is one of the few schools in Canada that has become FAE and FAS friendly.

Mr. Speaker, for many years, we did not have true academic graduates in our community. In 2000-2001, the Deh Gah School had four graduates and in 2001-2002, produced five more graduates with the required credentials. Three of the nine graduates are people who have jobs in the community, yet have taken certain classes to obtain credits for a high school diploma.

We are confident to say Ms. Arychuk has worked hard to make many positive changes in the Deh Gah School and she is certainly deserving of this prestigious award. I want to congratulate her and thank her. Mahsi cho.

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

Member's Statement on Health Care Concerns

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some three years ago, this Assembly, when it was newly elected and just in office, told the residents of the Northwest Territories that we would be moving towards a better tomorrow. Our constituents tell me, Mr. Speaker, that while there is some evidence of prosperity, there are too many social issues negatively impacting on the quality of life of many citizens and they are not sure that it really is a better tomorrow.

What I hear most from constituents is health care, health care and health care. Mr. Speaker, I am not pleased with the structure of the Minister of Health and Social Services' review committee on the Stanton staffing issues. This committee was struck in mid-September. Like many others, I told him so, but to no avail. One Yellowknife resident quoting Albert Einstein I think put it most succinctly: "You cannot solve a problem with the same thinking that created it."

Mr. Speaker, residents from all across the North are concerned about the deterioration of the health care system and have suggestions worth considering. In my talks with constituents, I heard some of the following details:

- Mr. Speaker, waiting times for doctors at clinics are increasing in Yellowknife. You are now looking at four-and-a-half weeks;
- More people are using the Emergency ward when cheaper treatment options should be available such as clinics and public health centres;
- Health care practitioners are exhausted. Stress levels are high causing high turnover and wages, in particularly benefits, need to be increased. The lack of affordable housing is a major problem in Yellowknife; and
- Perhaps most significantly, Mr. Speaker, I heard that respect, humility and compassion are missing from our messages.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister may have heard this all before but I wanted him to know that my constituents are deeply concerned about health care. Like other residents, they are not prepared to wait much longer for substantive changes in the system.

In spite of these trying times, Mr. Speaker, the efforts of health care workers, doctors and allied professionals are applauded daily. We have exemplary health care people and experienced qualifications and dedication. I would like to acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, the effort, often beyond the call of duty, of our many professionals and front-line workers. We are fortunate to have their dedication and expertise. On behalf of my constituents, I want to acknowledge them for their contribution and thank them for a job well done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Issues to be Addressed During the Fall Session

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is good to be back in the House to represent our constituents and the people of the Northwest Territories in the many, many challenges that face us as a society today.

This summer, Mr. Speaker, I believe the church was the busiest place in the Northwest Territories with many, many weddings and far too many funerals, which speaks directly to the problems of our health system as my esteemed colleague, Mr. Braden, spoke so well of.

The long line-ups, the rate of cancer that is causing grief to many families right across the Territories is disconcerting. The issue of education in stagnated form is something to be discussed where you have to depend on individuals to push the education system through.

Our blind faith in the Kyoto Protocol is something that we should discuss and debate in this House as legislators, and not just one or two Members saying that the North supports it, without knowing what the true cost is going to be to Northerners in the short-term. We live in the highest cost environment already, Mr. Speaker, and I believe the Kyoto agreement, if implemented as discussed today, is going to increase the cost of living without seeing the long-term benefits really soon.

Our interference in our arms-length bodies, such as boards of directors as we saw yesterday, is troubling. If that is the direction that government is going to be taking, what is the point of putting the board of directors there to represent the interests of the people of the Northwest Territories, so that they can think long-term without political interference or political motivation?

Mr. Speaker, we have lots to talk about and we have two-and-a-half weeks to do so. I believe we have to take the time to seriously debate these issues so we can be public representatives of our people.

The signing of the Tlicho Agreement, knowing there are disputes by other First Nations groups, is a troubling factor and I will be addressing that with the appropriate Minister and the Premier as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. I just want to remind Members that Members' statements should deal with the one subject. However, this being the first day, I just want to be a little bit more flexible there and we will allow Members a little bit of latitude, but I shall return to my usual strict self tomorrow. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Member's Statement on Removal of the NWT Power Corporation Board of Directors

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to address the issue of the removal of the board of directors of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. First off, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it clear that I oppose the one-rate zone application. In fact, I had filed with the Public Utilities Board to intervene in opposition to the application.

So when the Premier advised me of the order that they were giving the Power Corporation to withdraw their application, I was torn. I was torn because, Mr. Speaker, I have always maintained that the Power Corporation should operate under a board of management with no political pressure. One of the main reasons for that, Mr. Speaker, is that I discovered when becoming the Minister responsible that political commitments had been made to communities, or at least communities felt that they had heard commitments from political leaders.

These commitments, had they been followed through, would have cost an awful lot of money and were not necessary to increase reliability of the power supply. Everyone would have paid more for power, even though it would not have improved the power supply.

Mr. Speaker, while the government moved to accomplish what I wanted by providing this direction to the Power Corporation, I am very disappointed that they did not follow through on the process. Once the application had been filed with the Public Utilities Board, the government should have filed an intervention with the Public Utilities Board and we should have then discussed the issue in front of the board.

Mr. Speaker, this situation actually illustrates an issue of communications, and really of bad communications, because to my way of thinking, we never should have gotten to this point. When I heard about the application I assumed that Cabinet had agreed to this process. This, after all, was a major policy shift; a social approach to determining power rates.

I had expected that there had been consultation with the Cabinet, particularly since the Minister responsible was at the meeting when I heard about the application. I guess I should have known then that there was a problem with communications when at the same meeting, a senior deputy minister said that Cabinet was not in support of the one-rate application.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe that the board members, most of whom I know well, would have gone ahead with this application if they had been told clearly that the Government of the Northwest Territories did not support the one-rate zone application.

I have no doubt that they feel that they have had the carpet suddenly pulled out from under them. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, honourable Members. Mr. Speaker, for the record, I would like to thank Gord Stewart, Ric Bolivar, Tom Zubko, Andrew Gaul and Eric Shelton for their work on the Power Corporation board. It is too bad that we have lost their experience and obvious dedication to this government's most significant asset. 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 Official Launch of the United Way Campaign

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, it is good to be back in session, where we do the most public part of our work. Over the next number of days and weeks, I am sure we will have hearty and lively debates about many important issues facing us today.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to use my first Member's statement to celebrate something good that is happening in the city of Yellowknife, and that is the official launch of the United Way campaign.

Mr. Speaker, along with many other Members of this House, including yourself and the Premier, I was one of the many people who took part in the United Way Kick-off Pancake Breakfast this morning at City Hall. In spite of the fact that it was the early hours of the morning, many supporters came out to socialize and to celebrate this milestone in our community. I believe it is worthy of celebration to mark the City of Yellowknife joining and being the 125th member of the United Way.

Mr. Speaker, for those of us who have been around for a while, we are aware of the many incarnations and the setbacks this idea of the United Way in YK has had to endure over many, many years, but for the commitment and tenacity of the board members, volunteers and many supporting organizations, the United Way would still be at an idea stage. For that, I would like to salute and congratulate all those who have made the United Way possible in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate the Government of the Northwest Territories for agreeing to facilitate payroll reduction programs for those employees who are interested and willing to donate in that manner. As the biggest employer in the Territories, I know that it is setting an important precedent, and hopefully pave the way for many other organizations to follow.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this is a very positive action for many in our community and I look forward to seeing much success for this newly minted organization. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement on Withdrawal of the NWT Power Corporation Single-Rate Zone Application

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would also like to speak to the issue of the now withdrawn application of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. This subject of utilities and the regulation of those utilities is a very complex matter. I had the experience of sitting on the board of directors of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation for three years and I do not purport to be any kind of an expert on that subject, even after that close-up experience.

However, what I do know is that I had some very serious concerns about the process that was underway and I do support the intervention by this government as the shareholder.

To move from community-based rates to a single zone, flat rate across the North is a major shift in how revenue is raised for the Power Corporation. In fact, conventional wisdom was that community-based rates were a fair way to raise revenue, given that a well-conceived form of territorial support was in place to act as the mechanism to offset the cost in communities where rates were higher than those in Yellowknife, so in fact the territorial support program did have the same net effect of leveling the rates.

Given the Power Corporation's desire and intention to move away from its rate structure, and given the unquantified resulting impacts from such a shift, some very preliminary research and key consultations did not occur. Regular Members of this Legislature, for example, were not given an adequate opportunity to engage in the debate in this manner. Mr. Lafferty has spoken today about our style of consensus government, so this was a really key piece that was missing from this particular initiative, the consultation with the Regular Members.

Once the application was filed, some would argue that anyone who wished to intervene had an opportunity to enter that debate. I disagree with that for a number of reasons. For one thing, as I stated earlier, the regulation of a power utility is very complex and almost always necessitates the costly involvement of people with expertise in that field.

Secondly, the playing field is hardly even, given the seemingly unlimited resources of the utility to advance their side of the argument stacked against the limited financial resources of interveners who may or may not be able to recover their costs. It is safe to say that this debate would have cost millions of dollars and even if everyone's costs were recoverable, the consumer ultimately would have paid for this process.

Mr. Speaker, I want to state that the Public Utilities Board hearing is not the only process available for consultation. A general rate application will still proceed in any event and small communities, as any other individual, will have an opportunity to speak to that general rate application.

Mr. Krutko made reference to the fact that this is the only opportunity small communities have had to put their case forward. In fact, that is not true. They could intervene in any general rate application before the PUB. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. I understood, Mrs. Groenewegen, that you had concluded your statement. Mrs. Groenewegen, you would like to...

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? Thank you, we have a nay. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement on Appreciation for the Care and Compassion Demonstrated During Recent Hospital Stay

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is good to be back in session. I would like to take this first Member's statement to tell you how happy I am to tell you that I have recovered very, very well from my double-bypass coronary surgery.

-- Applause

In the circumstances that I was in, Mr. Speaker, I had a lot of opportunity, as you can appreciate, a lot of time to reflect on our role here. I must say that the bottom line for me is that I am very, very happy to be back here and to continue my work representing the people of the Northwest Territories and the students and the people who are in need out there. I must say that I feel like I am certainly back to full speed serving this Legislature again.

I was very fortunate to have the services of some very fine medical people to help me through this process. I would like to make reference to several from Stanton Regional Hospital: Dr. John Morse, who is the intern medicine specialist at the hospital. He certainly has the expertise and knowledge, but also a very important element that I felt was very important for someone in my circumstance and others that may go into my type of situation, and that is the compassion he showed for the need I had, but also the understanding that it can be a very traumatic situation for a person to be in.

The other person I would like to mention is Dr. Theresa Hansen, who helped spur everyone on to take good care of me while I was in the hospital here in Yellowknife. And of course, the nurses and the medical staff -- I cannot say enough about the tremendously good work and the wonderful approach that they take to their work in treating patients, Mr. Speaker.

There were many others. The Yellowknife firefighters who handled the ambulance service and the medevac crew and the medevac nurses that take care of you when you are medevaced to the Capital Health Authority in Edmonton.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who sent flowers, cards and books, and who visited me while I was in the hospital. I certainly enjoyed their visits, Mr. Speaker, and want to thank all of my friends and my colleagues who had the opportunity to visit.

I would like to thank Minister Handley for taking over my portfolio during my absence. Last of all, I would like to thank my family, and especially my wife Marg, for the tremendous support she provided. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Results From the North American Indigenous Games

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say that it is good to be back here again, or maybe not so good, depending on what kind of questions I face in the House...

-- Laughter

...but we are here to do a job and that is what we are here for. I just wanted to talk about a number of things that happened through the summer. I know that everybody is very busy as Ministers and Members, and even our people in the communities have been very busy. It has been a very busy summer, a lot of activities.

One of them that I want to mention is the North American Indigenous Games in Winnipeg, July 29th to August 4th. It was a huge, successful event. I was fortunate to be there at that time for the first few days. I was involved in the opening ceremonies. I think the Northwest Territories, we had a huge delegation for our size compared to the other jurisdictions. We had teams from all the provinces and a number of different states from the United States.

I just wanted to mention about the Midget Girls Soccer team, 16 players, most of them are from Fort Simpson, my constituency. As MLA, I would like to mention their names because they did very well. They came home with the silver.

From Fort Simpson, we had Christina McAdam, Veronica Antoine, Jennifer Thistle, Carry-Anne Loutit, Jesse Loutit, Shannon Sangris, Jenny Thompson, Jodi Thompson. We also had Fort Liard player Sabrina Diamond. Even though the other girls are from other communities not in my constituency, but if I do not mention them -- well, they are part of the team. Fort Resolution had Jody Miersch, Jessica Sanderson; Yellowknife had Sara Steven, Siku Alloo. Inuvik had Charlene McCarthy and Sheenee McCampbell. The coach was Val Genderin of Fort Simpson. The Manager was Connie Loutit.

In the round robin they played Manitoba and Ontario, each of them twice and they won all the four games. They advanced to the final against B.C. but unfortunately they lost out to B.C. and they came away with a silver. Going into the tournament, only two of the Yellowknife girls played on the outdoor field. They wanted to play their hardest and score at least one goal in the tournament. They outdid themselves and the total they scored was 30 goals. All of the girls got along and showed great team spirit.

This is a good opportunity for young people in the North to look forward to the next indigenous games three years from now in Buffalo, New York. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Allen.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return to Question 263-14(5): North Slave Correctional Centre Project

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to an Oral Question asked by Mr. Delorey on June 14, 2002, regarding the reasons for building the North Slave Correctional Facility in Yellowknife.

Standards and criteria for correctional facilities were developed in 1994. These were used to decide where the replacement for

the Yellowknife Correctional Centre and the new young offender facility should be located. In 1998, a decision was made to locate these facilities in Yellowknife. This decision was re-examined and confirmed by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The following are the reasons why the department decided to place the new North Slave Correctional Facility in Yellowknife:

1. Yellowknife has a resident Supreme Court, Territorial Court, JP Court, Court of Appeal, RCMP headquarters, and a large number of resident law firms. As a result, there are more accused people being dealt with in Yellowknife. Many of these must be held in custody before or after their case is finished.
2. The majority of court appearances take place in Yellowknife. A remand centre is required in the city to hold adults and youth in custody pending trial. The North Slave Correctional Facility will provide that remand space. If this facility were built in another community, there would be the additional cost to build and run a remand centre for adults and youth in Yellowknife.
3. Almost every flight in the NWT passes through Yellowknife prior to reaching its final destination. Costs to transport Yellowknife offenders as well as those from points outside of Yellowknife would increase if the facility were built elsewhere.
4. If the new North Slave facility were located in another community, there would be significant relocation or layoff costs. In 1998, it was estimated that these costs could total over \$1.5 million.
5. In 1998, it was estimated that the Government of the NWT would save approximately \$1.4 million by building a new young offender facility together with the new adult facility. These savings would be lost if these facilities were located separately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Allen.

Return to Oral Question 268-14(5): North Slave Correctional Centre

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Oral Question asked by Mr. Delorey on June 14, 2002, regarding the North Slave Correctional Centre and the lack of comparable facilities in the south to use for cost estimates.

This project is unique. There are no other corrections facilities like it in Canada.

-- Laughter

It not only has maximum, medium and minimum security requirements, but added to this is a healing, spirituality, restorative justice component in the design and programming of the institution. It is also sharing a number of areas with the young offender facility, such as the gym, the kitchen, and the security system, as well as the heating and ventilation systems.

Not only is the facility unique, but design and cost information for southern correctional facilities is limited and is difficult to apply to the NWT for two reasons. First, the North has environmental and technical constraints that are not comparable to the south. Second, the scale of projects in the south is much larger than the North Slave project.

These are not the only reasons why a firm price was not obtained before the project began. In 1998, the fire marshal condemned the Dene K'onia Young Offender Facility for the secure holding of young offenders. The Department of Justice was given until July 1, 2001, to erect new facilities. Under pressure from the fire marshal's order, it was necessary to "fast track" the construction of this project and to use an alternate method of construction. There is no general contractor but instead a construction manager who tenders out various aspects of the job to subcontractors. The drawings for phase one were done incrementally. Drawings for a certain aspect would be done and that job would go out to tender. While that was being done, the design engineers were designing the next stage of construction. Given this approach, it was not possible to get the price for the entire project in advance. Incidentally, the drawings are now complete for the whole project.

Finally, the overheated construction market that is currently being experienced could not be anticipated when the initial project budget was established in 1999. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 308-14(5): Clawback of Income Support

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Oral Question asked by Mr. Braden on June 19, 2002, regarding income support programs.

The Government of the Northwest Territories continues to reinvest funds arising from the National Child Benefit, in the Healthy Children Initiative, NWT Child Benefit, and Territorial Workers' Supplement.

The Healthy Children Initiative is administered jointly by the departments of Education, Culture and Employment and Health and Social Services, and provides support and service development in the following five key areas: strengthening young people, healthy babies, building stronger families, supporting parents, and healthy communities.

The Healthy Children Initiative is a community-based program that provides funding to local organizations for the enhancement of existing childhood programs and services for children zero to six years of age and their families. Funding, based on written proposals, is provided to community groups to deliver programs specifically for their community needs. The funding provided through the National Child Benefit reinvestment allows for the delivery of programs that meet the needs of young children and their families.

In Yellowknife, the following Healthy Children initiatives, currently funded through the National Child Benefit reinvestment, are typical of programs supported throughout the NWT:

- Early Intervention Program, NWT Council for Persons with Disabilities;
- Family Support Program, Yellowknife Women's Centre;
- 4 Plus Program (pre-school), Catholic School Board; and
- Parent-Child Resource Centre, Yellowknives Dene First Nation -- N'dilo/Detah.

The NWT also reinvests funds arising from the National Child Benefit in the NWT Child Benefit, which includes the Territorial Workers' Supplement. These are cash payments included in the monthly federal cheque that is sent to all low-income NWT residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

Colleagues, I would like to direct your attention to the presence in our visitors' gallery of the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Member of Parliament, Secretary of State for Youth.

-- Applause

Also accompanying her is Mr. Leon Andrew, her husband.

-- Applause

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I have the privilege of being able to recognize some constituents, as well as a board member for Stanton. I would first like to recognize Ms. Bea Campbell, the president of the Northwest Territories Seniors' Society in town for the annual gathering of the seniors.

-- Applause

Mr. Dennis Bevington, the director of the Energy Secretariat, who is going to make straight these complex issues for us.

-- Applause

Mrs. Vina Beaugrain-Champagne, who is a constituent and the mother of my executive secretary, Ingrid.

-- Applause

Finally, last but not least, Mr. Dave Wind, member of the Stanton board. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too would like to recognize Mr. Wind, who is a constituent, in the gallery, and also Barb Wyness, who is a resident of my constituency.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Major Karen Hoeft from the Yellowknife Salvation Army. She is a constituent of mine and I am very proud of the promotion she made this year from captain to major.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize several people, but first of all I would like to recognize my wife Margaret who is in the gallery today.

-- Applause

A constituent, Ed Jeske, a well-known Yellowknifer.

-- Applause

Margaret Wilke, who is a member of the YK No. 1 school board.

-- Applause

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and welcome the Grand Chief of the Deh Cho First Nation, Mike Nadlii.

-- Applause

Also, I want to recognize Mr. Brian Kennedy from Washington D.C., who is doing some work for us on energy, keeping an eye on the Americans for us. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone to the Legislative Assembly to watch the proceedings of your Members. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 320-14(5): Intervention in Ministerial Portfolios

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier, the honourable Stephen Kakfwi. Mr. Speaker, last week I wrote the Premier asking him to intervene in matters where I was getting no response from the Minister responsible for that particular department. This morning I received a response from the Premier stating that I needed to continue to deal with the same Minister, as he was responsible for that department.

As we are all aware, the Premier has recently intervened in the Minister's portfolio related to the Northwest Territories Power Corporation and the Premier went so far as to overturn an earlier Cabinet directive.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask what justification is the Premier using to intervene in another Minister's portfolio? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 320-14(5): Intervention in Ministerial Portfolios

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, as Premier, I have a duty to act on the direction of Cabinet, so it is not necessarily my sole prerogative and decision to take action on certain occasions. If the Member is asking about the particular issue regarding the Power Corporation, it was simply clarifying and following a direction set out by Cabinet. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 320-14(5): Intervention in Ministerial Portfolios

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier, how can a board's independence be maintained if the Premier interferes in a public process? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 320-14(5): Intervention in Ministerial Portfolios

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, the Cabinet had made a decision in August, a month before the Power Corporation filed an application that we thought was clear, that said the direction was given to defer any further consultation specifically on the one-rate zone. When that was undertaken by the Power Corporation, Cabinet met just recently to reiterate its position and ask for the Power Corporation, through the Minister, to comply with that decision. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 320-14(5): Intervention in Ministerial Portfolios

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier, what avenues are available for public input into other rate options, whether it is to be a one-rate, two-tiered, hydro, diesel or alternative energy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 320-14(5): Intervention in Ministerial Portfolios

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, it was my understanding in talking to a number of MLAs that there was

not enough discussion at our level to warrant such a massive shift in approach to providing safe, reliable and affordable electrical services, power, and electrical power to the people of the Northwest Territories, and that we needed to have a fundamental discussion about it before a single-rate application could be made to the Power Corporation.

The Public Utilities Board will still require an application to be made to it and it will still require to have hearings and accept presentations. The Power Corporation, we expect, will re-file an application along the lines of what it has been providing up until now, which is a community-based rate.

That will allow individuals, groups and communities to present their case as to how power should be provided to them in the communities and they can talk about the different ways in which that can be provided and seek clarification on issues they wish to have clarified. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 320-14(5): Intervention in Ministerial Portfolios

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier how he expects to have public input into the new application when the board consists of deputy ministers only who work for the Cabinet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 320-14(5): Intervention in Ministerial Portfolios

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, the Public Utilities Board is an independent body that conducts hearings in the public interest. The board of the Power Corporation has nothing to do with that at all. The board of the Power Corporation is simply set up to manage the business of the Power Corporation, its assets in the interest of the public as directed by the Government of the Northwest Territories as its owner and single shareholder.

The hearings will resume as soon as the application is resubmitted and consultation will resume with the public as to their views regarding the application of the Power Corporation in the way that the Power Corporation provides service through most of the Northwest Territories to the communities and people.

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

Question 321-14(5): Determining Power Rate Structure

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Premier, and it is regarding my Member's statement. I for one totally disagree with the community base rates. I believe that we have to have a system that ensures socio-economic viability of our communities to take on the opportunities of expanding our wealth, but not being in the position right now of having a competitive rate right across the board for everyone. For one, it is not fair. The other reason, it is not economic to pay \$2.20 for a kilowatt of power

in Colville Lake and pay 10 cents a kilowatt for power in Fort Smith. There is definitely a difference and we have to look at it.

I would like to ask the Premier, what is he going to do to ensure public confidence in the system, ensuring that we do have a public process, that we allow public hearings to take place without political interference by this government?

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

Return to Question 321-14(5): Determining Power Rate Structure

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the rate structure is an issue that is by itself, not able to address the needs of communities. The Public Utilities Board, for the Member's information, had ruled some years ago, and had explicitly rejected a single-rate zone because, as they said at that time, it would result in a massive cross-subsidization of diesel ratepayers by hydro ratepayers. That is, the ratepayers in places like Fort Smith and Hay River and Resolution would have to pay more -- not because it costs more there, but because they would be asked to subsidize the high cost of providing diesel power in other communities. The Public Utilities Board at that time had ruled that was not the business for them to deal with. It was called social engineering and that the issue of subsidies had been dealt with by government.

So the idea had been rejected some years ago. In any case, the hearings are still going to continue and people are going to be heard. I think, more importantly, the energy strategy that this government had undertaken to have delivered to Cabinet for consideration by this Assembly is expected to be prepared and presented in draft form in the next week or so, and that once we have this draft energy strategy, the Cabinet and every Member of the Legislature, along with the public, would have then a broad paper, in which to look at specific issues under which rate zones, subsidies, additional incentives to offset high cost for commercial and industrial users in remote communities would come into play. Conservation, environmental impact...a whole range of issues, under which the specific issues or rate zones could properly be considered.

So the issue was not whether we were attempting to take away public consultation and involvement, but rather to make sure that the context was set so that people, once they started talking and forming opinions, had available to them good factual information and a broad range of considerations under which to formulate their positions, then to present them in a public forum. That was the intent. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 321-14(5): Determining Power Rate Structure

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it sounds good, but apparently, it does not answer the question. The question is why did this government interfere with a public process that was well on its way? We had people intervening in a public process and who gives justification for this government to...(inaudible)...a public process through a public hearing by the Public Utilities Board?

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

Further Return to Question 321-14(5): Determining Power Rate Structure

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in early August, Cabinet directed that the Power Corporation should cease consulting on a range of issues, including the single-rate zone. This was not properly communicated, apparently, to the Power Corporation. They went ahead and filed their papers for a single-rate zone in early September. When we had a Cabinet meeting here two weeks ago, we revisited that decision. The decision was maintained and direction was given. They refused to comply, and so their appointments were revoked and a new interim board was put in place. The interim board is expected to withdraw that application and resubmit a new application so that the public process can continue. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 321-14(5): Determining Power Rate Structure

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hope this is not the precedent of this government, that we muzzle every public hearing process if this government does not like what the outcome may be. The whole idea of having a public consultation process through a public hearing is to determine what the public thinks and what their opinions are on the different rate structures that are in place. It is not up to us as government. It is the Public Utilities Board.

Again, I would like to ask the Premier, was there a directive passed in Cabinet where a vote took place that clearly spells out how that decision was made a couple of months ago?

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

Further Return to Question 321-14(5): Determining Power Rate Structure

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A couple of points. One, I think the Member should be aware that Cabinet did not reject any particular proposal. What we said very clearly in August was that further consultation and work on the single-rate zone should be deferred until after a draft energy strategy was completed and presented. So Cabinet itself does not speak in favour or against any particular proposal at this time. I think that is very important to point out, because in all of the discussions to date, I note that nobody has ever bothered to ask me what my position is on this person. It is just an important point to make, that Cabinet did not reject the idea of a single-rate zone. It said very clearly that it should stop consultation on it until an energy strategy is completed. That is an important point to make.

The advice, the direction that we gave, we thought it was clear in August. Our staff thought it was clear. Just to be doubly sure, we revisited the decision and made it explicitly clear. The direction was given. The staff looked at the August decision and legal people looked at it and said the direction was clear. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 321-14(5): Determining Power Rate Structure

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier up front, was he lobbied in any way by Cabinet Ministers or Members on this side of the House to cancel the public hearing process altogether?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi, your short response.

Further Return to Question 321-14(5): Determining Power Rate Structure

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the question was, was I lobbied by anybody to shut down the public process, and the answer is no.

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

Question 322-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stated in my Member's statement my concerns about the proposed changes to the BIP policy. I would like to ask the Minister responsible if he could confirm that the process was open from the time that we were informed of the changes to the Business Incentive Policy, that it was open until September 30th, the date that he gave us, and not the answer that was given to one business from the Business Incentive Policy office? Have there been changes made to the Business Incentive Policy from the time that we were presented the proposed changes to the input that was received September 30th? Did the department make any further changes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 322-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Business Incentive Policy is a very important policy of this government. A number of different Ministers in the past have tried to change it and were never able to do it, but I intend to continue with this process. This process is very open. We have not finished working on it. September 30th was the deadline to receive information and input and our consultation team has gone out to all of the stakeholders, including the Members through the committee, to get feedback. A lot of concerns and issues that are raised on how to improve on the proposed policy, and we are still working on it. The results of this consultation have yet to come to Cabinet. We hope to do it in the next couple of weeks.

All of the concerns that we heard through the stakeholder meetings and the consultation have been taken into consideration and incorporated into the new version of the policy, so yes, we have been quite open.

During the Member's statement about the one businessman who was not taken into consideration, the allegations there, I am checking with the department right now to see if this happened, to who and when this happened, and they have not come back to me yet. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 322-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, could the Minister inform this House of the socio-economic benefits, or lack of benefits, that this policy has created over the past number of years that warrant the changes being proposed to this Business Incentive Policy?

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

Further Return to Question 322-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Member to maybe elaborate a little more on it. He asked about socio-economic benefits, the lack of that was created as a result of the Business Incentive Policy. For me to reply right now would be difficult. If I could get more specifics? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The Speaker cannot direct the Member to ask a particular question. The Minister has the responsibility to either answer the question, not answer the question, or take it as notice. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 322-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am going to leave that question as I put it, because I think that what I was trying to get at is what I mentioned in my Member's statement, that the government has had a hard time quantifying what this policy has done as far as benefits and what the costs were. That is what I was getting at. I hope that the Minister can supply some information to me on that.

One of the business sectors, Mr. Speaker, that seem to have been left out of this, especially the new proposal, this policy, is the manufacturing industry. I will give you one example, Mr. Speaker. For a \$70,000 contract, the adjustment in the old policy would have been \$10,500. Under the new policy, the adjustment would only be \$3,750. This basically represents the freight subsidy that would be extra for a southern company to bid on a contract of that size, not taking into consideration the extra cost of labour and utilities. How does this benefit the manufacturing industry in the Northwest Territories? What is it telling our manufacturing industry in the Northwest Territories under these new proposed changes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 322-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, like I said earlier on in the beginning of my answer, we are still working on this policy. We have taken a lot of feedback from all of the stakeholders, including the manufacturing sector, during our consultation process. The consultation process is done and we are compiling the information that has come from there. If the honourable Member's concern has been raised by the manufacturing association, then it would be considered during the work the department is doing. We have not concluded the work. I cannot answer specifically to the Member on this concern. I have to check with my department, so I will have to take this as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Just a little caution that usually when a question is taken as notice, there is very little response to it. It should be taken as notice. However, the Chair will recognize the Minister's request to take that question as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Question 323-14(5): Bison Problem in Fort Providence

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. It is a question I have raised in this House before. Leaders of the community of Fort Providence have questioned on several occasions for the department to intervene with this problem that we have been experiencing in Fort Providence. It is regarding the bison that are roaming in the community.

It seems that every fall, we have to tolerate a large number of bison in the community. They are destroying fences. When I left the community on Monday, I saw a large portion of the baseball diamond fence knocked down and the children are having a field day stampeding the herds of buffalo down the streets in between the houses. It is getting to be a serious safety concern. I would like to ask the Minister, what does he plan to do about this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 323-14(5): Bison Problem in Fort Providence

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the buffalo problem is similar to a number of communities in Fort Liard as well. There are a number of problems there. We need to work with the community on how and what their suggestions are. The buffalo are there. They are roaming around and causing a lot of different problems. Safety is a big issue. We have to work with the community in trying to solve this problem together. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 323-14(5): Bison Problem in Fort Providence

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the Minister is repeating what I just stated, that it is a safety concern and we

have to work this out. However, I have been asking this question on many occasions, and the community leaders have requested something to be done about it. What is the department planning to do about it was the question. There has been no response to that. I would like to ask the department, what options are they looking at to solve this problem in the community of Fort Providence? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 323-14(5): Bison Problem in Fort Providence

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have to talk to my officials in the department to see what kind of options are there to deal with this issue. I will get back to the Member on that. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 323-14(5): Bison Problem in Fort Providence

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if it were bears or any other type of wild animals roaming the community, especially if it was the city of Yellowknife or Hay River, those animals would be destroyed. Can the Minister tell me if these animals, these wild bison that are in the community, if they could be destroyed by the community leadership? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 323-14(5): Bison Problem in Fort Providence

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the legislative process, we have a species at risk legislation that is going through the system right now. The bison is one of the species listed as a species at risk, so the legislation, once it gets through, would have provisions in there on how to deal with this issue. At the present time, we do not have any type of legislation on how to deal with this issue. I think there are about five herds that are trying to increase in the North through this species at risk program that we are involved with throughout Canada.

At this point in time, if it is causing a nuisance and causing a problem, I know that the renewable resource officers, in some instances, have been instructed to destroy some of the buffalo. I know in Nahanni Butte, there were incidents earlier on when there were some problems with some buffalo that were causing a lot of danger there and they were destroyed. In this instance, there are areas, I guess that is the extreme case, but that could be one of the options that might be up there, but I have to be careful on how I phrase this and I have to really talk to my officials who are experts in this area on how to deal with this issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. I erred. You have one more supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 323-14(5): Bison Problem in Fort Providence

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a problem that has been ongoing. We do not know if we can shoot them. We do not know what we can do with them. It is getting to be a more serious concern. I hear what the Minister is saying about meeting with his officials. I would like to request and ask if the Minister would commit to meeting with the leaders of Fort Providence and talk about this very issue? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 323-14(5): Bison Problem in Fort Providence

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I welcome the invitation to go to Fort Providence with my officials and meet with them on this issue. Thank you.

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

Question 324-14(5): Tlicho and Akaitcho Boundary Dispute

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, this past summer, in late August, the leadership and elders and people of Akaitcho met with the Premier and some members of his Cabinet right here in the Great Hall, at which time they expressed very eloquently and with a lot of passion their fears of their traditional lands being alienated through the Tlicho Agreement. Through a land use map, they clearly demonstrated their use of the land in question throughout history, with communities that have been established along the shoreline of Great Slave Lake and past into the tundra. Yet the Premier and his staff initialled the final Tlicho Agreement, knowing that there are other interests on the said lands within the Tlicho Agreement. Would the Premier allow his Minister and officials to sign a final agreement before those disputed issues of land ownership and use of land are resolved? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 324-14(5): Tlicho and Akaitcho Boundary Dispute

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the initialling of that agreement, it was possible to make the document public and open to scrutiny and review by all interested parties. So it is my expectation that, along with the Minister, Mr. Antoine, that if there are areas in dispute that need clarification, that require further work, then that process is available and underway at this time. It is our hope that we will see all parties concerned work together to resolve all outstanding issues so that the Tlicho Agreement can be finalized and the Dogrib and the beneficiaries can vote on a document that will serve them well and into the future.

It is our expectation that there will be processes available for all parties to resolve outstanding issues and to get clarification on areas and issues that require addressing and clarification. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 324-14(5): Tlicho and Akaitcho Boundary Dispute

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if the Premier answered the question. I do not think he did. He kind of danced around the question, Mr. Speaker. He is talking like he has not heard or understands the major problems that the Akaitcho and the Deh Cho have with this process, along with the North Slave Metis. He is talking like he never heard the news on the radio, television or in newspapers. There are major concerns on this issue, Mr. Speaker. He is not giving me a commitment. He is saying hopefully there will be some clarification, as if that is Dogrib land already, Mr. Speaker. Can the Premier tell me if he will allow his Minister to sign a final agreement if the disputed area is not resolved through a boundary, a clear-cut boundary that distinguishes whose land is which? We do not want to face another Middle East here, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 324-14(5): Tlicho and Akaitcho Boundary Dispute

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a process of negotiations. The Member may not be aware, but we have been through this a number of occasions in the past. When the Inuvialuit Agreement was presented to the public, this issue came up about the border dispute with the Gwich'in and the Sahtu. I was involved in that. There was a process I was engaged in and those issues were resolved. When the Gwich'in claim was presented to the public as well, the same process ensued with the Sahtu. Those issues were resolved. The Sahtu claim also saw the same process. The Deh Cho and the Dogrib regions were impacted and the parties simply went together and resolved their differences.

The pressure is going to be intense, I believe. The negotiations are difficult and very stressful for everybody, but they are negotiations. All I can say is that I think we are interested in helping in whatever way we can to make sure that the issues that are raised by Akaitcho are addressed. The Minister, Bob Nault, is aware of that. I think everyone agrees that these issues have to be addressed and resolved before a final agreement is considered by the Tlicho beneficiaries, by this government, by the Government of Canada and Parliament.

There is no easy answer in this House because we are not involved in the day-to-day negotiations. That is for the Akaitcho and the Tlicho to sit down and resolve. We hope that the Minister, Mr. Nault, will provide some process that will give comfort that the parties should engage and arrive at a conclusion that is satisfactory to both. I am not certain that has gone underway yet, but it is my expectation based on all of the other agreements that have been addressed in the Northwest Territories by aboriginal people that there is a way to do it, it can be done, and we expect no less in this situation. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 324-14(5): Tlicho and Akaitcho Boundary Dispute

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Premier that there are precedents that happened. However, there is something different about this agreement. There is a self-government component to this agreement and there are boards that are going to be established on the signing of the final agreement, which is going to have wide-ranging jurisdictions over the lands that are also claimed by the Akaitcho as their traditional territory.

This would have a direct impact on the Akaitcho's ability to negotiate their own rights to lands and resources within that land. There are differences. Is the Premier aware of those differences? What does he plan to do about the differences? The precedent does not apply here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 324-14(5): Tlicho and Akaitcho Boundary Dispute

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a process underway now and we hope that all the parties will try to engage and come up with a solution that is equally unacceptable or equally acceptable to everyone. The Cabinet is in support of concluding agreements and respecting the rights of all parties. The Akaitcho is a group that we support and respect and wish to see the rights of their people upheld and not eroded.

The Minister, Jim Antoine, is going to see what he can do to see that there is some resolution to this. The ball is in the federal court. The Minister, Mr. Nault, has the capacity to set up a process to invite or perhaps even force both parties to come together to resolve this.

As a government, we will be meeting as a Cabinet to be making a final decision about any final agreement before anyone signs a final agreement. That is the way it is going to happen. It is going to be stressful. We do not have the answers and we are hoping for some solutions to come. The solutions are possible and the parties have to engage. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 324-14(5): Tlicho and Akaitcho Boundary Dispute

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am always leery when you have to leave it to Ottawa to make a final decision, especially if it is going to be Minister Nault. He has made that promise before, like he has made many promises to help the Northwest Territories in more ways than not, and he has not followed through. I am still leery there.

I am hoping that the two parties get together and come up with a solution that is acceptable to all, as the Premier said. I would like to ask the Premier, is he planning to witness the final initialling of the federal negotiator of the Tlicho Agreement as he witnessed the initialling of the other agreement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 324-14(5): Tlicho and Akaitcho Boundary Dispute

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was at the Tlicho initialling and I was asked to be a witness to the federal negotiator's initialling. I declined, that was not understood when the initialling was done. I was called up and, rather than set an unpleasant scene, I proceeded to be a witness to that.

Having said that, the Tlicho Agreement will see this government as a party and it is my expectation that the Deh Cho and the Akaitcho people will find acceptable solutions to the outstanding issues with the Tlicho people and that all parties will support the signing of the final agreement with the Tlicho people. It will be difficult but I expect that people will make best efforts and issues, as they have in every other instance in the past, be resolved to everybody's satisfaction. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Colleagues, I would like to, at this point in time, direct your attention to the presence in the Speaker's Gallery of the honourable Minister of Justice, the Honourable Martin Cauchon.

-- Applause

As well, please welcome members of his staff who are accompanying him on his trip to the Northwest Territories. Welcome.

-- Applause

Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 325-14(5): Withdrawal of the Single-Rate Zone Application for Power Rates

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, Mr. Handley. It relates to an aspect of the single-rate zone application and the board of directors, as many of my colleagues have been referring to.

My question, Mr. Speaker, for starters, can the Minister tell the House when communication began between his office and the corporation in the development of the single-rate zone application?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 325-14(5): Withdrawal of the Single-Rate Zone Application for Power Rates

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, communication began probably about the day I took over responsibility for the Power Corporation, as we were going through the review of the Robertson report. I do not have a specific date but it was certainly sometime in the fall of 2001.

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

Supplementary to Question 325-14(5): Withdrawal of the Single-Rate Zone Application for Power Rates

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So at least under Mr. Handley's watch, about a year of exchange on this idea, to the matter of the August directive, which really was sort of the pivotal decision that was made, and as has been noted in a number of media accounts, there really was a major communication breakdown from the point of which this directive was issued or decided at the Cabinet table and then finally acted on just yesterday. We are looking at a period of about two months, Mr. Speaker.

My question is, why did the Minister allow the situation to go unchecked for so long when it was so clear, at least I think from the Minister's side, that the corporation was acting against Cabinet's wish? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 325-14(5): Withdrawal of the Single-Rate Zone Application for Power Rates

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Cabinet direction that was provided to the Power Corporation, first of all, dealt with strategic direction. That was very clear. That was direction to the Power Corporation. There was also other direction following that meeting that was directed towards me as the Minister responsible and it certainly made reference to slowing down on the consultation with regard to the Robertson report. That was made available to the Power Corporation. In fact, the Power Corporation had a hand in even drafting the documents for that particular meeting. They were fully aware of it. They would have gotten the notice probably a week after the meeting in early August, so they were fully aware of what the government's position was. There is no doubt at all about that.

In terms of specific direction to the Power Corporation, the first time there was a formal directive to the Power Corporation on this issue was October 11th. As I think some people found out as they went through the Power Corporation Act, it is only by Executive Council directive that we can provide direction. I do not have that authority to provide it as Minister responsible for the Power Corporation. That is not within my authority. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 325-14(5): Withdrawal of the Single-Rate Zone Application for Power Rates

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, we are sure getting some mixed signals here. If the Power Corporation itself was involved in determining this position and drafting the directive, why is it then that we had to bring the lawyers in? I understand that the Premier's office found it necessary to consult the services of a lawyer in this matter and if I read today's newspaper correctly, the Power Corporation itself brought two lawyers in to help interpret a directive that the Minister says it actually helped to write.

What steps were taken, Mr. Speaker, by the Minister to clarify and confirm with the corporation what the government's intentions were?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 325-14(5): Withdrawal of the Single-Rate Zone Application for Power Rates

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, in my mind, there was not any lack of clarification in the document or interpretation on it or whatever. I am not sure one group of lawyers or another group of lawyers could really be definitive on what was intended in the document either.

I think the important thing, Mr. Speaker, in this whole issue is that we have a process through the Power Corporation, through the Public Utilities Board, for making decisions on these kinds of matters. We have to recognize that. We have to honour that and we have to allow those processes to follow.

I am of the view that I will not interfere unnecessarily in any board that we appoint in their mandate. We will provide them a strategic direction. We will let them know what our position is. However, if they have an authority, then we have an obligation to either let them carry out their job or, if we do not want to do that, then we should change their mandate. If they will not do it, we have to take the action we had to take yesterday of revoking their appointments.

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

Supplementary to Question 325-14(5): Withdrawal of the Single-Rate Zone Application for Power Rates

MR. BRADEN: I am still very concerned that we may have this protocol but in this case it failed miserably. The dismissal of five or six people from a board that has been in place -- and I think operated very well for 14 years now -- demonstrates that this government has some real weaknesses in its communication.

Mr. Speaker, I am kind of frustrated here. How is it that such a weak and poorly worded and ambiguous directive got through the system?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 325-14(5): Withdrawal of the Single-Rate Zone Application for Power Rates

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I do not know that it was weak and badly worded and so on. I certainly would not characterize it as that. I think there has been clearly a difference in communications here. The Power Corporation, in my view, had it. They knew what it meant. They have gone to whatever extent necessary to clarify it. It is unfortunate. I think they were a group of people who are well-respected in the community, I think they made a good contribution to the Power Corporation and it is unfortunate that it ended up as it did with me being forced to revoke their appointments. I am saddened by that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Colleagues, we have quite a list of Members who want to ask questions and we have ten minutes left. I know they are all important questions. If you could just shorten up the questions a little bit and Ministers can shorten up their responses and we will get everybody in today. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Question 326-14(5): Dissolution of the Power Corporation Board of Directors

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions have to do with the dissolution of the Power Corporation board as well. I will be asking the Premier about that.

It has come to my attention that I neglected to mention and thank Rod Hardy for his work on the board. He was probably the longest serving member at the time of his removal from the board.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier, once we obviously had this failure in communication and the board had gone ahead and filed the application, why did the government not consider filing an intervention in opposition to the application instead of providing a directive to the corporation?

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

Return to Question 326-14(5): Dissolution of the Power Corporation Board of Directors

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, the Cabinet met in early August and it was felt that there was a clear political understanding, an understanding of the Ministers about what that decision was, which was to direct that the Power Corporation defer any further consultation on a range of things, including a single-rate zone. For whatever reason, this was not understood by the Power Corporation and conveyed to them. It was important to get that clear.

We had a meeting two weeks ago. Cabinet reviewed that and we had that clarified and confirmed and simply asked the board to withdraw their application at this time, so that the energy strategy could be completed and the Members of the Legislature could have a debate about the draft Energy Strategy, the public could have a look at it and within that context discuss what is the best way for the Power Corporation to operate, what are the goals and objectives that we have in the strategies that we set out, and then deal with specific issues of single-rate zones. That was the direction we gave in August and it was a decision we thought was clear.

It was brought up again. It was revisited and we asked our board to comply. They chose not to comply so that was the action we took. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 326-14(5): Dissolution of the Power Corporation Board of Directors

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What is the Premier doing to make sure that communications around Cabinet decisions are clear and direct from now on? It is hardly any

wonder that the corporation did not know what to expect, or the board did not know what to expect when on August 6th the Cabinet apparently made a decision, August 13th the Minister was in front of AOC and he came out in support of the one-rate zone application to AOC. He was then heard on the radio subsequent to the application being filed saying that he supported it.

How could the board ever get the impression that this was a clear decision of Cabinet? Has the Premier dealt with that issue so that we know that we are going to hear publicly now what Cabinet positions are from Cabinet Ministers?

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

Further Return to Question 326-14(5): Dissolution of the Power Corporation Board of Directors

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Cabinet Ministers were not asked what their preferences were in regard to the issue of rate zones. The Cabinet was asked to make a decision about what type of a process and sequence in which things should happen because we had a draft strategy that all of us had been waiting to discuss and review. We felt that it was the right decision to do, to ask the Power Corporation to defer any further consultation specifically on the single-rate zone until the Energy Strategy had been completed.

All Ministers agreed with that, that consultation should be deferred. It was confirmed again in the recent Cabinet meeting. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 326-14(5): Dissolution of the Power Corporation Board of Directors

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, has the Premier discussed with his Cabinet then how in the future we are going to make sure we do not get into this situation where there is not a clear understanding of what the position of Cabinet is?

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

Further Return to Question 326-14(5): Dissolution of the Power Corporation Board of Directors

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, I believe that all of us are aware that there was a communication problem with the August Cabinet decision and for whatever reason, the Power Corporation did not understand the intent and direction given by Cabinet. I am sure the staff will review that and ensure that this is addressed so that it does not happen again. Thank you.

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

Question 327-14(5): Mechanism for Revoking Board Appointments

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is obviously much confusion around this whole issue, the Power

Corporation and the board and the revoking of the authority of the board. There are a number of avenues I would like to take on this, but realizing we are late in our time in question period, I am just going to go off to one and try to get information out there for our constituents.

It is the area of authority to revoking the appointment. Under what portion of the act or what area has the Minister revoked the authority of the board? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 327-14(5): Mechanism for Revoking Board Appointments

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that as notice. I do not have the document with me to confirm exactly what area. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

Question 328-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of RWED and it is about the BIP provision process, a process that the Minister has characterized as very open, Mr. Speaker. The presentation from RWED to our committee, when we were talking about BIP adjustment thresholds, the case was made that this would allow cost containment, Mr. Speaker. Cost containment was the rationale. Go to RWED's web site, why are thresholds being introduced? During our consultations, the business community expressed the need for a dollar cap on the application of BIP adjustments -- nothing about cost containment.

Mr. Speaker, why are we not being forthright and honest with the people of the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 328-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my instructions to the department were to be open and to receive all the concerns and take every concern that was raised very seriously. I am hoping that is still the case. As I indicated to the honourable Member for Hay River North earlier on, this process is not completed yet. The concern raised by the honourable Member Bell from Yellowknife is that the comments on cost and the comments on the different thresholds and of that nature have not been taken into consideration. They are currently being incorporated into a revised BIP that the Cabinet has not had the opportunity to see.

I have not seen those changes myself. I have been briefed in the last couple of days by the department to see where they are at. I am told there is a decision paper that will be coming forward to Cabinet with the finished product. Hopefully the concerns of the Members here and the concerns raised by the

stakeholders are all included. The reason why I am saying it is open is that the concerns have been taken, not only through the web site but also through the discussions face to face with the stakeholders will be included. I say that we are open and I am hoping the department is following through with that type of condition. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 328-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So behind closed doors, we are being told that it is about cost containment. In public, we make no mention of cost containment. I have a theory, Mr. Speaker. I think it is because if you tell people it is about cost containment, they would ask you what the BIP is costing us, and the truth is that we have no idea, Mr. Speaker.

Will the Minister endeavour to figure out what the BIP is costing this government?

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

Further Return to Question 328-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I personally would like to know how much the BIP has cost this government over the years. I think we all want to do that. I think people have a right to know that. We have tried in our first discussion paper on the proposed BIP to use a mechanism of labour rebates and tax credits, and we thought that such a system would have allowed us to assess the cost of BIP. However, this approach was not accepted during the stakeholder discussions and through the consultation that took place. I think this was a way of trying to find out how much BIP is costing us, but since it was not accepted by the stakeholders, we are not going to pursue that avenue. We will have to find another way of trying to figure out how much BIP is costing.

Frankly, the Business Incentive Policy has been in place for some time and it is difficult to have baseline information of where to start. Of course, there is the BIP administration that we are involved with. There is also a contract administration that takes over after BIP has been analyzed and a contract given out, so it is a responsibility that the Minister of Finance and FMB has on the contract administration part of it. We need to go there as well if we really need to know how much BIP is going to cost us. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 328-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

MR. BELL: Mr. Speaker, I am not even going to wade into this dispute about what are contract administration issues and what are BIP administration issues. This is one of the biggest shell games I have ever seen, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the Minister raised the issue of labour rebates. We have had store-fronting problems with BIP. That is no surprise to anybody. We figured,

I guess, with this revision that we are going to change all that because we are going to now allow it. What we are going to do is we are going to apply BIP to companies purporting to have a percentage of northern content or northern labour in their proposals and we are going to take their word for it, Mr. Speaker. How does this make any sense? Why are we proposing that we will go back after the fact and audit these things when we know that we do not have the capability to do that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 328-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what we would like to see in the major changes to BIP is clarification of definitions applying to BIP. We would like to also have a clear definition of what a BIP business is really, and strengthen the administration procedures. There is also a formal complaint mechanism that we would like to see put in place, as well as the new threshold for the application of BIP adjustments. These five very substantial areas of change to BIP are not easy. You are not going to have everybody thinking that this is the greatest thing. There are people currently here that do not think we should apply BIP at all. Some do not want to make any changes, and if we are trying to make changes and trying to be open, we get criticized for it. We are going to try to move ahead with this. That is the intention of myself, as well as the department, to see if we could try to get everybody satisfied or as close to it as possible to see if we can make the changes that will make this BIP policy work a lot better. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 328-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

MR. BELL: Mr. Speaker, I agree that these are not easy issues. I suppose if they were, we would have resolved these many Ministers ago but, Mr. Speaker, I still do not think that excuses our public process where we get one shred of a concept from one submission and run with it because it fits the bill for the BIP that we would like to see. Could the Minister not acknowledge that we need to weigh public input, all types of public input, and give it equal weight, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 328-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Revisions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am open to all the suggestions and concerns that are raised here in the House. I think this is part of the process in trying to change BIP. If there is one strand of an idea that perhaps my administration in RWED have taken and run with, I will certainly look at it. Thank you.

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

ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Return to Written Question 3-14(5): Application of the Business Incentive Policy to Tendered Contracts

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question asked by Mr. Charles Dent on June 14, 2002, regarding the application of the Business Incentive Policy to tendered contracts.

In fiscal year 2001-2002, Public Works and Services awarded five contracts on the basis of the Business Incentive Policy. At the appropriate time, I will table information about these contracts and the percentage of the premium paid as compared to the lowest tender.

We do not have the results of contracts for other departments.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Return to Written Question 4-14(5): Initialling of the Final Dogrib Claim

Mr. Speaker, I have a provisional Return to Written Question asked by Mr. Nitah on June 18, 2002, regarding the initialling of the final Dogrib Agreement.

The Return to Written Question 4-14(5) is not ready today due to some minor formatting problems. The return will be ready on October 17, 2002. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

Return to Written Question 5-14(5): Financial Assistance for Students with Disabilities

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question asked by Ms. Lee on June 18, 2002, regarding financial assistance for students with disabilities.

In order to be eligible for financial support from the NWT, students must be attending approved, post-secondary programs leading to a licence, certificate, diploma, undergraduate, masters or doctoral degree.

The SFA program offers the NWT Study Grant to students with permanent disabilities. This grant provides assistance of up to \$8,000 per academic year to eligible students taking full-time post-secondary, and up to \$1,000 per course for students taking part-time post-secondary programs. The expenses must be directly related to the student's program of study or course; for example, a specialized computer screen or a tutor to take notes. Students who are not eligible to apply for the NWT Study Grant can apply to the NWT Council of Persons with Disabilities under the NWT Literacy Program funding provided by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Aboriginal students may also be eligible for disability assistance through their band. As each student's needs and eligibility are unique, detailed assistance information differs from student to student.

Governments across Canada follow a stringent designation process to determine the institutions and programs eligible under their government financial assistance program. To determine post-secondary institution and program eligibility,

SFA refers to other Canadian government lists of approved and designated post-secondary institutions. When required, SFA will also research specific program eligibility through the institution's web site, government financial aid offices or school calendars.

ECE is currently in the process of researching and developing private institution policies for institutions within the NWT. However, the SFA program will continue to rely on the expertise of other governments across Canada when approving students who wish to attend institutions outside of the NWT.

Return to Written Question 6-14(5): Aurora College Nursing Program

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question asked by Ms. Lee on June 18, 2002, regarding the Aurora College Nursing Program.

The Aurora College Student Record System began to record nursing access applications and acceptances in 1999. Prior to 1999, nursing access students were registered as adult basic education students.

Applicants must meet the academic entry requirements for admission. The qualified applicants who are admitted to the program, less any no-shows, register and are recorded as full-time or part-time enrolments. Students are admitted to nursing upon completion of the access program, or by direct entry into year one. Attrition in the first semester of year one is made up in the second semester by returning students who are completing coursework, or by certified nursing assistants or licensed practical nurses who receive advance credit for the first semester.

Students must complete all coursework before they can enter the final practicum. This is a supervised semester-long work experience practicum. Upon successful completion of the final practicum, the graduates must write and pass the Canadian Registered Nurses Examination before they can register to practice. Only graduates who have passed the national examination are eligible for nurse registration with the Northwest Territories Registered Nurses' Association. In three of the first five graduating classes, 1996/97 through 2000/01, all of the Aurora College graduates who wrote the national examination passed, and in four of the five years, their success rate exceeded the national average pass rate.

There have been 72 graduates of the Nursing Program in the first six graduating classes. A total of 147 first-year nursing students entered these classes, for an overall graduation rate of 49 percent. The majority of the graduates are now working as nurses in the NWT.

The college student records system does not keep records of home community for students who apply and are accepted. This information is available only for students who enrol in the program. The majority of students list Yellowknife as their home community, when it is in fact their place of residence.

Return to Written Question 7-14(5): Clawback of Income Support Payments

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question asked by Mr. Braden on June 19, 2002, regarding income support payments.

I have asked departmental officials to undertake an inter-jurisdictional review and report back through the Standing Committee on Social Programs. However, please be advised that day care costs are allowable expenses under the NWT income Assistance Program.

Return to Written Question 9-14(5): Stanton Hospital Deficit Position

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question asked by Ms. Lee on June 19, 2002, regarding Stanton Hospital's deficit position.

The temporary closure of the Intensive Care Unit, the summer closure of the Surgical Inpatient Unit, and the current waiting lists for physiotherapy and mammography services are not related to Stanton Hospital's \$700,000 accumulated deficit and/or \$500,000 2001-2002 operating surplus. The following provides background information related to the above noted closure and waiting lists.

Surgical Unit Closure

Over the past several months, Stanton has closed the surgical unit during the summer months. This closure relates to reductions in operating room loads and elective surgical procedures as residents may be on vacation or do not want surgery during the summer months. Physician surgeon and nursing complements are also affected by summer vacations.

Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Closure

The ICU has been closed since June due to a shortage of critical care nurses. This is unrelated to the financial situation of the hospital. ICU services are continuing to be provided on an as-needed basis through a contractual agreement with the Capital Health Authority. An earlier plan to re-open the unit in November was put on hold until sufficient nurses can be hired. Intensive recruitment efforts for ICU experienced nurses are underway and four job offers have already been made. A date to re-open the unit will be made when adequate staffing levels are in place.

Physiotherapy Waiting Lists

The physiotherapy unit has been consistently short-staffed since 1999. There are continued efforts to fill vacant physiotherapist positions. The waiting list for services also varies over the course of a year. However, a priority listing has been established for WCB clients and emergency cases.

Mammography Waiting List

Mammography services were also affected by staff shortages. Access to services has now returned to normal and the waiting list will be addressed over the next few months.

Prior Years Accumulated Deficit

The deficit accumulated over the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 fiscal years. It was directly related to increases in staff recruitment and retention, security and Emergency Room physician services costs.

2001-2002 Surplus

The 2001-2002 surplus was directly related to a combination of an increase in revenues and unexpended salary funds

associated with staff physician vacancies. Increased revenues were associated with medical travel and pharmacy expense recoveries and increased inpatient and outpatient revenues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Any further returns to written questions? Item 9, replies to the Opening Address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Bill 16: Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act

Bill 21: Health Statutes Amendment Act

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 16, Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act, and Bill 21, Health Statutes Amendment Act, and wishes to report that Bill 16 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole, as amended and reprinted, and that Bill 21 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole.

Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Bill 21 ordered into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Bill 21 ordered into committee of the whole for today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have consent. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Bill 15: An Act to Amend the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development has reviewed Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act, and wishes to report that Bill 15 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole. Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Bill 15 ordered into committee of the whole for today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Bill 15 ordered into committee of the whole for today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have consent. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Bill 18: Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2002-2003

Bill 19: Write-off of Debts Act, 2002-2003

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight has reviewed Bill 18, Forgiveness of Debts Act, and Bill 19, Write-Off of Debts Act, and wishes to report that Bills 18 and 19 are ready for consideration in committee of the whole. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4)

and have Bills 18 and 19 ordered 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) and have Bills 18 and 19 ordered into committee of the whole for today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have consent. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 53-14(5): Report of the Auditor General of Canada on "Other Matters" for Fiscal Years 2000 and 2001

Colleagues, I wish to table the Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly on Matters for the Years ending March 31, 2000, and March 31, 2001.

Tabled Document 54-14(5): Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, 2001-2002

Further, pursuant to section 68 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, I wish to table the Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for the Period April 1, 2001, to March 31, 2002.

Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

Tabled Document 55-14(5): Northwest Territories 2001-2002 Public Accounts

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Northwest Territories 2001-2002 Public Accounts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

Tabled Document 56-14(5): Application of the Business Incentive Policy to Tendered Contracts, PWS 2001-2002

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, further to my Return to Written Question 3-14(5), I wish to table the following document entitled Application of the Business Incentive Policy to Tendered Contracts, Department of Public Works and Services, 2001-2002. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Tabled Document 57-14(5): Response to Petition 2-14(5): Funding for Education Bodies

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Rule 42(10), I wish to table a response to Petition 2-14(5) presented by the Member for Range Lake and responded to by the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 24: An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have three notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, October 18, 2002, I will move that Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Mr. Minister.

Bill 25: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2001-2002

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, October 18, 2002, I will move that Bill 25, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2001-2002, be read for the first time.

Bill 26: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2002-2003

Mr. Speaker, I also give notice that on Friday, October 18, 2002, I will move that Bill 26, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2002-2003, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 35-14(5) and Bills 15, 18, 19 and 21, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call the committee of the whole to order. We have several items to deal with. Tabled document 35-14(5) and Bills 15, 18, 19 and 21. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend that the committee consider Bill 15, followed by Bill 18, followed by Bill 19 and then Bill 21.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We will take a short break and start with Bill 15.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call committee of the whole back to order. We are dealing with Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister if he has any opening comments. Mr. Minister.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, yes, I have opening comments. Mr. Chairman, this bill will amend the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act to remove the requirement that real estate agents be residents of the Northwest Territories to be licensed. This change complies with

the labour mobility provisions of the Agreement on Internal Trade, which the Government of the Northwest Territories signed in 1994. This change also ensures that the Government of the Northwest Territories is not open to a possible court challenge under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Similar changes have already been made, or will be made shortly, in all other Canadian provinces and territories.

The department does not anticipate an increase in the number of southern agencies doing business in the Northwest Territories as a result of this change. The act will still retain specific requirements that agencies maintain a local business office, have Northwest Territories trust accounts and meet Northwest Territories bonding and educational requirements. This information was made available to Northwest Territories agents during initial consultation and again during July of this year when the department received several inquiries about the proposed bill.

Northern real estate representatives acknowledge that all southern jurisdictions are adopting similar changes and as such, they have indicated no further issues with this proposal. I look forward to answering the committee's questions on this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Steen. At this time, I would like to ask the committee responsible for overseeing and reviewing Bill 15 if they have any comments. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development conducted a public review of Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act, on August 27, 2002. The committee would like to thank the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs and his officials for presenting the bill.

The bill would remove the current requirement for a real estate agent to live in the Northwest Territories in order to be licensed to be a real estate agent in this jurisdiction.

The reason for the change is the Northwest Territories' participation in the Agreement on Internal Trade, which came into effect July 1, 1995, with the goal of reducing and eliminating barriers to trade within Canada. While certain programs such as the Business Incentive Policy and Affirmative Action Policy are exempt from the AIT, the residency requirement within the Northwest Territories Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act was the only area in which the Northwest Territories contravened this agreement.

The committee asked whether the Northwest Territories was obligated to pass this legislation. The department stated that the amendment was not only required to comply with the agreement but that the current Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act could be challenged as a violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms Act.

Further, the committee asked if the department had undertaken consultation on the proposed change to the act. The department stated that there are currently six agencies licensed under the act and that all agencies were contacted verbally. The only concern expressed during consultation was a wish to see the current requirement for a real estate agent to maintain a business office in the Northwest Territories be upheld.

Mr. Chairman, following the committee's review, a motion was carried to report Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act, to the Assembly as ready for committee of the whole. Additional comments or questions of Members may be posed as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister if he will be bringing in any witnesses. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Does the committee agree that the Minister bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on my left is Debbie DeLancey, deputy minister of Municipal and Community Affairs; and on my right is Patricia Gall-Smith, legal counsel with the Department of Justice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome witnesses. At this time, I would like to ask if there are any general comments in regard to Bill 15. General comments? Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not a lot on this bill, but a couple of comments I wanted to make about concerns that were raised while this bill was out for consultation. I am aware that this bill is being looked at because of labour mobility provisions in the Agreement on Internal Trade. However, the department states that it does not anticipate an increase in the number of southern agencies doing business in the Northwest Territories as a result of these changes.

It specifies that the act will still retain specific requirements; that agencies maintain a local business office, have Northwest Territories trust accounts and meet Northwest Territories bonding for educational requirements. Are there any possibilities that a southern firm could meet all of these requirements and set up shop in the Territories where they cannot now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I will ask Ms. DeLancey to answer that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The deputy minister, Ms. DeLancey.

MS. DELANCEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I suppose there is a possibility but we really do not anticipate it because the provision of having to have a business office in the Northwest Territories would require that there be some agent for the agency that is resident in the Northwest Territories. We have looked at the requirements that are still in the act and we think they provide pretty good comfort that there will not be an increase in the number of agencies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess my major concern is that we do not want to set up anything that would

help southern businesses come up here and set up so-called storefront operations, and maybe make it tougher for local businesses to compete. Those are my major concerns and the concerns that were expressed to me during this. I would suspect that the department has done due diligence in making sure that the amendments that are being made here are not opening the door to southern firms, making it easier to come in and compete with local businesses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Chairman, I think that even if the department were even to identify it as a growing problem, we would have to look for other avenues than residency requirements, because we have to comply with this particular requirement under the Charter of Rights. We will definitely be watching for that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. Detail. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are dealing with Bill 15, An Act to Amend the real Estate Agents' Licensing 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): Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that Bill 15 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Bill 15 is now ready for third reading. With that, I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Is the committee ready to deal with Bill 18?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Bill 18, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2002-2003. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for this bill if he has any opening comments. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The purpose of the Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2002-2003, is to authorize the forgiveness of certain debts listed in a schedule to the act. Pursuant to section 25(1) of the Financial Administration Act, the forgiveness of a debt or obligation to the government exceeding \$1,000 must receive Legislative Assembly approval. When a debt is forgiven, no further collection action shall be pursued. The forgiveness being proposed in this act will not

require a new appropriation. Allowances for doubtful accounts were charged to an appropriation at the time it is considered that the collection of debts is unlikely.

The accounts being recommended for forgiveness are the result of bankruptcy, compromised settlements and/or are in the public interest. In cases where a compromised settlement is reached, the following factors have been considered:

- the possibility of future recoveries;
- the cost to continue legal actions; and
- the value of security. For example, do the personal guarantees hold a realizable worth?

Mr. Chairman, I, or the appropriate officials, am prepared to answer Members' questions on these proposed forgivenesses. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Minister Handley. Does the committee responsible for reviewing the bill have any general comments on the bill at this time? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight reviewed Bill 17, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2002-2003, on August 13, 2002.

The committee would like to thank the Minister of Finance and his officials for presenting the bill. This bill will forgive \$3,342,867.36. Mr. Chairman, during its review of the bill, the committee expressed a number of concerns. Committee members suggested that the credit history of an individual, corporation or other organization should be kept on file and considered in any future credit application to this government and its agencies. In 2000-2001, the committee had recommended to the government that a central credit monitoring system be established to reduce and better manage the government's lending risk. Committee members were encouraged to hear that the government has implemented the committee's recommendation.

The committee also noted that the bill would forgive the remaining debt of Great Slave Forest Products Limited. Great Slave Forest Products was a subsidiary of the Northwest Territories Development Corporation. Committee members requested additional information from the government. During the committee's consideration of the bill, it was confirmed that the assets of the subsidiary were sold by public tender and applied to the money owed to the Northwest Territories Development Corporation. The subsidiary was closed down as it continued to be a money losing operation, despite significant government subsidies. Patterson Enterprises, which comprised one of the three companies purchased by the Development Corporation to form Great Slave Forest Products Limited, is separate and distinct from Patterson Sawmills.

Mr. Chairman, following the committee's review, a motion was carried to report Bill 18, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2002-2003, to the Assembly as ready for committee of the whole. Additional comments or questions of Members may be posed as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, I will, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree that the Minister bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witness in. Mr. Minister, do you feel comfortable proceeding without your witness at this time?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to go ahead without him. If there are things I cannot answer, I am sure when they get here, we can come back to those issues.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not trying to find a trick question the Minister cannot answer or anything, but something that the Minister said in his statement raised my interest. It has to do with criteria for cases where the outstanding loan or debt to the government is forgiven, which is what we are considering here. It says here that the criteria is where there was a bankruptcy, compromised settlements and/or are in the public interest. I wanted to get an elaboration from the Minister as to what constitutes a public interest? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the term public interest is used as a catch phrase to take into consideration situations where it just does not make common sense to continue to pursue a particular debt. It may be because the amount owing is so small that it is not worth going after because it would cost us more, or it could be that all the efforts have been made and at this point, there is just no point in proceeding. It is a term that can be used generally for areas outside of bankruptcy or compromised settlements.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand the general parameter of what public interest might include, but does the Minister have a written policy or direction or some kind of rule or guideline that tells him or the government that something would be or could be construed in the public interest to forgive? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I do not have the page in front of me, but there would be a provision in the Financial Administration Act and the Financial Administration Manual which would provide further direction on this, I would expect. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I be provided with a copy of that, and also may I ask the Minister what the difference is? I realize that write-offs of outstanding debts is not under consideration here, but these two are related. I would

like to know what the difference is between writing off things and forgiving.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, in the forgiveness of a debt, that is confirmation that the government is not going to take any further action, that we have pursued all activity in terms of any recoveries and/or there is a bankruptcy. We are simply not doing any more action. It is written off the books.

In the case of write-offs, in that situation, the action may be an abeyance. We may have forgiven the interest portion but we are continuing to keep that on the records and would continue with any kind of collection activity, should the individual or company have some means to pay us back. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, at this time, could you introduce your witness for the record?

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witness. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Mr. Chairman, may I be provided with something that says the difference between -- I know the Minister just gave me that information and I appreciate that. I am interested in knowing though, detailed criteria for write-offs and forgiveness. If it is possible, I would like that information as soon as possible because it is something relevant to some of the issues that my constituents are bringing up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will have Mr. Voytilla respond to this one with more detail. Mr. Chairman, by the way, Mr. Voytilla has told me that on the term public interest, it is not included in the Financial Administration Act or the manual, but simply is one we use our own judgment and common sense on. Thank you. Mr. Voytilla.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Voytilla.

MR. VOYTILLA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All of the regulations governing write-off and forgiveness are in the Financial Administration Act and in the Financial Administration Manual, so we can certainly provide that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. Now I am told that there is no written criteria or rules governing what constitutes public interest. I would like to then get a better explanation about what goes into this common sense, or whatever the Minister or FMB considers when they are faced with files that are subject to possible forgiveness or write-off and they are deemed in the public interest to do so. I would also like to know what percentage of the files that come to the board might fall under the category of public interest to be written off or forgiven. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I do not believe we have any debts in this forgiveness package we have before us that

would be in the public interest sector. It makes up a very small percentage. I cannot even recall any recently that we would have had. Mr. Chairman, if I may, I will ask Mr. Voytilla just to give a more detailed explanation of how we manage the term "public interest". Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Voytilla.

MR. VOYTILLA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Minister has pointed out, the reason of public interest is used sparingly. Generally, on all of our debts, we do pursue them aggressively. There will be times when we do agree to a negotiated settlement, but that is because in our judgment and the judgment of our counsel that we think we have maximized the return we are going to get on the debt and pursuing it would not be fruitful or cost effective. That is usually the rule that we abide by.

When it comes to public interest, however, there can be situations where it might be compassionate or it might be a particular situation that would cause severe hardship on the individual. Quite often, that would be related to some sort of medical condition or some other factor that made the likelihood or the pursuit of collection to be doubtful, with respect to either getting further yield or it would create such burden on the individual that we would view it in the public interest to forgive the debt. So very much, it would fall into most often the forgiveness on compassionate grounds.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is very helpful and perhaps this is a good time for me to bring up a case that I know of, which I think should be considered by the Minister and whoever is in charge of determining what is in the public interest of forgiving a loan. Mr. Chairman, I have written to the Minister about this and I would just like to highlight this issue so that the Minister could pay more attention to it and hopefully give me a favourable response.

This has to do with a constituent of mine who worked for the government for about 16 years up to 1996. It has been six years since he has retired. While he was working in Inuvik, he was routinely receiving travel advances of \$1,000. You travel and you have to file the claims and so on and get accountings done. Six years after he left the public service, he received a bill from the government saying that he owed the government \$1,000. He did not know what this was about so he wrote back and he called the finance office to ask what this was about. The government officials just told him that, "We do not have any accounting of you paying it back so you have to pay it now."

He said, "Well, not six years later. All the accounting had been settled and you should give more information about what this is about." The government position was, "We have no records to show that you paid us, so unless you show it."

I believe actually that this thing happened 13 years ago. Although he left the government six years ago, the actual situation when this happened was 13 years ago. I do not think it is reasonable for anyone to expect that somebody would keep Visa receipts or cheque stubs back 13 years. I do not even think that Revenue Canada expects you to keep records for that long. So he is put into a position where, unless he can produce records going back that far, he has to pay \$1,000. He told the government to go take a hike, and then he learned --

he happens to be a Justice of the Peace and he gets \$175 every six months. This is voluntary work. You spend a lot of hours and he gets \$175 as an honorarium -- that the government actually took off the money.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Excuse me, Ms. Lee, we are dealing with Bill 18, Forgiveness of Debts. I am not too sure if the information you are giving is something that is outside the main bill. Unless the Minister would like to reply, I am not too sure if he is aware of it, but I think this falls outside the scope of what we are dealing with here. Also, your time has expired. I would like to ask the Minister if he is privy to answer, but at this time, it is not something we are discussing under Bill 18. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will get all the detail from the Member and follow up on it right away. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. General comments. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer to item 11 in tab 18, Great Slave Forest Products Limited, forgiveness of debt, \$1.199 million. That is a significant amount of dollars, Mr. Chairman. Great Slave Forest Products Limited was originally located in Fort Resolution. My constituents there were quite reliant on that sawmill for employment, and just the general good will and good feeling in the community by having such an industry in the community. Since the closure of that sawmill, the employment rate has dropped significantly and it has never been the same since then.

I would like to ask the Minister who was responsible for the administration of that sawmill at the time of closure that led up to such a huge debt that we are forgiving here today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Great Slave Forest Products Limited was 100 percent owned by the NWT Development Corporation. Initially, during its operation, it had its own local board, but then ultimately later on it became the responsibility of the Development Corporation. I know that the Development Corporation provided a briefing on this, and I do not know the exact date of when it was taken over by the Development Corporation board completely. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this has been a very hot topic and issue in the community of Fort Resolution. People want to see the forest industry rekindled in that community, so that long-term employment could be realized and the good will of the people realized through ownership of such an industry. I would like to point out for the record that it was the NWT Development Corporation that mismanaged this industry in the community to a point where it was financially not feasible. The kind of decisions made were impractical and made without thought to the community. It was an industry that was needed but because of the mismanagement by the Development Corporation, that community lost out big time.

I hope that future consideration by the Development Corporation or by this government in establishing such or similar industry in that community will not be viewed as the community cannot handle it, the community cannot manage such an industry, and that the full blame should be put on the shoulders of the NWT Development Corporation, where it should lie. I want the record to show that, Mr. Chairman, so that there is no confusion when and if there are discussions or thoughts that are going to rekindle the sawmill and forestry industry within the Fort Resolution area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I cannot speak for the Development Corporation, but our government would certainly review each and every proposal that was made on its own merit in the future. If someone comes forward with a proposal to establish a similar operation or the same kind of operation, we would look at it and assess it. There would be no penalizing of the community or anything like that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Financial Management Board, FMBS, the NWT Development Corporation and all the GNWT development corporations operate similar to banks. If there is a record of decision and poor financial planning is in the books, then it makes it that much more difficult to get to point B from point A. I want the record to show that the problem that led to such a big debt that we are forgiving today is a problem that was generated by the NWT Development Corporation, under the management of the Development Corporation, so that the community is not slated as part of the problem. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, as I said before, the Great Slave Forest Products Limited was 100 percent owned by the Development Corporation. The Development Corporation is ultimately responsible for it. There is nowhere in our records anywhere that would say that anyone else except the Development Corporation are responsible. The community is not responsible. There is nothing to indicate anything like that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not going to prolong what I was trying to say earlier. I just wanted to simply point out that I had a case where the public interest comes into play in determining what the government should be collecting and what not. I just wanted to reiterate that I have communicated this case to the Minister, so if he just checks his files, it is on his desk and I ask for his review of it and positive response as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister, I believe you have made a commitment, but for the record, could you state it again?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I certainly commit to reviewing it and following up on it as quickly as I possibly can. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. We are dealing with Bill 18, Forgiveness of Debts Act. Detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are dealing with Bill 18, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2002-2003. If you can move to page 2, schedule of debts, forgiveness, page 4, total, \$3,342,867.36.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. We will go back to page 1, Bill 18, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2002-2003. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that Bill 18 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Bill 18 is now ready for third reading. At this time, I would like to thank the Minister and his witness. Thank you.

The next bill we agreed to deal with is Bill 19, Write-off of Debts Act, 2002-2003. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for this bill if he has any general comments. Minister of Finance, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The purpose of the Write-Off of Debts Act, 2002-2003, is to authorize the write-off of the debts listed in the schedule to the Act. Pursuant to section 24 of the Financial Administration Act, the write-off of government assets or debts exceeding \$20,000 must receive Legislative Assembly approval. Pursuant to section 82 of the Financial Administration Act, the write-off of debts owed to a public agency exceeding \$20,000 must receive Legislative Assembly approval.

The write-off of debts owed to the Workers' Compensation Board exceeding \$50,000 must receive Legislative Assembly approval.

The write-off being proposed in this Act will not require a new appropriation. The write-off will be charged against allowances for bad debts, which were established in the department budget at the time it was determined that collection of the debt would be unlikely. I wish to emphasize that the write-off of a debt does not relieve a debtor of the liability for repayment or mean that the government will not continue to attempt to collect the outstanding amount. Through continued reviews by my staff, future recovery of the debts may still be achieved. In addition, in the case of debts owed by companies, we track the principals of each firm for future credit reference.

Mr. Chairman, I or the appropriate official are prepared to answer Members' questions on the proposed write-off. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. At this time, I would like to ask the committee responsible for reviewing Bill 19 if they have any comments on the bill. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight reviewed Bill 19, the Write-Off of Debts Act, on August 13, 2002. Committee members would like to thank the Minister of Finance and his officials for presenting the bill. This bill will write-off \$134,150.41 in debts owed to this government. The bill in its entirety is comprised of student loans that have been considered by the government to be uncollectable. A number of committee members noted that in Bill 18, corporations were forgiven debts while student loans were written off through Bill 19.

Some committee members suggested to the Minister that in cases of hardship, student loans should be forgiven. The Minister replied that it is the present policy of the government to consider each case on its own merits. Risk management continues to be an ongoing concern of the committee. The committee encourages the government to continue to enhance its credit monitoring system to ensure that the credit history of clients who have received write-offs or forgiveness of debts from the government is considered in any future credit application.

Mr. Chairman, following the committee's review, a motion was carried to report Bill 19, Write-Off of Debts Act, 2002-2003, to the Assembly as ready for committee of the whole. Additional comments or questions of members may be posed as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Dent. At this time I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Bill 19 if he will be bringing in any witnesses. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, I will, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that the Minister bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, with me is Lew Voytilla, secretary to the Financial Management Board.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witness. General comments with regard to Bill 19? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a question for the Minister on his opening comments. In the third paragraph, he refers to the write-off of debts owing to the Workers' Compensation Board and the level at which they must exceed in order to have to be considered by the Assembly. Seeing as how the only debts we are writing off are student loans, did the Minister include this line here because they wanted to flag for the committee that there had been other write-offs just under \$50,000, and was signalling that we should pay attention to that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for FMBS, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, no, there was no signalling of anything. This is just outlining the framework for

write-off of debts. There is nothing anticipated or expected here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments on Bill 19?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We will move to page 2, schedule of debts written off, total \$134,150.41.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We will go back to page 1, Bill 19, Write-off of Debts Act, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that Bill 19 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Bill 19 is now ready for third reading. At this time, I would like to thank the Minister and his witness. The next bill we agreed to deal with today is Bill 21, Health Statutes Amendment Act. What is the wish of the committee?

At this time, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for introducing the bill if he has any general comments. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, I do, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to have an opportunity today to speak with the Members of the committee about Bill 21, which proposes changes to various health statutes. The acts amended under this bill include the Guardianship and Trusteeship Act, the Certified Nursing Assistants Act, Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act, Medical Care Act, Public Health Act, Medical Profession Act, Dental Auxiliaries Act, Dental Mechanics Act, Dental Profession Act, and Vital Statistics Act.

The proposed amendments are mainly of a miscellaneous nature and are intended to simplify and clarify administrative procedures, or make the legislation consistent with that of other jurisdictions. The amendments also change the delegation of authority from the Commissioner to the Minister in provisions dealing with registration, licensure, and discipline procedures of health care professionals. Many of these amendments were identified over a period of years by department and authority staff, as well as by stakeholders. Further amendments of a miscellaneous nature were identified by the Department of Justice during the drafting phase of the bill. The amendments fulfill the commitments made to stakeholders and make the legislation consistent with other health profession legislation. In particular, amendments to change the name "certified nursing assistant" to "licensed practical nurses" fulfills a longstanding

commitment by the department and brings us in line with other jurisdictions across Canada.

The change of authority from Commissioner to the Minister is also important and appropriate, as it is the Minister who is ultimately responsible for the delivery of health care services in the Northwest Territories.

I would like to thank the Members of the standing committee for their consideration of this bill and look forward to discussing Bill 21 with the members of the committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. At this time, I would like to ask the committee responsible for reviewing Bill 21 if they have any comments on the bill at this time. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Social Programs met on Wednesday, August 28, 2002, to review Bill 21, the Health Statutes Amendment Act. This act amends a number of acts relating to health care and health professions. The majority of the amendments are minor in nature and correct legislation to match administrative practice or match legislation in other jurisdictions. The amendments also change the delegated authority from the Commissioner to the Minister for provisions dealing with the registration, licensing, and discipline of health care professionals to reflect actual practice and responsibility.

The amendments also change references to certified nursing assistant to the new term licensed practical nurse. This is consistent with other Canadian jurisdictions. Individual members of the committee may have questions or comments for the Minister as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that the Minister can bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, can you escort the witnesses in? Mr. Minister, could you introduce your witnesses at this time?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me Dave Murray, the deputy minister for Health and Social Services; Mr. Blair Barber, the senior policy advisor for legislation for Health and Social Services; and Janice Cooper, legislative counsel, Department of Justice. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witnesses. General comments on Bill 21? General comments? Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just had a chance to review the Minister's comments and the introduction in the beginning of the bill that indicates what amendments are being made with this bill. I have been communicating with the department about the need to make an amendment to the Marriage Act to increase the fees that the people who -- I do

not know what the formal title is, but the people who actually issue licenses on behalf of the government. Right now, I believe they are getting a very low fee for it, about \$25, which does not even pay for the cost of issuing it. I have received a commitment from the Minister that he will be reviewing it. I do not see it here. It is unfortunate that it is not here, but I guess that amendment just did not make it for the deadline.

I just wanted to take this opportunity to get the Minister to commit to do that again and to advise the officials there, who I know are the ones who actually do the work. Could I get the Minister to commit to that again and have their staff be aware of that amendment, and that I would like to see that come before the end of this Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Ms. Lee, I believe your comments are outside the scope of the bill that we are presently dealing with. It is nowhere to be found in here, so you are talking about something that is irrelevant to Bill 21. The Minister is aware of the issue, since I believe it is not privy to the Members of the committee of the whole. If you would like to add, but I would just like to remind the Members that we are dealing with Bill 21, An Act to Amend the Health Statutes Amendment Act. Mr. Minister, if you want to respond, you can do so.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we are aware of the concern raised by the Member. I have been advised that it would be appropriate to deal with this through the next Miscellaneous Statutes Act and it is on the list for consideration for that act when it should be brought forward. We are aware and have seriously considered the request of the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the Minister. I was not implying that he was not doing work. I just knew that it was the legal beavers who had to put the writings together. I appreciate the Minister's answer. Did I hear in that answer that it is in the works and it is on the books to be done by the end of this Assembly, prior to the end of this Assembly?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I will just remind Members, we are dealing with Bill 21, Health Statutes Amendment Act. We are talking about...excuse me, could I have order in the House please? We are dealing with a whole different matter than the bill that is presently before the committee. If we can keep your questions directed to the bill that is in front of us. We are dealing with Bill 21, Health Statutes Amendment Act. General comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Clause-by-clause.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause-by-clause. If I could have the Members turn to schedule A, part 1, page 3. Schedule A, part 1, 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): Clause 7.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 8.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Schedule B, clause 1.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 2.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Schedule C, clause 1.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 2.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Schedule D, page 8, clause 1.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 2.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Schedule E, page 9, 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): Schedule F, 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): Clause 7.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 8.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Schedule G, 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): Schedule H, clause 1.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Schedule I, 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): Schedule J, 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, page 17.
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): Clause 7.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 8, page 18.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 9.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Schedule K, 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): Schedule L, 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): Schedule M, page 21, 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, page 22.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 6.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 7.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 8.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 23, clause 9.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 10.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 11.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 12.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 13.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 14.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We can now go back to page 1, dealing with Bill 21, Health Statutes Amendment 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): Clause 7.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 13.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that Bill 21 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Bill 21 is now ready for third reading. With that, I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses out? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move that we report progress.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The House will now come back to order. Item 20, report of the committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 15, Bill 18, Bill 19, and Bill 21, and would like to report that Bills 15, 18, 19, and 21 are 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 I have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah, seconds the motion. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, a meeting of the Special Joint Committee on Non-Taxed Based

Community Affairs at adjournment today; tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight; at 10:30 a.m. of Governance and Economic Development; also at 10:30 of the Standing Committee on Social Programs; a meeting of Caucus at 12:00 noon.

Orders of the day for Thursday, October 17, 2002:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 20, Legal Registries Statutes Amendment Act
18. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 23, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2002
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 35-14(5), Social Agenda: A Draft for People of the NWT
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act
 - Bill 18, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2002-2003
 - Bill 19, Write-off of Debts Act, 2002-2003
 - Bill 21, Health Statutes Amendment Act
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, October 17, at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

