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Speaker: The Hon. Levi Barnabas, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Levi Barnabas

(Quttiktuq)

Ovide Alakannuark

(Akulliq)

Enoki Irqittuq

(Amittuq)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Kevin O'Brien

(Arviat)

Chair of Caucus

Glenn McLean

(Baker Lake)

Hon. Kelvin Ng

(Cambridge Bay)

Minister of Finance and Administration; Minister of Human Resources; Government House Leader

Peter Kattuk

(Hudson Bay)

Hunter Tootoo

(Iqaluit Centre)

Hon. Ed Picco

(Iqaluit East)

Minister of Health and Social Services

Hon. Paul Okalik

(Iqaluit West)

Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Donald Havioyak

(Kugluktuk)

Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth

Hon. James Arvaluk

(Nanulik)

Minister of Education

Uriash Puqiqnak

(Nattilik)

Deputy Speaker

Hon. Peter Kilabuk

(Pangnirtung)

Minister of Sustainable Development

Hon. Jack Anawak

(Rankin Inlet North)

Minister of Justice; Minister of Community Government, Housing and Transportation

Hon. Manito Thompson

(Rankin Inlet South-Whale Cove)

Minister of Public Works, Telecommunications and Technical Services

Olayuk Akesuk

(South Baffin)

Jobie Nutarak

(Tunnunig)

David Iqaqrialu

(Uqqummiut)

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Sergeant at Arms
Simon Nattaq

Editors of Hansard
Innirvik Support Services

Box 1200

Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

Tel (867) 979-6770 Fax (867) 979-6811 Toll-Free (877) 334-7266

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday May 14, 1999**

Members Present:

Mr. Ovide Alakannuark, Mr. Olayuk Akesuk, Honourable James Arvaluk, Honourable Levi Barnabas, Honourable Donald Haviyok, Mr. David Iqaqrialu, Mr. Enoki Ireqittuq, Mr. Peter Kattuk, Honourable Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Glenn McLean, Honourable Kelvin Ng, Mr. Jobie Nutarak, Mr. Kevin O'Brien, Honourable Paul Okalik, Mr. Uriash Puqiqnak, Honourable Manitoq Thompson, Mr. Hunter Tootoo.

Item 1: Prayer

Speaker (Mr. Barnabas) (interpretation): I would like to ask Mr. Ireqittuq to say the opening prayer.

>>Prayer

Item 2: Budget Address

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Ireqittuq. To the orders of the day. Item number two. Budget Address. Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Introduction

Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present our first Government of Nunavut Budget. This Budget Address, along with the Main Estimates which I am tabling today, provides our financial position and plans for our first fiscal year of operation, which ends March 31, 2000.

Across this country tradition has Finance Ministers delivering new budgets wearing new shoes. In establishing a Nunavut tradition, I am proud today to be wearing a pair of new caribou kamiks made by respected elder Bessie Omilgoetok of Cambridge Bay. Mr. Speaker, new kamiks, a new budget, a new beginning.

This Budget ensures the early success of our new territory. It also provides a strong foundation on which we can build our future.

The needs of Nunavummiut are great. Our expectations are high. But like the journey taken by the Founders of Nunavut which led to the creation of our new territory, the meeting of those needs and the realization of those expectations will take time. There is a great conviction on the part of all MLAs to see that this happens in the least amount of time possible.

Government programs and services will be reshaped as quickly as possible to better meet the needs of the people; and to better meet the vision of Nunavut.

Some changes to programs and services have been made already, and are reflected in our Budget. Many other changes are in the planning stages and will be announced in the coming months. Other more substantive reforms will require careful study and extensive public consultations.

One option that does not exist is for us to fund new programs, services and capital projects without regard to our fiscal means and circumstances.

Our Fiscal Plan

The Government of Nunavut is in the fortunate position of starting without an accumulated deficit, or debt load.

Despite the attractiveness of borrowing money to finance current spending on needed government programs, services and capital projects, such actions would be short-sighted. We must avoid the problems faced by other governments. We are adopting a sound budgetary policy which will allow us to move towards improving the quality of life in Nunavut.

Most governments, including the federal government, have large accumulated debt loads. The associated interest costs greatly reduce the amount of money that can be spent on health, education and other important social programs. Similar to other jurisdictions, here in the North we have seen the impact of reductions in spending on our social programs.

Most governments in Canada have experienced negative effects from financing current programs and services with borrowed money. Interest costs on borrowed money soon outweigh any short-term benefits. We can and we will learn from their mistakes. We plan to stay debt free.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut will have a balanced budget in the 1999-2000 fiscal year. Our fiscal plan projects revenues of \$610 million and expenditures of \$600 million. We have a small 1.6 percent operating reserve to accommodate unforeseen expenditure increases or revenue declines.

Our projected expenditures do not exceed projected revenues. We do not plan to spend money we do not have.

We are not allocating expenditures from a potential positive opening financial balance for Nunavut at this time.

The size of our opening balance will be determined when the Division of Assets and Liabilities process with the Government of the Northwest Territories is completed by

October 1999. We currently do not know the final amount of this opening balance, but we do know that many of the assets will not be cash.

We also know that our opening balance will be reduced as a result of having to assume the financial obligations incurred by the Office of the Interim Commissioner.

Our fiscal plan focuses on the strengthening of our revenue base and the management of our expenditures in a manner which best meets the needs of our citizens, and the vision of Nunavut.

Prospects for improving our revenues from our own economic base are limited in the short-term, however future prospects are much brighter. Our forecast of revenues from taxes and fees account for approximately 9.5 percent of our total revenues.

We are projecting \$57 million in own-source revenues this year. Our largest source is personal income tax, which we expect will bring in \$16 million. Other sources include tobacco tax, payroll tax, corporate income tax, fuel tax, property tax, and school levies. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that there will be no new taxes or fees in this budget.

Nunavut, given our vast area, small population, and lack of a developed economic base, is very dependent upon federal fiscal transfers. They will comprise about 90.5 percent of our revenues for the 1999-2000 fiscal year.

Of the \$553 million of revenues expected in federal transfers, \$499 million will come through the Formula Financing Grant. The formula for this program is set for the first two years of the Government of Nunavut.

The level of these transfers is influenced by national factors such as growth in provincial expenditures, as well as by Nunavut factors such as population and tax revenues. The current structure of the formula hinders the Government of Nunavut in benefiting from revenues of future economic activities in the territory. We will seek a better arrangement in the next negotiations.

The Formula Financing Grant was intended to allow for the delivery of the same level of services in Nunavut as was provided in the area previously by the Government of the Northwest Territories. It also made allowances for the additional headquarter costs in both territories. Although, the federal government provided transitional funding of \$150 million, additional funding for infrastructure, social and cultural needs was not included in the Formula Financing Grant.

We will continue with efforts to have our additional needs addressed through the Formula Financing Grant, and through other federal transfers. We are hopeful that a stronger national economy and an improved federal fiscal position, will allow room for positive federal responses.

Mr. Speaker, independent of our success on the revenue side, we plan to act in a responsible manner in our development of expenditures policies, and our delivery of programs and services.

Being responsible means using our resources efficiently and effectively, setting priorities, making choices, being innovative, and being open to change. As well it means operating in a fiscally responsible manner and living within our means.

We plan to reshape and manage government programs and services in a manner which best meets the needs of Nunavummiut.

The achievement of these objectives will require the input of all Members of this Legislative Assembly. It will require the involvement and support of our other northern partners. It will require the dedication and commitment of our employees. Above all, it will require the wisdom of the people of Nunavut, particularly of our elders.

Stability in Our Programs and Services

Mr. Speaker, the reshaping of government programs and services to best meet the needs of Nunavut is a complex task. Many reforms will take considerable time and energies. The continuity in the delivery of programs and services used daily by the people of Nunavut is a major priority of the Budget.

To help ensure that all programs are delivered as cost-effectively as possible many headquarters and other administrative functions have been streamlined and will be delivered by central government departments. This includes information technology, financial processing and human resources services. This approach to internal organization will enable program departments to focus on the provision of programs and services beneficial to the public.

The Budget allocates \$545 million on government programs and services. An additional \$55 million will be spent on capital projects throughout Nunavut, including nearly \$20 million on social housing.

The Departments of Health and Social Services, Education, and Community Government, Housing and Transportation account for over 60 percent of Nunavut's spending on programs and services.

The Departments of Public Works, Telecommunications and Technical Services, Justice and Sustainable Development account for another 25 percent.

Mr. Speaker, I will now highlight some of the departmental spending initiatives for this year.

The Department of Finance and Administration will continue the electrical power subsidy to ensure that all Nunavut residents continue to have access to reasonable utility rates. This will cost \$3.8 million.

The Department of Justice will continue to provide \$830,000 to support Nunavut's 3 regional legal aid clinics.

The Department of Community Government, Housing and Transportation will continue to provide assistance to hamlets in meeting their operational costs through the Municipal Operating Assistance Program. This program will contribute \$18.7 million in this fiscal year. In addition \$5.2 million will be provided to communities to help offset the high cost of water and sewage services to local residents.

The Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth will provide \$1.8 million in grants to art councils and cultural organizations.

The Department of Education will provide \$72.4 million to territorial schools, \$13.6 million to Nunavut Arctic College, plus \$28 million for income support. It will also add 17 teaching positions across Nunavut by reprofiling current expenditures. This will help the department to accommodate the increased number of students and maintain its present level of service.

The Department of Health and Social Services will provide \$44.4 million to support hospital insurance services in Nunavut. As well, it will contribute \$4.9 million to Community Wellness Programs. This department also will continue to support a broad range of children's programs including the Children in Care Program and the Early Intervention Program, spending a total of \$3.2 million this year.

The Department of Sustainable Development will provide \$12.5 million in grants and contributions to a wide variety of associations and organizations. These contributions include: \$1.3 million to Nunavut Tourism, \$1.0 million to the Nunavut Business Development Fund, \$1.8 million for Community Initiatives funding, and \$2.9 million to the Nunavut Development Corporation.

The capital program for 1999-2000 incorporates projects where contractual arrangements were in place by the GNWT. Also included are projects having legal or regulatory requirements, or involving health and safety concerns. Social housing projects and projects supported by federal contributions, insurance claims or other external funding sources were given priority.

The use of these criteria allowed us to initiate a capital program in time to meet the 1999 construction season.

In the coming months we will be starting a 5-year capital planning program, which will involve extensive consultations with MLAs, along with communities.

In addition to the capital program outlined in our Budget, there will be many other construction programs carried out this fiscal year.

The Government of Canada will be providing \$9.3 million in funding for water reservoir improvements, sewer lagoon improvements, and other capital projects. Nunavut Construction Company (NCC) will continue a major office building and housing program in support of our decentralization plans throughout Nunavut. In addition, we are actively pursuing private-public partnering arrangements to provide much needed health and education facilities in our communities.

By partnering with Nunavut's business community we can develop local expertise and skills, create employment, and maximize the benefits from our resources, while building our needed infrastructure.

Our Budget provides a stable environment to plan for Nunavut's future, it allows us to begin addressing the challenges we face and the priorities of our people.

Our Environment and Challenges

There are major geographic, demographic, social and economic challenges that we have to contend with in order to improve the lives of Nunavummiut.

Our territory encompasses almost one-quarter of the land mass of Canada, with a population of approximately 26,000 residents. Our 28 communities are only accessible year round by air, or by ship during the short summer season. Our geography causes the cost of providing essential programs and services to be very expensive. An example of this is the \$15.4 million we must use to provide transportation for our people to access health services not readily available in our communities.

Our population is growing three times faster than the Canadian average, 64 percent of our people are under the age of 30 and more than 45 percent are under 20. This creates ever increasing demands and pressures for health and education services, as well as for housing and other social programs.

In our largest social program education and health and social services, we have started the process of reform. Planning for efficiencies between departments and board administrations is a major step in that reform. We also know that recruitment and retention of staff in these important program areas needs to be addressed as a priority. Both the Honourable James Arvaluk and the Honourable Ed Picco are committed to dealing with these initiatives and the task of ongoing reform.

We are looking at ways we might work with the federal government to address the shortage of new social housing. The CMHC funding we have in place will decrease over the next 20 years, so finding new ways of dealing with this matter is crucial.

The Honourable Jack Anawak, Minister of Community Government Transportation and Housing has recently announced an extension of the Minimum Down Payment Assistance Program. This program provides Nunavut residents with a grant of up to \$15,000 to use as a down payment to purchase an existing home. The availability of adequate and affordable housing to meet the needs of our growing population is one of our highest infrastructure priorities.

The Nunavut Court of Justice has been established. This is a single level of court that is unique in Canada. Along with this there will be increased support for Justices of the Peace so more cases can be dealt with by community members within their own communities.

Meeting our social challenges will require a commitment on the part of our government and the people of Nunavut.

We know that in Nunavut we have an economy that is unique in Canada, one that affords great opportunity for development. Our government holds that all our people should be able to participate fully in these economic development opportunities.

Nunavut has enormous natural resource development potential. Last year the mineral exploration industry invested more than \$70 million here.

We are committed to improving employment opportunities across Nunavut and we will continue to support economic activity that is based on our traditional way of life. Later this Session the Honourable Peter Kilabuk, Minister of Sustainable Development, will address in some detail the issue of the development of our economy.

This budget provides additional financial support for a Nunavut Prospector Program, a Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association, harvester support programs, and community economic development.

Economic development depends in part on our ability to attract investment, both private and public. The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement provides a stable economic environment, in addition to our resource potential. As a result, private investor confidence is strong.

We must look to the federal government for a high level of partnership and commitment in our economy. The Government of Nunavut is working with federal officials to act now on their public commitment to develop a "Northern Economic Strategy." We are working to establish an Economic Development Agreement between the Government of Canada and Nunavut.

We await a positive response from our federal partners on several current economic initiatives, which are crucial to the growth of our economy. These include infrastructure development, a partnership on geoscience, and negotiations on the development of our fisheries.

We must encourage our partners, in both the public and private sectors, to invest in the diverse economic opportunities we have throughout Nunavut. And we must consult with the people of Nunavut to ask for their participation in planning the development of our economy.

If we plan well and make effective choices, Nunavut will have a bright future.

Making Changes

The choices we make in the coming months will greatly affect our future. We must take the time necessary to ensure that our changes make programs and services better suited to Nunavut's needs and vision.

We have to be realistic in our expectations. Priorities will have to be established. I want to assure you Mr. Speaker that over the coming months we will consult with MLA's and the people of Nunavut in considering any and all future plans.

We realize expectations are high and the desire for change is well founded. However, changes will take time to implement. But be assured that our government is committed to change.

A key will be our ability to be resourceful, innovative, and more efficient. We will have to do many things differently. A good example is the recently announced amalgamation of health and social service boards into the Department of Health and Social Service, and the divisional education boards into the Department of Education. Another good example is the decision to pursue private public partnering arrangements to provide some of our capital needs.

One of the most important elements in the delivery of programs are our employees. The Nunavut Employees Union, which represent the largest number of employees, has indicated that they would like to reopen negotiations for the current agreement which expires March 31, 2000. The other union, the Federation of Nunavut Teachers, has already given notice to begin the collective bargaining process. Their current agreement expires August 31, 1999. We will examine with the unions more innovative ways of compensating employees. However, we must be aware that the outcome of these negotiations will have an impact on our current and future budgets.

Key to meeting Nunavut's challenges will be how to manage all the future pressures for funding from limited financial resources.

Questions will have to be asked about how best to do things. The government can not answer these questions alone. Input will be sought from the people of Nunavut. Together we will make the necessary decisions in the best interest of our land and its people.

If we incorporate the knowledge of our people, particularly our elders and community leaders, we can establish a path that is right.

Our task, as Government, will be to work with the people in all our communities to find the best way to move forward. This will take time but we will move forward. Knowing where we spend money now will have an influence on where we set priorities in the future. Doing something new will mean changing the way programs and services are currently provided.

Before we make any changes to our programs and services we must know the impact that such changes would have on the people of Nunavut. We must be mindful of Inuit Qaujimaqutuqangit (IQ) in what and how we do things.

Whatever the situation, change will only be introduced after the people of Nunavut have been consulted. The issue is not whether changes will be necessary, but rather when and what changes will be implemented.

Establishing Our Priorities

One of the most challenging tasks for any government is to identify priorities that matter to people and would make a difference in their lives. Our Government will address this challenge in a manner befitting the efforts that have led to the creation of our territory.

There are three broad goals for the Government of Nunavut - establishing a more appropriate and better government; creating healthy communities, families, and individuals; and becoming more self-reliant.

With regard to better and more appropriate government, we will consult widely and listen to our people. The people of Nunavut must be able to identify with all orders of government - municipal, territorial and federal. Our government will become more accessible, less complex and more effective.

We will work hard at improving our social programs. Government will help provide the means for people and communities to make meaningful improvements in their daily lives. Our approach will be wide and varied – from improvements to social housing, to better education programs, and more effective health programs. Again, we will listen to our people to tailor a Nunavut strategy for developing healthier communities, healthier families, and healthier individuals to overcome our social challenges.

To improve the daily lives of our people we also will need to become more self-reliant. This will mean more employment opportunities, it will mean investments in education and training of our human resources, it will mean investments in improving the overall health and well-being of our citizens. We will have to work closely with NTI and other organizations to foster an atmosphere of trust and cooperation.

We will have to get more from our resources. This means using our present resources wisely while pursuing new resources. We are committed to the negotiation of an agreement with the federal government that would enable Nunavut to share in the prosperity of its natural resources. Such an agreement would be a bold step forward, enabling our government to be more self sufficient and less reliant on federal transfers in the future.

Establishing our priorities will enable Nunavut to have a successful beginning. In mid June after the budget session, there will be a Caucus Strategic Planning Retreat to deal with setting priorities as another step towards change.

Conclusions

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have presented a Budget that will not only ensure the early success of our new territory, but also will provide a strong foundation on which we can build.

The needs of Nunavummiut are great, and they will be met. Like the journey undertaken by the Founders of Nunavut, we will need some time. We are committed to orderly change to ensure that our policies as well as programs and services will best meet the needs of our people. We will consult, we will listen and we will initiate change, change that will have long lasting benefit to all Nunavummiut.

>>Applause

Speaker (Mr. Barnabas) (interpretation) Thank you Mr. Ng. Back to the orders of the day. Ministers statements. Ministers Statements. Item Number 4. Members statements. Members statements. Mr. Nutarak.

Item 4: Members' Statements

Members' Statements 19 - 1 (2): Appreciation of Finance Minister

Mr. Nutarak: (Interpretation) Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister of Finance for making his budget report for the year 99/2000. I would just like to state my appreciation.

Speaker (Mr. Barnabas) (interpretation) Thank you Mr. Nutarak. Mr. Tootoo

Members' Statements 20 - 1 (2): Appreciation of Iqaluit Co-op Steering Committee and Qikiqtaaluk Corporation

Mr. Tootoo: Mr. Speaker, as many members may know, Arctic Co-operatives had their Annual General Meeting here in Iqaluit. The Canadian Co-operative Association will also be having their Annual General Meeting here in early June. Most communities in Nunavut have a co-operative in their community which is a locally owned and operated

business. They operate in areas such as retail stores, hotels and a variety of other services. They play a significant role in the economies of their communities.

The principles by which they operate go hand in hand with the vision of Nunavut. People of a community working together to achieve a common goal or purpose. There has long been a desire for a Co-op here in Iqaluit.

I would like at this time to acknowledge the efforts of Matthew Spence, Mary Ellen Thomas, Hugh Lloyd and other members of the Iqaluit Co-op Steering Committee. The members are working hard to re-establish a Co-op here in Iqaluit. I would further like to recognize the support that they have received in their efforts from the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Ms. Thompson.

Members' Statements 21 - 1 (2): Balanced Budget

Hon. Manitok Thompson (interpretation): At this time, during the budget address by Minister Ng, I would like to say that I'm very proud that he was able to make an announcement. As you probably know Mr. Speaker, we had a hard time with G.N.W.T. Legislative Assembly, because of the cut backs and how it effected communities in the Northwest Territory and Nunavut. We worked very hard for the creation of the Nunavut Government and to start off without a deficit.

With this in mind Mr. Speaker I'm very proud to say that if we can keep to our budget and if we work hard to keep within our budgets as a Legislative Assembly, we will start off with a clean state at the beginning of Legislative Assembly. We have to keep in mind that of course, we're going to be going through hard times trying to keep within our budget, because of course there are a lot of needs and desires that we'd like to see within our Departments.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to say that we are able to start off without a deficit and of course our elders and community residents have told us to keep an eye on our budgets, so that we can keep within our budgets with our Departments. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation) : Thank you Ms. Thompson. Members Statements. Mr. Puqiqnak.

Members' Statements 22 - 1 (2): Funding For Artists and Carvers

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank the Minister of Finance for introducing our Budget for Nunavut. At this time during the Budget address by Minister Ng, we were told that there is 1.8 million dollars that will be used for the Arts Committees at the community level. On behalf of the carvers and artists in the communities, I would like to say thank you and I'm hoping to see more creation of local arts, because they are very beautiful and artistic. The true

carvers of Nunavut are recognized world wide and Mr. Speaker, I would like to see this go properly and I hope to see more dollars given to the arts members of our communities. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation) : Thank you Mr. Puqiqnak. Members Statement. Mr. McLean.

Members' Statements 23 - 1 (2): Congratulations on Birth

Mr. McLean: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time today to ask all my colleagues to join me in congratulating the first Nunavut Baby born to Faith Mautaritnaaq of Baker Lake, a boy Kirk Michael Mautaritnaaq born April 18, 1999, coincidentally it's the same birth date as my wife. Thank you Mr. Speaker

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you Mr. McLean. On behalf of your constituency the Assembly will send a card to that Mother and Father.

Speaker: Members Statement. Mr. O'Brien.

Members' Statements 24 - 1 (2): Congratulations to Graduates

Mr. O'Brien: Qujannamiik: Thank you Mr. Speaker, I'd like to Acknowledge and congratulate the seven individuals from own community in Arviat that recently Graduated from a 2 year program at Arctic College, which at this point qualified as Aboriginal Language Specialist. The individuals that recently graduated are, Mark Kalluak, Maggie Ishalook, Donald Uluadluak, Henry Isluanik, Louie Angalik, Elizabeth Nibgoarsie, and Rachel Gibbons. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you Mr. O'Brien. On behalf of the Legislative Assembly, we'll send a congratulatory card for those graduates. (interpretation) Members Statements, going back to the orders of the day Item # 5. Returns to Oral Questions. Item # 6, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Arvaluk.

Item 6: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. James Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Baffin Divisional Board of Education Members who are here in the Gallery.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Arvaluk. Please welcome Members of the Baffin Divisional Board of Education, because I used to be a Member of their Board. Recognition of the visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Arvaluk.

Hon. James Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize the Sergeant at Arms. These students of the Sergeant at Arms, Simon Nattaq, they are in Grade 8, he was supposed to have taken them out for cultural inclusion training, but of course Simon Nattaq had to be here to help out with the proceedings. But he did invite the Grade 8 students. I would like them to stand up, so they can be recognized.

>>Applause.

Speaker (interpretation): Please Welcome. To the orders of the day. I would also like to remind you, because we're all new, we have to state the name of each person that we're recognizing, we cannot make two recognitions at the same time. Mr. Premier and myself would like to recognize a person who has been a member at the negotiations of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. He was with us for a long time in the Baffin Region. The president of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association Pauloosie Keyootak is here, please stand up so we can recognize you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to our Session, Mr. Keyootak, welcome. Recognition of visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Iqqittuq.

Mr. Iqqittuq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. They are members of my constituency, two of them. I believe they are Members of the Baffin Divisional Board of Education and the Baffin Health Board. I would like to recognize the two members Timuk Qamukaaq and Joe Ataguttaaluk. Please stand up so we can recognize you.

>>Applause.

Speaker (interpretation): Please welcome to our meeting. Recognition of visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize Sanikiluaq resident Walter Audla. Please stand up so we can recognize you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Please welcome Mr. Audla. Recognition of visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize a member of my community and also from my constituency. Mr. Jose Enuarak and his colleague there, please stand up so we can recognize you.

>>Applause.

Speaker (interpretation): Please welcome to our meeting. Mr. Havioyak.

Hon. Donald Havioyak (interpretation): For myself I would like to recognize a person from my constituency, John Kumak, who is also an Inuinnaqtuun interpreter.

Speaker (interpretation): Please welcome Interpreter Kumak. Recognition of visitors in the Gallery. Ms. Thompson.

Hon. Manitok Thompson (interpretation): I would like to recognize a long time resident of Salliq who use to be here when I was a child. Nana Curley who now lives in Hall Beach.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Please welcome to our meeting. Recognition of visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Puqiqnak.

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Since Kitikmeot is very far away I don't have anybody from Kitikmeot area, but I would like you to recognize Philip Woos, who is one of our translators originally from the Kitikmeot area. We have Betty Brewster, who will be one our interpreters originally from the Kitikmeot area.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Puqiqnak. Betty, please welcome. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: I'd like to recognize two elders from my Constituency, Inuapik and Iqaluk I'd like to stand and recognize them. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you please welcome to the elders of Iqaluit and I would also like to welcome Mr. Erkidjuk who is usually here during our proceedings. Please recognize the visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Akasuk

Mr. Akasuk (interpretation):. Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize people from my Constituency the Member of the Baffin Divisional Board of Education, Simigak Suvega and Mr. Mangitak.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Akasuk. Welcome to the members who stood up. Recognition to the visitors in the Gallery. Ovide Alakannuark.

Mr. Alakannuark (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize all the people in the Gallery, whether they're youth, elders or middle aged, because of course they are all at the same level as myself. Thank you Mr. Speaker

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Alakannuark. Recognition of the visitors in the Gallery. Jobie, Mr. Nutarak, I apologize.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize David Qamaniq from the Baffin Divisional Board of Education if he would stand up please.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Nutarak. Welcome David. Recognition visitors in the Gallery, Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I don't have anybody from my home community, but since everybody's doing it, I do see two individuals that should be recognized. Dan Cain of Canadian North, and Gilbert Normandeau of First Air. I don't know their titles, but they're sort of like the grand poobas of their companies.

>> Laughter. Applause.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien, welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of the visitors in the Gallery. Return to our orders of the day, Item # 7.

Before we start Oral questions, I wish to inform the members that yesterday when people were asking questions we cannot make statements that concern one person in particular. If we're going to be asking a question concerning one person, I'm going to stop the question. I have been a Member of the Legislative Assembly for a number of years now, but I have to remind myself that we cannot ask questions to a Minister who is not present.

For example, yesterday I named the Ministers that were not present. And of course I made a mistake yesterday when I let the questions proceed to a member that wasn't present. If you have a question you can direct the question to the Premier if the particular Minister is not present in the House. I just wanted to make the clarification. We'll return to Item # 7 Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Item 7: Oral Questions

Question 15 - 1 (2): Affirmative Action Policy

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Premier and just wondering if the Premier can give us an update as to what the status is on our Affirmative Action Policy. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): The question is directed to Premier Mr. Okalik. If you would stand up please.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): The question is for the Minister of Human Resources. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Premier. Kelvin Ng

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker the question relates to the Inuit Employment Plan and is one of the things we are following up on. We've got the report from the Government of Northwest Territories now, and the Government of Nunavut through the Department of Human Resources will be working with our partner in trying to formulate the Inuit employment plan for proceeding on. Of course our goal is to maximize the employment of individuals from the Nunavut area. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Ng. Second question Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Speaker. I realize that we are very new into our mandate here. I wonder if the Minister could tell us exactly, or roughly when we could expect the policy and the details.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Ng

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all we have to assess what's there and take an assessment now on the levels of the employees throughout the Nunavut public sector. That is on the stream and so I can say that we'll probably have more information by the time the budget goes before the House. I don't know specifically right now, I can't address the time frame, because of course every body knows all the Departments have been right now focussing on trying to get the main estimates done to give all the Members an opportunity to deal with the overall financing of Nunavut in this current year. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions Mr. Tootoo.

Question 16 - 1 (2): Status of Memorandum of Understanding with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Premier. As the chair of the Standing Committee on Ajaugtiit which has responsibilities for issues related to the Land Claim, I was very pleased to hear in the Premiers' Sessional Address that the Government is working towards signing the Memorandum of Understanding with Nunavut Tunngavik. I would like to ask the Premier, if he could advise the house today as to the status of these discussions. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you Mr. Speaker. We are very committed to meeting regularly with NTI. We received correspondence from NTI not too long ago about trying to initiate an agreement with them on how we are going to deal with each other. We are trying to work on a response. Currently they have a political accord with the prior government, the Northwest Territories Government, which will expire on June 30. We are hoping to conclude an Agreement prior to that time. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Premier. Second question Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Thank you, would the Premier commit to providing a draft to the Standing Committee on Ajaqtiit for review and input prior to the agreement being signed. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Well I don't know how exactly we can conclude it. I don't have the time line right now and depending on when the Committee is sitting, we don't want to hold up the agreement if we have to wait for the Ajaqtiit Committee and if they're not around that might delay a signing of the agreement. So I don't know how we can proceed with that but we'll make efforts to provide what we can. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Premier. I think that Mr. Tootoo's question has been answered, do you have any additional questions? Thank you. Mr. Irqittuq.

Question 17 - 1 (2): Required Qualifications for Government Positions

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I didn't hear you properly the first time. Mr. Speaker I would like to ask a question to the Minister of Finance. Regarding the new jobs that are being created by the Nunavut Government and new hires that will come into play. What kind of qualifications are you looking for in the new hires that you are hiring? Are you going to require them to have a bunch of credentials?

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Irqittuq. Premier, if you prefer to answer I will allow you to answer. I know the question is more directed to the Minister of Human Resources.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Mr. Speaker, I believe the question is more directed to the Minister of Human Resources.

Speaker: Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. There's a lot of different positions throughout government of course, and the qualifications for each job are different. I think what's important to recognize probably, and again when the Department of Human Resources comes before a Committee of the Whole with the budget, we can probably get in to some more detail about what the expectations are, but I think what's important to recognize is not so much the qualifications that we're looking at as the ability of an individual to be able to carry out the functions within the job. That's the main focus of what we are trying to do in order to expand the work force to be more representative of the people that government serves. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Ng. Mr. Irqittuq do you have any additional questions? Thank you. Oral questions Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Question 18 - 1 (2): Construction of Road to Keewatin

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Premier. The road that we were talking about yesterday in Keewatin. My question; is that road viable for all of Nunavut, would it benefit all of the residents of Nunavut?

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. We have no highway whatsoever in Nunavut from Southern Canada. I think that once we have a highway anywhere in Nunavut I think that it can benefit all the residents of Nunavut, in terms of cost savings. I think it can benefit everybody in Nunavut.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Premier. Mr. Iqaqrialu second question.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Also my supplementary question will be that the building of this highway is going to be very expensive and there's going have to be feasibility studies done prior to the construction of the road. The funds that will be expended for the study, would that come from Nunavut Government budget?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation) : Yes thank you Mr. Speaker. I cannot answer the details at this time as we are still in the preliminary stages of discussions. First of all we will be talking to people who will be directly impacted by the construction of the road, and we're still having preliminary discussions with the Federal Government. We don't know the details at this time.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Premier. Do you have supplementary questions Mr. Iqaqrialu? Thank you, oral questions, Mr. Kattuk.

Question 19 - 1 (2): Federal Firearms Control Legislation

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation) : Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to the Premier. As a Hunter in Nunavut, all the hunters are experiencing difficulties in terms of trying to obtain firearms for hunting. My question is what is the government planning to do with the new gun law?

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): We are still trying to come up with a plan, what kind of action we are going to be taking about the gun law. Yukon, NWT and Alberta went before the courts to challenge the legislation. The bill is currently before the Supreme Court of Canada and we are still exploring different ways of approaching this new law.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Premier. Mr. Kattuk do you have any additional questions? No. Oral questions, Mr. Alakannuark.

Question 20 - 1 (2): Promoting the Sale of Furs

Mr. Alakannuark (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to Sustainable Development. What is your Department doing about trying to raise the prices of fur, seal skins, fox furs, etc.? Is your Department doing anything to promote the sale and better prices for furs? Thank you

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Kilabuk

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker and regarding especially seal skins. Our Department in the coming year will be working on that and we are trying to introduce uniform pricing for all furs and skins. Our Department has been working very hard to restore prices for fur and we are committed to continuing this line of work. We want to keep working on that but we also have to look at different ways how we're going to do that, so I cannot provide you with any firm plans at this time.

Speaker (interpretation): Do you have any other questions Mr. Alakannuark? Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Puqiqnak.

Question 21 - 1 (2): Funding for Outpost Camps

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Sustainable Development. My question has mainly to do with the outpost camps. The funding has been cut for outpost camps and now that we have a Nunavut Government, is the Government going to be providing more funding for the out post camps? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Puqiqnak. Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation) : Thank you Mr. Speaker. The question has to do with outpost camps. We're talking about small outpost camps and the funding that was identified and it's still being carried out. My Department is currently looking at the program and how we can improve upon that. So we are currently looking at that and once that work has been done, we'll give you the information.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Kilabuk. Mr. Puqiqnak. Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 22 - 1 (2): Status of Legislative Assembly Building

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker my question is to the Minister to responsible for DPW. When is the Legislative Assembly building going to be completed?

Speaker: Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Ms Thompson.

Hon. Manitok Thompson: (interpretation) Yes, thank you Mr. Speaker, the new building is not yet ready, and I think we all know that. I don't think it is going to be ready until next fall. We may be able to use it in the Fall Session. We have to make some changes to the design of the building. There is still some major work to be done in that building, so I expect that we might be able to move in at the end of September or early October.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Ms. Thompson. Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can tell the House whether or not we are actually paying lease payments on this building now.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Ms. Thompson.

Hon. Manitok Thompson: (Interpretation). Thank you Mr. Speaker. I will have to find that information and pass it on to the House.

Speaker: Thank you Minister Thompson. Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure this is appropriate or not, but I wonder if it would be possible for members to actually see the leasing arrangements for the assembly building.

Speaker: She took it as notice, so she will answer you when she has time. Ok? Oral questions. Oral questions. Oral questions. Orders of the Day. Item Eight. Written Questions. Written Questions. Item 9, Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Item 10, Budget Address. Replies to Budget Address. Item 12, Petitions. Petitions.

Item 13, Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Item 13, Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Item 14, Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 15, (Translation) Tabling of Documents. Tabling of Documents. Item 16, Notices of Motions. Notices of Motions. Yes thank you, Item 17 Notices of Motions for first reading of Bills. Item 17, Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 18, Motions. Motions. Item 19, First Reading of Bills. Mr. Ng.

Item 19: First Reading of Bills

Bill 1 - Appropriation Act 99/2000

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Iqaluit West, that Bill One, Appropriation Act 99/2000 be read for the first time. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ng. Item 20, Second Reading of Bills. Mr. Ng.

Mr. Ng: Point of Order. Mr. Speaker I believe you missed calling for the vote on Item 19, First Reading of Bills. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Ng. Those in favour of the Motion, First Reading of Appropriation Act 1999/2000. Motion is carried.

Item 20, Second Reading of Bills. Item 20 Second Reading of Bills. Mr. Ng.

Item 20: Second Reading of Bills

Bill 1 - Appropriation Act 99/2000

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member from Pangnirtung that Bill One, Appropriation Act 99/2000 be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the Government of Nunavut to make operations and maintenance expenditures and capital expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31/2000. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ng. Your motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Questions. Question is being called. All those in favour? Motion is carried.

Item 20. Second Reading of Bills. Yes thank you. Bill One Appropriation Act 1999/2000 has had it's second reading. Thank you. Item 21, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. I would ask Mr. Puqiqnak to take the Chair. Thank you.

Item 21: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairperson (Mr. Puqiqnak): Thank you. The committee will now come to order. We have Bill One approved, Appropriation Act 1999/2000 for consideration. What is the wish of the Committee. Mr. O'Brien?

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair it is the wish of the Committee that we report progress.

Chairperson: There is a motion to report progress. All those in favour? (interpretation) All those opposed? (interpretation ends) I will now report progress.

Item 22: Reports of the Committee of the Whole

Speaker: Mr. Puqiqnak.

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation) Mr. Speaker your committee has been considering Bill 1 and would like to report progress, and Mr. Speaker I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Puqignak. All those in favour. Motion is carried. Orders of the Day, Mr. Clerk.

Item 23: Orders of the Day

Mr. Quirke: Mr. Speaker, at three o'clock this afternoon, at the Navigator Board Room, Regular Caucus Meeting,

Orders of the Day for Monday May 17th.

1. Prayer
2. Minister's Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Return to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Return to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notice of Motions
16. Notice of Motions For First Reading of Bills
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills

19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bills and Other matters,
- Bill One, Appropriation Act 1990/2000.

20. Report of the Committee of the Whole

21. Orders of the Day.

Thank you.

Speaker: (Interpretation) Thank you Mr. Clerk. I now recess the House until Monday at One thirty in the afternoon.

>>Assembly adjourned 11.20 am.

