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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2000****MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

MR. ROLAND: Heavenly Father, may your spirit and guidance be in us as we work for the benefit of all our people, for justice in our land and for constant recognition of the dignity and aspirations of those whom we serve. Amen.

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated. I understand his honour, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, is prepared to enter the Chamber to give assent to bills. Mr. Clerk, could you attend to and escort in the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories?

ASSENT TO BILLS

COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. Dan Marion): Please be seated. Mr. Speaker, Premier, honourable Members, before I assent to bills today, I wish to advise the House that I will be sending a letter of recognition to the Dogrib Translation Committee. This committee was set up with the object of translating portions of the Holy Scriptures, in particular the New Testament, into the Dogrib language.

This important work required the close cooperation between the committee, St. Michael's Parish Council and Wycliffe Bible Translators Society, represented by Jacob Feenstra. Apart from the religious purpose, this document represents a substantial contribution to the preservation of the Dogrib language. The Dogrib Translation Committee has also produced a Dogrib Dictionary, which is of equal historic importance.

As the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bill, Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1999-2000. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 11-14(2): International Women's Day and Week**

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, March 8, 2000, is International Women's Day, and the beginning of International Women's Week. As the House will not be in Session during that period, I would like to take this opportunity to express this government's appreciation for the many contributions that women have made in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, International Women's Day was first recognized to highlight the struggles of working women, and to promote universal suffrage for women. Over the years, International Women's Day has come to be a time for reflection and for women and men to celebrate women's ongoing commitment to improving the quality of life for all.

In the Northwest Territories, women have played a significant role in the social, economic and political changes that have taken place. They are working hard to remove the obstacles that have limited the choices and opportunities for women to be full and equal partners in today's society.

Mr. Speaker, the role of women has been a catalyst. They have initiated the move toward community empowerment and self-empowerment by producing volumes of work that address all aspects of social, political and economic equality. The production of videos and public service announcements and the completion of reports that address issues of self-esteem, human rights, violence against women and children, women's health, family well-being and women in politics complement the work of governments and other special interest groups. Improving the quality of life is everyone's goal, and these initiatives help to achieving this important objective.

Mr. Speaker, northern women in particular must be commended for their achievements and we, as government, must continue to support them in their goals and aspirations. We can do this by reaffirming our commitment, which is to "actively support and encourage the participation of women on an equal basis with men in all aspects of society in the Northwest Territories".

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to thank all women's organizations for their continued dedication to their communities and their families. A number of communities throughout the North will be celebrating International Women's Week and I encourage all Members to participate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Minister's Statement 12-14(2): 2000 Arctic Winter Games

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today about the 2000 Arctic Winter Games. The Games are being held from March 5th to 11th, 2000, in Whitehorse, Yukon.

Since 1970, the Arctic Winter Games have been bringing young people from the circumpolar region together every two years for a celebration of sport and culture. We are proud to participate in this event again this year.

The Northwest Territories is sending over 300 athletes, coaches, cultural delegates and mission staff to Whitehorse. Team NWT will join nearly 1700 other people representing Alaska, Yukon, northern Alberta, Nunavut, Greenland, Nunavik and the Russian provinces of Magadan and Chukotka. This is the first time since 1976 the Inuit of Northern Quebec will participate in the Arctic Winter Games. It also marks the first time that Nunavut will participate as its own territory.

Mr. Speaker, Team NWT members were selected through regional trials held in a variety of Northwest Territories communities from November to January. From the regional trials, athletes moved on to the territorial trials held earlier this month in Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Hay River, Yellowknife, Dettah and Inuvik. A total of 776 athletes from 24 communities participated in the territorial trials. Of that number, 527 participants were from outside Yellowknife, with 231 coming from the Inuvik region alone.

I would like to thank Sport North, the territorial sport organizations, regional coordinators and the countless volunteers who organized the regional and territorial trials process. Their work makes it possible for young Northwest Territories athletes to take part in events like this. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs will continue to work with these partners to ensure that young athletes from across the entire Northwest Territories have the opportunity to participate in sport and recreation programs.

Mr. Speaker, the Arctic Winter Games is a celebration of northern culture and achievement. Our delegates to the Games will share in friendly competitions and cross-cultural exchanges with youth from across the North. I am confident that our young people will benefit for years to come from the experiences and friendships they will find at the Arctic Winter Games.

Premier Stephen Kakfwi will be attending the official opening ceremonies for the Arctic Winter Games on March 5, 2000. The Honourable Roger Allen, Minister responsible for Youth and I will also attend the Games. I invite all Members to join us in wishing the best of luck to Team NWT and all the participants in the 2000 Arctic Winter Games. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister Joe Handley.

Minister's Statement 13-14(2): Northern Leaders Forum

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to speak about the Northern Leaders Forum that will be held in Whitehorse on March 4, 2000. Premier Okalik from Nunavut, Government Leader Piers McDonald from the Yukon and Premier Kakfwi will meet on that day to discuss further action on issues that are common to all three of the northern territories.

The Northern Cooperation Accord was signed in August, 1999. The accord outlines the principles under which our three territories cooperate and some of the areas in which mutual benefits can result from working in tandem. The accord, however, only captures in writing what has traditionally been done by Northerners for many years. Although the three territories each have their own unique circumstances, Northerners have worked together for many years, and on numerous issues. Northerners understand Northerners.

This upcoming meeting provides another chance for the three northern leaders to exchange ideas and set priorities. The issue of governance is common to all three territories. The Yukon has been working toward assuming the responsibilities being devolved from the federal government. Nunavut has had almost one full year as a new government in a new territory. Here in the Northwest Territories, we are advancing land claims and self-government and are solidly supporting the government to government process. Although the three territories are dealing with different approaches to governance, it is a common issue to all of us.

Given our mutual status as territories, all three northern governments deal with the federal government on fiscal issues in a manner distinct from the provinces. That relationship is a critical one, given escalating costs and mounting pressures on Northern budgets. We look to each other to learn what advances have been made in each individual jurisdiction that may benefit the others. As well, economic development is of critical concern to all of us.

Within our own country, the three northern territories have much to gain when common issues with common positions can be brought to forums such as the Western Premiers' Conference and Annual Premiers' Conference.

More globally, all three northern territories must cope with a changing and shrinking world. Climate changes are showing their effects on the North. We need to address that. The North forms a large part of the circumpolar world. The activities and developments of our international neighbours are becoming increasingly important to us, for instance, environmental concerns, transportation patterns, shared economic development and the role of Canada in a North that includes other countries.

Mr. Kakfwi is looking forward to meeting with his fellow territorial leaders to discuss these issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Reading Achievements of Rae-Edzo Students

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to acknowledge an achievement that is going to be celebrated in Rae this week. Two hundred and fifty students and staff at Elizabeth Mackenzie School in Rae-Edzo have been dropping everything and reading for 15 minutes every single school day since the start of the current school year.

This Friday, March 3, 2000, the school will be celebrating the students' and staffs' accomplishments. They have read for over 250,000 minutes. That is more than a quarter of a million minutes of reading.

This 15-minute daily program, called DEAR, is a small part of the Dogrib Community Services Board's plan to focus on improving reading achievement throughout its schools in the Dogrib region.

A part of the celebration will be a feast for the students in the school gym. The feast will open with a traditional drum prayer, and elders will sit with the students to enjoy the feast together.

I would like to send congratulations to the students and staff of Elizabeth Mackenzie School. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce Rae-Edzo Customer Appreciation Trips

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on this last day of this Session, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight something very positive that is being done by the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce, under the able direction of its president, Ms. Tracy St. Denis and her hardworking board members.

On Thursday, March 2, 2000, dozens of the chamber members will be travelling to Rae-Edzo on a customer appreciation trip. A bus has been arranged to transfer the members on the infamous Highway No. 3 to Rae-Edzo. There will be a reception hosted by the chamber and a presentation to the residents of Rae-Edzo.

The main objective of the trip, Mr. Speaker, is for the chamber members to go to the community and show firsthand how much they appreciate the business our friends in the surrounding communities bring to our city. It may be the chamber members will get an earful as to what we can do better. In the end, I am sure this will be a good thing for everyone involved.

I know the business community in our city is very aware that our friends across the North spend money on a wide array of goods and services in Yellowknife. The residents of Rae-Edzo are some of our best customers. Mr. Speaker, the goods and services include professional services such as hiring a lawyer, accountant, or an architect, or more simple things like eating in our many restaurants, taking in a movie, or buying many different things in our stores, both small and big, including, as Mr. Lafferty informed me, fuel for residential homes.

I can also advise you, Mr. Speaker, that the chamber will be making four trips this year to the communities surrounding the city of Yellowknife. I would like to commend the Chamber of Commerce for taking an active role in this way. I am not able to make this trip, as I will be tied up in committee meetings for the next two days. If I may, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of all Members representing Yellowknife, including yourself, to say thank you to our friends in Rae-Edzo and all other surrounding communities near and far for buying our goods and services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement on Greetings To Television Viewers

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This may be an unusual Member's statement, however, I would like to advise my fellow colleagues that many ex-Northerners watch us regularly on APTN.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of our Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, I would like to extend our greetings and well wishes to the following families in northern Alberta who frequently watch our proceedings during question period:

- Mr. And Mrs. Gordon Norrie of High Level;
- Mr. Bob Milner and Lena Malegana of Fort Vermillion;
- Mr. Floyd Sydney and Edna Elias of High Level;
- Mr. Art Bingham and his wife Deanna of High Level;
- Mr. Pat Gauchier of Paddle Prairie;
- Bill and Kathy Crozier of High Level; and
- Jack and Holly Fletcher of Rocky Lane.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement on South Slave Highways Deficiencies

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in this, the last day of this particular sitting, I would like to raise a constituency issue. It is in line with some of the discussion earlier on that dealt with highways and the highway strategy. The fact, as my colleague for Mackenzie Delta pointed out, not all roads lead to Yellowknife.

There are many roads in the Northwest Territories that need attention. In the South Slave, there are two pieces of road that are in dire need of attention. I am specifically referring to the section of Highway No. 5 from Fort Smith to Hay River. My colleague for Tu Nedhe has a section of road from Fort Resolution to the Pine Point junction. Both need repair and upgrading.

As we look at the money and the strategy, we have to keep our mind on the whole Territory. As the Minister responsible for Transportation mentioned the other day, every section of road you drive on is the most important one. For the people of the South Slave, the road they drive on to Hay River points south and is very important to them. It has had its share of accidents as well. I think we could make the same case the Yellowknife MLAs are making. It is due to the condition of the road. It could also benefit from extra attention.

In my opinion, if you upgrade these roads to the proper level and chip-seal them, you have longer term cost savings. I know the community of Fort Smith and the residents of Tu Nedhe have been pushing to have their roads looked at. I will be raising this issue again, as I did repeatedly through the 13th Assembly. I know money is tight, but I definitely want to ensure the people of Thebacha have their concerns on the record. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement on Impact of Public Service Reductions

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the many issues that arose as I campaigned was the government had already stripped its workforce to the bare minimum. Mr. Speaker, the people I talked with thought that any more cuts to staff would impact the ability of the departments to deliver the programming.

Mr. Speaker, the people thought that, if anything, the government had already cut programming too close to the bone. This becomes apparent when you look at the one example of the cuts addition services received over the life of the last Assembly. We may have gone too far.

As the Member with possibly the most experience within the labour movement, Mr. Speaker, it is natural that I would be expected to take the lead on labour issues emanating from this side of the House and would become the contact point for the Union of Northern Workers.

I understand the pressures the uncertainty over whether there will be any further reductions in government employees is placing on my former brothers and sisters in the Union of Northern Workers. Mr. Speaker, it is hard, in fact impossible, to plan your life if you are not sure whether you will have a job two or three months down the road.

The Union has been looking for assurances there would be no further layoffs to the Northwest Territories hardworking public service. Mr. Speaker, the Union had thought they had the support for no reductions in the public service, as a result of a poll they took of candidates during the election.

In that poll, Mr. Speaker, the Union asked the candidates whether they supported cutting government jobs to balance the budget. The majority of the successful candidates the Union managed to contact on both sides of the House, gave a simple "no" answer. A couple of current MLAs qualified their answer by saying not without further study on the issue.

The point I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is that this promise to the electorate should have made it relatively easy for me to shop a non-binding motion to my fellow MLAs on no more cuts to the civil service for the upcoming fiscal year. This was not the case.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure my constituents I have not forgotten the promises I made. I will fight any further reductions to the public service.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to encourage the government to make a statement reassuring the public service sector as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Renewed Interest in Oil and Gas Industry

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have heard many announcements in the last couple of days regarding the oil and gas potential that exists in the Beaufort

Delta. In the last couple of years, lands have opened up. Currently, Petro Canada is doing a seismic project. The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation has opened lands in the Inuvialuit settlement region. The Gwich'in have submitted letters to people in Ottawa to look at doing the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to travel to Calgary to meet with the oil and gas industry. I met with Embridge Resources, BP Amoco, Paramount, Trans-Canada Pipelines, Ranger Oil, Petro Canada, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, and West Coast Energy.

One thing I discovered during these meetings is the inadequacy of information that flows between the Northwest Territories and people in Calgary who do not understand the regulatory process in the North, nor the claims that have been settled. They do not understand the demands the industry has to meet, especially in the area of having trained people and infrastructure in place, so their costs will make it more realistic to produce and drill in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I found the industry is willing to come back to the North. They want to make a presence in the North. They see a potential in the North. At the present time, there are very few lands left in Alberta to put out for leases. Due to that, the industry is looking northward. I think it is critical that this government refocuses its priorities of developing the oil and gas industry. In the long term, the oil and gas industry will be generating in the area of 1600 jobs because of these developments, compared to 600 jobs for one diamond mine.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development about what this government is doing to stimulate the oil and gas industry in the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement on Congratulations to Yellowknife Dog Musher, Grant Beck

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and honourable colleagues, in light of recent accomplishments by Canada's national sports organizations, Melanie Turgeon with the National Women's Downhill Ski Team winning gold and the Canadian National Soccer Team winning an international tournament, both of which has received national and international media attention, I wish to recognize and congratulate one of the Northwest Territories' own – dog musher Grant Beck – on his recent victory in Spain.

This Yellowknife resident competed with 47 dog mushing teams in a 200 mile trek through the Pyrenees Mountains. The event was the 2000 Pirena Stage Race. It took 15 days to complete the course.

Mr. Beck and his team came in first place, nearly eight minutes ahead of the second place team from Norway. Mr. Beck put Canada in first place on the world stage of international competition.

Mr. Beck has been racing dog teams for more than 30 years, since he was six years old. It is a fine family tradition. His two brothers and cousins are also dog mushers. Training for this race began last April. Mr. Beck put in 2,500 miles just to prepare for Spain.

During the 2000 Pirena, Mr. Beck raced with a dozen Alaskan huskies, often through very steep hills and high velocity winds. Mr. Beck says his next challenge will be the Iditarod in a few years.

This is good, as the Northwest Territories' only contestant in this event, Dave Olson from Hoarfrost River, announced yesterday that he is retiring. I want to acknowledge the great contribution Mr. Beck has made to the sport of dog mushing in the Northwest Territories and throughout the world. I wish him well in his next goal, to complete the Iditarod. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement on Release of the Federal Budget

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my comment this afternoon is related to the release of the federal budget for the year 2000-2001. I must confess some envy when I consider the full range of choices the Government of Canada had when they were establishing their budget. These choices are currently not available to the governments in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, Canada used the fiscal choices of strategic investments in new programs, enhancing existing programs, reducing the tax burden, targeting tax cuts to those most in need, and reducing the overall government debt. In fact, they were able to use all of these options in shaping their budget. These are tools Members of this House can only dream about at the present time.

The Government of Canada used many of these tools to deliver a budget that benefits Canadians, Northerners included. Businesses, students and families will all see some benefit. The budget seems to have failed to recognize, Mr. Speaker, at least one of the immediate needs of the Northwest Territories – new infrastructure development to improve our roads and inject other new capital into the Northwest Territories.

All northern leaders need to resolve to unify their actions and bring control of northern resources home. We need to focus on the signal given last month by Mr. Robert Nault, the Minister for DIAND, that Ottawa is prepared to work to that end.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day when our own Minister responsible for Finance can rise in this House and deliver a budget that uses all of the fiscal tools available to other governments in this country. We want the independence to do the right thing for the people of the Northwest Territories. It is time we had options and choices similar to other governments in this country. It is time for the Northern Accord. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Arctic Winter Games Team Selection Process

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week I made a statement regarding the Arctic Winter Games that seems to have sparked a great deal of interest both inside and outside of this House.

I listened with great interest as my colleagues rose and spoke of the impact the Arctic Winter Games had on their lives. For them, the experience was positive. It created a sense of pride and fostered lifelong friendships. This is an experience that every athlete in the Northwest Territories should have equal access to.

Mr. Speaker, I could stand here and say warm and fuzzy things about the games. My son participated with pride in the 1996 games in Eagle River, Alaska. My daughter will be participating this year in Whitehorse. I know they will remember this for the rest of their lives.

However, Mr. Speaker, there is a glaring omission from this year's Arctic Winter Games team. That omission is athletes from 17 Northwest Territories communities. Less than half of the communities of the Northwest Territories will be represented on the Arctic Winter Games team this year. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Sahtu region does not have any representation. Are we to believe there are no athletes in the Sahtu?

Further, when I look at the different sports participating at the Games, I note that some of the sports are fielding teams consisting mainly of athletes from the larger communities.

Mr. Speaker, I make these points because I am convinced there is a flaw in the Arctic Winter Games team selection process. The flaws are both at the support level and at the Arctic Winter Games trials level. Many of the communities do not have the recreational facilities required for some of the sports in the Games. At other times, the selection process is defective and does not provide for the fair selection of athletes.

I would like to remind the Members of a debate in the 13th Assembly. The debate was over a hockey team from Fort Smith. The team won every game of the tournament at the 1998 territorial trials. Yet only one athlete was selected for the Arctic Winter Games team. Later that year, two players from the Fort Smith team went on to play Junior A hockey in the south. I cannot be convinced that players chosen to play Junior A in the south cannot make the cut for the Arctic Winter Games team.

Mr. Speaker, the Games have changed greatly since their inception in 1970. We have gone from three contingents to six contingents. The sports involved have changed and we have adult participation in very few of the sports. The cost to participate has become a barrier to some athletes.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. McLeod, your time has elapsed.

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Deh Cho is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. McLeod, you have unanimous consent to conclude your statement.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these changes require me to ask this government insist on an independent evaluation of our Territory's participation in the Arctic Winter Games. This evaluation should address how the different sports are selected to be in the Games, how athletes are selected to be on the different sport teams, cost for athletes to participate in the selection process, and whether or not we should continue our participation in the Arctic Winter Games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement on Impact of the Federal Budget on Northwest Territories Residents

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a big day for the federal government. The budget speech was read, and the news given to Canadians of the benefits a surplus will bring to them.

Mr. Speaker, we have to ask ourselves how the federal budget impacts the residents of the Northwest Territories. Our Member of Parliament stated publicly there will be transfer payments to the North of around \$100 million. Mr. Speaker, if that is the case, I think we have come out of some difficulty and have some cash in hand to help out our much needed program areas, like health and social services and transportation.

The fact is, from my previous work in the Legislative Assembly, when the federal government spends a billion dollars, we are lucky to receive \$1.3 million when it works out to getting money in the Northwest Territories.

What does this mean to residents, Mr. Speaker? Yes, we benefit. Some people will receive lower tax deductions. We also forget an area here. I think the budget could have focused on one of the things that would have positively impacted every resident of the Northwest Territories; northern residents' deductions.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to that area, we share the same distinction as residents of northern Alberta. We are in the prescribed Zone A, which means we, as residents of the Northwest Territories, can claim \$15 a day. Mr. Speaker, when you live in Holman Island, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Inuvik, and many of the smaller communities which are not connected by road in the Northwest Territories, the cost of living far exceeds the costs in northern Alberta. Yet we fall in the same zone.

As a government, we need to start pushing to have that changed, so we may be recognized differently in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, I would like to see clarification from our Minister responsible for Finance as to the differences in the budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

Member's Statement on Congratulations to Arctic Winter Games Participants

MR. STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as with all communities in the Northwest Territories and other northern

regions, young athletes of my riding have been competing for the privilege to represent the Northwest Territories at the Arctic Winter Games in Whitehorse.

At this moment, I would like to recognize and congratulate the following individuals who will be going to the Arctic Winter Games in the Arctic sports category:

- Sharon Alanak and Daryl Egotak, from Holman;
- Mathew Aninkin, Randy Cockney, Irwin Elias, Philip Jacobson, Eli Nasogaluak, and Noah Pokiak, from Tuktoyaktuk; and
- Edgar Kotokak Jr., who will be their coach.

In the midget hockey category, Charlton Wolki will be representing Tuktoyaktuk.

Mr. Speaker, the Tuk Drummers and Dancers will also be taking part in cultural activities in Whitehorse; Albert Elias, Jodi Felix, Norman Felix, Josephine Felix, Sarah Mangelana, Brian Panaktalok, Eunice Nasogaluak, and Willima Nasogaluak will be the representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the Members will join me in wishing these athletes and performers all the best while attending the Arctic Winter Games next week and representing the Northwest Territories while in Whitehorse. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement on Federal Budget Shortcomings

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a taxpayer, it was hard not to like parts of the budget tabled by the federal Minister of Finance. Who can argue against lower taxes, or the indexing of the tax system to inflation?

As a Northerner, it was what was missing that I notice most. The Northwest Territories has huge potential, but we need investment to realize it. I saw nothing in this budget to promote economic development in the Northwest Territories. I saw almost nothing for a highways program. There is \$150 million to split up across Canada between the provinces and territories, which leaves almost nothing for the Northwest Territories.

This is a real missed opportunity for economic development and training for our people in the Northwest Territories.

We know the spin-off from economic development in the Northwest Territories benefits southern jurisdictions more than it does those of us who live here. It is really short-sighted of Canada not to invest in the North.

Like most Canadians, Northerners want to see increased funding for health and education. We should welcome the additional funds we see in the Canada Health and Social Transfer. But there is a catch. These funds are allocated on a per capita basis. With the \$2.5 billion added to CHST funding, we will only see \$3.4 million in the Northwest Territories. Contrast that with the \$55 to \$60 million in direct cuts we took a few years ago in our transfer payments from Ottawa.

Mr. Martin talked of how transfer payments to provinces and territories have been increased. Mr. Speaker, in spite of what we hear our Member of Parliament has said, I do not see it in this budget speech. I do not see increased transfer payments to the Northwest Territories.

We did more than our fair share to help defeat Canada's deficit. One year, our grant was frozen, leaving us \$40 million short of expected growth. The next year, the grant was reduced by five percent, which meant an additional \$60 million was cut.

If Canada is not going to restore the transfers and invest more in economic development in the North, then they must quickly agree to negotiate with this government and aboriginal governments to move ownership and control of resources to the North.

Mr. Speaker, since we cannot count on Canada, we need the tools to invest in the North ourselves. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return to Question 14-14(2): Child and Family Services Program Review

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: On February 23, 2000, the Member for Thebacha raised questions in the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories about the Child and Family Services Program review. I am pleased to provide the Member with further information.

The first question concerned how child protection files were selected for the Child and Family Services Review. I have been advised that over 100 child protection files were reviewed. Reviewers selected files at each child protection worker office in three different ways. One was that they chose some on a random basis. In some smaller communities they read every file. They also consulted with local community social workers and selected files the local workers desired for case consultation.

The second question raised concerns regarding the consultation process in each community. I can assure the House the contractor developed consultation activities that were well organized and efficient.

In each community a variety of interviews were prearranged. Community councils, including band and municipal offices, as well as local school authorities, were contacted in advance so they could identify representatives to participate. The length of each visit was determined by the size of the community, the number of individuals or groups to be interviewed. The reviewers spent a total of 37.5 days interviewing people and groups. This has worked out to be an average of four days per community.

The consultation process is now winding down. Last week in Yellowknife and Rae-Edzo, reviewers held focus group sessions with children and parents receiving services through

the Child and Family Services Act. A third session was held in Fort Simpson this past weekend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 23-14(2): Funding for Language Development

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Nitah on February 23, 2000. It is regarding funding for language development.

The honourable Member raised questions regarding French schools in the Northwest Territories.

Ecole Allain St. Cyr is the only French first language school located in the Northwest Territories, and as of September 30, 1999, there were 70 students. It is funded by the Government of the Northwest Territories under the same formula as other schools in the Northwest Territories.

The cost of constructing the French school was shared between the federal government and the Government of the Northwest Territories. The federal government provided \$3.5 million and the Government of the Northwest Territories contributed \$500,000.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return to Question 34-14(2): Non-Renewable Resource Policy

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a response to a question asked by Mr. Floyd Roland on February 24, 2000, regarding policies of this government on non-renewable resources.

The question was asked on February 24, 2000, if the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development had a broad policy in the area of non-renewable resources, and who would be in charge of that. This government's Sustainable Development Policy provides a framework for decision making on issues related to natural resource development. The Sustainable Development Policy is based on the recognition that sustainable development of resources is essential to the long term economic security, self-sufficiency and social well-being of northern residents. In guiding decisions and actions related to resource use in the Northwest Territories, this policy sets out a number of objectives, with specific reference to non-renewable resources, including the following:

Promote Integrated Resource Management

Recognizing that resource development decisions usually involve numerous management objectives and interest groups, the Government of the Northwest Territories shall promote an integrated approach to managing the environment and its resources.

Maintain and Enhance Environmental Quality

Recognizing that the Northwest Territories' economy and cultures are deeply rooted in the environment, the Government of the Northwest Territories shall ensure that environmental quality is maintained to support the long-term stability of northern society.

Develop Non-Renewable Resources in Ways that Contribute to a Sustainable Economy

The Government of the Northwest Territories will promote exploration, development and use of mineral, aggregate and fossil fuel resources in ways that provide lasting social and economic benefits while maintaining ecological processes and natural diversity.

These objectives are to be implemented through GNWT programs and through collaboration with other governments and organizations. The Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development is responsible for implementation and periodic review of this policy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 60-14(2): Mackenzie River Crossing at Fort Providence

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a reply to a question asked by Mr. McLeod on February 28, 2000, relating to the Mackenzie River crossing in Fort Providence.

The Department of Transportation uses the Gold formula to calculate the thickness of ice necessary to support the weight of a truck on its winter roads and ice bridges. Dr. Lorne Gold developed the formula from his studies of winter logging roads in northern Quebec in the 1950s. Dr. Gold is Canada's foremost authority on the use of ice as an engineering material for transportation and has been the standard for design for many years.

The bearing strength of ice is not related to traffic volume. If the ice is strong enough to support the passing of one truck, it is strong enough to support any number of passes. Increased truck traffic does, however, damage the surface of the ice road by causing ruts. Many other factors, of course, also play a role and these are described in the Department of Transportation's manual, A Field Guide to Ice Construction Safety. Higher truck volumes increase the department's maintenance efforts in blading, flooding and smoothing of the travelling surface. If the wear and tear at a crossing becomes excessive, the department would open a second parallel crossing while it repaired the first.

So, in answer to the Member's question, heavier truck traffic does not effect the initial construction of an ice crossing, but it does impose greater maintenance costs on the Department of Transportation through the operating season.

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of lawyers in Canada. Today, we have the president of the Canadian Bar Association from Ottawa with us in the gallery, Mr. Eugene Mehan. Thank you.

-- Applause

As well, we have our very own branch president from the Northwest Territories, Ms. Sarah Kay.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to recognize Ms. Thomas, president of the NWTTA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Welcome, Ms. Thomas. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize all of the people in the gallery who are from Tu Nedhe. I cannot see anyone that is up there, so I cannot recognize anybody specific. I would suggest maybe we place a mirror on that wall, so there is a reflection of the people who are here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. I am sure the folks back home are watching here on the television. They will be able to appreciate your recognition of them.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize from the riding of Kam Lake and St. Joseph's School, the pages who are here today. We have Francesca Marrai, Konstantin Gavrikov, Alexander Grant, Sarah Erasmus, Brittany Herriot, Jessica Macintyre, Carmela Venezuela, and Matthew Battiste. I would like to welcome them to the Assembly.

-- Applause

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 71-14(2): Access to Sports Facilities

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in support of Mr. McLeod's statement on the review of the Arctic Winter Games, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine, if all communities in the Northwest Territories have the facilities and resources available to them to truly partake in tryouts for various sporting events, and have any chance of success? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 71-14(2): Access to Sports Facilities

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, all of the communities in the Northwest Territories generally have very good infrastructures. We have schools with gymnasiums that could be used for various indoor sports. In most of the communities the outdoors are beautiful and should be utilized for sports and other activities in both the summer and winter. There are communities in the North that have arenas for ice skating, hockey, figure skating and broomball. These are the different facilities that most of the communities have. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Antoine. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, the Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 71-14(2): Access to Sports Facilities

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although there are certainly facilities in most of these communities, the second part of the question is do they have resources available to them that they can utilize? When I speak of resources I am talking about supporting coaches, financial resources, equipment, and so on.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister, during the review for the Arctic Winter Games trials and the whole Arctic Winter Games, and the question of our participation in it, as part of the review, can the Minister also look into the smaller communities, particularly the communities in the Sahtu and others that are not participating, to see if the resources available to every small community are sufficient to truly participate in the sporting arena of the Northwest Territories? I am not only speaking of the Arctic Winter Games. I am also speaking of the Canada Summer Games, or the Dene Games, and so on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 71-14(2): Access to Sport Facilities

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question implies that there is going to be a review. I think the honourable Member for Deh Cho has made reference to it in his Member's statement and in the question there is the implication that there is to be a review of sports in the North.

I would say right now that yes, being a new Minister to this portfolio and being interested in sports, along with the concerns that are raised here in this House on sports and recreation in the communities, including the small communities, it is very important to me.

I will review how Municipal and Community Affairs is involved in the development of sports in the communities and we will certainly look at all aspects of that. I will share the information I get from the department with the Members of this House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Antoine. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 71-14(2): Access to Sport Facilities

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you know, if you are young, you do not have much patience. When you want something, you want it right away. I imagine there are many young people out there who have not qualified for the Arctic Winter Games or other areas who want to see some action.

Can the Minister commit to some sort of timeline? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 71-14(2): Access to Sports Facilities

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, sports development in the North is ongoing, with the help of the Sport North Federation. In consultation with the communities and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, they sponsor different programs throughout the year.

The Arctic Winter Games seems to be the focus of concern here. The process has run its course, and we have selected athletes to represent us at the Arctic Winter Games.

These games occur every two years. This is the beginning of the life of this new government, and we will try everything we can to review how selections have been done. We will endeavor to look at how small communities participate and have a very thorough review of how this was done and see how we can make improvements. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 6, oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 71-14(2): Access to Sports Facilities

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe this is not the first time this issue has been raised. There have been problems with resources available to the smaller communities for sporting facilities, operations, maintenance of sporting facilities, and participation at the territorial level in sporting events throughout the Territories and Canada.

The aboriginal communities have had a problem for a while. For that reason, they are looking at the aboriginal sports circuit. Will the Minister give the House a status report on that initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 71-14(2): Access to Sports Facilities

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is an aboriginal sports circle that was established in 1999. It is meant to promote and enhance community wellness and cultural awareness through sports and recreation.

This encouraged aboriginal youth in the Territories to be more involved in sports. MACA has provided a total of approximately \$125,000 and a number of in kind services towards supporting

the establishment of the aboriginal sports circuit since its inception in December. MACA will continue to assist the aboriginal sports circuit to establish their operation and develop a business plan. Thank you.

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

Question 72-14(2): Effect of Division on NTPC Headquarters

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are addressed to the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. There are two specific issues that are going to have a dramatic impact on the Power Corporation. One of them is the impending split with Nunavut. The other one is the work that is being done in Fort Simpson where they have done a lot of major work in reviewing the provision of power by Northwest Territories Power Corporation. They put out a request for proposals and are seriously looking at changing suppliers.

Regarding the split, can the Minister indicate the timelines and the effect on the NTPC headquarters? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 72-14(2): Effect of Division on NTPC Headquarters

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The agreement reached was that the Power Corporation would continue to operate as one until March 1, 2001. In the interim, an agreement was reached to look at methodologies of handling the split. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary to Question 72-14(2): Effect of Division on NTPC Headquarters

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, I am going to have to use a supplementary to get the Minister to finish answering the first question. Could the Minister indicate the potential or projected impact on the headquarters in Hay River? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 72-14(2): Effect of Division on NTPC Headquarters

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take that question as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Question 73-14(2): Impact of Federal Budget on Northwest Territories

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, residents of the Northwest Territories wanted to hear the budget speech to see what impact it would have on the residents in the Northwest Territories. One cannot

say that more money into the pockets of residents throughout Canada and the Northwest Territories is a bad thing.

The fact is, for example, in my community alone the cost of a two litre container of milk when the ice crossings are closed is \$7.00. The price of gas in Inuvik is now 95 cents per litre.

Mr. Speaker, when talking of the benefits we will receive from the changes in the tax policy of the federal government, those impacts, and the \$400 per year that a low income family might receive in the Northwest Territories, does not cover the costs of increases. That is why I question, in the area of the northern residents deduction as well, because that is the tax side of things that can benefit all residents.

But back to the basic message of the budget speech, our Member of Parliament, the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, stated on Northbeat that there should be transfer payments to the North of approximately \$100 million. Can the Finance Minister tell us how that will impact us in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 73-14(2): Impact of Federal Budget on NWT

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The \$100 million that is being referred to is \$100 million divided between the three northern territories. The \$100 million dollars is a result of the normal adjustments that are made to the territorial grants under the current formula. It is money that has already been accounted for in our estimates. It is not new-found money, it is simply an adjustment that is made to the grant for this year and for previous years. Mr. Speaker, there is no new money as a result of that \$100 million adjustment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 73-14(2): Impact of Federal Budget on NWT

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So a slight of hand has occurred. Can the Minister inform us, in fact, of the \$2.5 billion being invested in the CHST, what is the net impact? Do you believe it is \$3.4 million? Does that cover both the health and social services side and the education side? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 73-14(2): Impact of Federal Budget on NWT

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The federal budget did announce a \$2.5 billion, one-time adjustment to the Canada Health and Social Transfer. The Government of the Northwest Territories' share of that money, as the Member has noted, is approximately \$3.4 million. This is one-time money. That money is to cover health, social costs and post-secondary education.

Mr. Speaker, our ongoing costs are higher than that. The amount of the adjustment is not enough to meet the increasing expenses we face in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Handley. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 73-14(2): Impact of Federal Budget on NWT

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What initially sounded quite good is starting to sound rather negative. Can the Minister inform us how we in the Northwest Territories benefit from this budget? As the Government of the Northwest Territories, what is the net impact of this budget? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 73-14(2): Impact of Federal Budget on NWT

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the people in the Northwest Territories certainly benefit, as do all Canadians, in that there is a tax cut for wage earners both at the lower and middle income, as well as at the higher income.

In the case of lower and middle income, it is cutting the percentages down over a period of three or four years. In the case of higher income earners, there is a gradual reduction of the five percent surtax. However, over five years that would disappear. Mr. Speaker, that would be the main way people in the North will benefit.

In terms of businesses in the North, there is also a benefit in the corporate taxes are gradually being reduced as well. In the case of smaller businesses, the rate will decrease from 28 percent down to 21 percent in a fairly short period of time.

This, very broadly, is the impact benefit to our people. In terms of how the government benefits from this budget, it does not provide us with the money we had asked for and hoped to see in the budget. That money was primarily in the areas of health and social services, our social costs, and the ability that would give us for capacity building.

The other area, in terms of infrastructure; while there is a provision in the budget for some infrastructure money, it is not adequate to meet the kind of infrastructure that we need, particularly in transportation.

That would be the main impact. I could go on with some of the more minor adjustments that have been made in this budget to give us some benefit, but I will not get into all of these details unless it is the wish of the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. The question period is only one hour, so... Item 6, oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 73-14(2): Impact of Federal Budget on NWT

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have to ask many more questions on this, because he has already answered a few others that I had, except for the question of what is the net benefit to this government? How does it impact our revenues? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. In a word, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 73-14(2): Impact of Federal Budget on NWT

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It will take some time for us to calculate exactly what the net benefit is, because that is complicated. There are a lot of elements to this budget. Many benefits will have to be negotiated with the other provinces.

In terms of the tax side, the change in the taxes, if that is what the Member is asking about specifically, the federal government reducing its taxes will result in a \$3 million loss in personal income tax for our government. By the time we do the adjustment with the formula and the grant, then that is a \$600,000 decrease in our revenue through taxation.

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

Question 74-14(2): Improving Safety on NWT Highways

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I have a question for the Minister responsible for Transportation, the Honourable Vince Steen. Last week he stated the speed limit will be reduced on Highway No. 3 from 90 kilometres per hour to 70 kilometres per hour for trucks. This would be in effect on the portion of the road between Stagg River and Yellowknife.

I would like to know if Mr. Steen would also consider long-term ways to improve safety on all territorial highways. For example, would the Minister look into the combined use of running lights and low beams on vehicles? Some vehicles have more than one set of running lights. When these lights are both on, they blind oncoming traffic. Thank you.

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

Return to Question 74-14(2): Improving Safety on NWT Highways

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in reference to the running lights issue, the Member raised that issue with me in my office. I advised him I would look into it. I understand from my department they are unprepared to respond to the Member at this time. I just advised him that the department will be putting forward a response to his concern. We will respond directly to him. Thank you.

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

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, when he passes a bill, if public input is put into passing bills for safety issues under the Motor Vehicles Act?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. I believe that would be a new question. We were talking about one issue and now we have moved into another. I will have to ask you if you want to ask a question along the same lines as the first one about running lights on vehicles?

MR. LAFFERTY: I will save it for another day, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 75-14(2): No Lay-off Policy for Public Service

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Premier. I would like to ask him a question about the concern many of the civil servants have all over the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the previous government, after they engaged in major job cuts, introduced what is known as a no lay-off policy within the civil service. My question today to the Premier is whether or not he plans to introduce a new policy, or will the no lay-off policy remain in effect? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 75-14(2): No Lay-off Policy for Public Service

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The no lay-off policy was a policy that was set out by the previous government. It was intended to stay in effect until the end of the last government. We have indicated in discussions with our senior managers that there are no plans, at this time, to make changes to the size and the structure of our civil service. In some ways, the policy is considered to still be in effect, although it is not a policy of this government. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 75-14(2): No Lay-off Policy for Public Service

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Premier confirm whether or not the voluntary separation agreement packages that were practiced by employees who were having to be laid off in the last government would be available for any employees laid off during this government? Could the Premier indicate, if there are any layoffs or any need for cuts which we currently are unaware of, would the employees have the ability to exercise such an option? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 75-14(2): No Lay-off Policy for Public Service

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since there is no lay-off policy in place, there is no need to consider whether or not this would be something that would be available to staff who would be considered for lay-offs, since there is no intent to lay-off staff at this time. Thank you.

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

Question 76-14(2): Developing the Oil and Gas Industry

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier and Minister responsible for Economic Development.

In my Member's statement, I made reference to the positive news that is coming out of the Beaufort Delta. There is a real

interest being shown by the oil and gas industry to return to the Beaufort Delta to start developing the oil and gas potential we have.

Mr. Speaker, one of the strongest economic indicators we have is that it has been almost 20 years since the Beaufort oil and gas development really took place. With the good news we are hearing, it is critical this government takes the same initiative it did with the diamond industry, and put block dollars in place for training and secondary industries, to ensure this government get as much potential out of that development as we can.

With that Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister to ensure we get the best economic benefit out of these developments. This government should seriously consider improving the oil and gas development at the department secretariat by putting new human resources and dollars into the oil and gas sector so we can be on the same footing as the diamond industry. Will the Premier consider looking at that?

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

Return to Question 76-14(2): Developing the Oil and Gas Industry

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is true that, until recently, there was no substantive interest in oil and gas development in the Northwest Territories. The industry has returned very quickly. There has been substantive interest shown in the Liard area in the last two years and, more recently, in the Beaufort Delta as well as the Sahtu.

In recent years, we have put some resources towards ensuring the interest in diamonds could be enhanced through work we want to do, to make sure there were substantive benefits returning to us through our limited means. We have done that. We need to try to be able to sustain that.

It is also true the returns in oil and gas development would be more substantive for the Territories, due to the nature and size of the oil and gas industry and its impact on our economy.

We also have signalled the aboriginal leaders and communities that we will work in tandem with them. It is not for us to go out unilaterally, advocating oil and gas development in the Sahtu, for instance, on Gwich'in lands or Inuvialuit lands. Where there is interest, and the industry is prepared for the aboriginal groups, we are prepared to work in partnership with them. We are prepared to look at ways in which we could allocate more resources to oil and gas development.

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

Supplementary to Question 76-14(2): Developing the Oil and Gas Industry

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe one of the greatest potentials we have in the North is our people. The Beaufort Delta has some very productive people working in the oil and gas industry, judging from previous experience. I would like to ask the Minister what has he done to improve the economic well-being of the people in the Mackenzie Delta? Has he given any consideration of looking at programs such as training initiatives, grants to small businesses, and also ensuring we develop infrastructure in the region to take on the developments when they happen?

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

Further Return to Question 76-14(2): Developing the Oil and Gas Industry

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In our recent discussions with aboriginal leaders, we know that, while they are interested in promoting development in their regions, they are also not positioned very well to make maximum use of the opportunities that could become available.

For instance, the chiefs have signaled they are prepared to support the pipeline proposal down the Mackenzie Valley. However, they have conditions. They want to manage the project. They want to find the business partners of their choosing to work with. They would like to have substantive ownership of that pipeline and to reap substantive benefits from the development and management of that pipeline. This means there needs to be substantive resources available to the aboriginal leadership in the next year or two, not five or ten years from now.

We have made suggestions to the aboriginal leaders as recently as yesterday. We are prepared to work with them to develop a strategy on how all of us, as aboriginal northern governments, can position ourselves where we can access the necessary dollars and resources to pave the way for orderly development, for development that is going to benefit aboriginal communities, aboriginal leaders, aboriginal corporations, as well as the businesses of the North and the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary. Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 76-14(2): Developing the Oil and Gas Industry

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to know if this government will consider putting the human resources and the resources towards developing a regional office, say in Inuvik, so we have people from the Government of the Northwest Territories where the developments are taking place. I would like to ask the Premier, will he consider looking at establishing an oil and gas secretariat or office which will take people out of the Yellowknife office and put them in the regions where the developments are taking place?

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

Further Return to Question 76-14(2): Developing the Oil and Gas Industry

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is committed to working with the Members of the Legislature to set priorities. We have agreed we will try to meet to define the priorities that all Members are willing to support some time in March. Based on that, the government will start to plan where the budget priorities will be when we present it in June. We have indicated to the aboriginal leaders at our meetings yesterday that we are prepared to do that with them as well.

Most importantly, we have indicated this government is not in a position to prepare adequately for the recognition, the

negotiation and the implementation of self government agreements and institutions without additional resources being made available. We believe aboriginal governments are not in a position to negotiate the implementation and the recognition of aboriginal governments without some injection of dollars, without some sense they will have dollars coming to them so they can set up their institutions and their governments.

Aboriginal people, aboriginal governments, this government and Northern people in general need a new source of additional revenues, so we can prepare our government, our people and our communities for the developments we are indicating we want to initiate.

The Member is highlighting some of the priorities that the communities and regions are indicating. Some communities need airports, roads, and training dollars for their people. They need additional money for education. Even impacted communities like Rae, where there has been a large number of jobs created through their deals with BHP Incorporated, they also recognize the social impact is there. They need additional resources to deal with the social impact of development that is currently being felt.

We understand we need to prepare and we need to get resources for our people and our governments. This has been the message we are sending, assuring the aboriginal leaders that we met with yesterday. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 76-14(2): Developing the Oil and Gas Industry

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe it is essential we try to be prepared for development. We need to have people trained and in place, so we do not get caught training people and finding out the project has already been concluded.

I think it is essential this government and this Minister, who is responsible for the oil and gas development, look at the economics these developments create. The people in my riding have been waiting over 20 years to get a job in the oil and gas industry. The opportunities are coming. They want to get those jobs. They do not want to be on welfare or income support.

We either can pay the piper by putting people to work, getting them jobs so they pay taxes to this government or continue to keep people on income support. The people I represent ...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krutko, this is your final supplementary. Could you get to the question, please?

MR. KRUTKO: I am trying to lead into the question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krutko, if you could just go directly to the question. This is your third supplementary.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question I have for the Minister and the Premier is what kind of guarantees will he have for the people I represent that they will be allowed to have jobs within the next year?

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

Further Return to Question 76-14(2): Developing the Oil and Gas Industry

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We cannot provide any guarantees, but we can ensure the members of the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit communities that if they want development, we are prepared to work with them. We will help them define the terms and conditions under which they would advance their economic agenda.

There is no doubt we would be as supportive as we can. Again, the Members will realize we have a budget that is less than adequate to meet the present demands, just in education alone. In justice, in health and social services, in housing... every area of basic need we have now is more than short on the necessary funding.

But we also recognize it is important to invest in the economic development initiatives. We are prepared to do that. As I have said, it is not for me to unilaterally decide to make pronouncements on where resources will go. All of us together are going to make an effort to set priorities for the budget in the coming year. We will do that together in March. We will also engage the aboriginal leaders in this discussion. Thank you.

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

Question 77-14(2): Summer Student Employment Program

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. I have asked previous questions of him in this House on summer employment for students coming back to the Territories from university.

He had presented us with a suggestion that the Executive was taking the lead role in this and will be coordinating the summer hiring program, which was very encouraging to hear. But often, Mr. Speaker, what sounds good at first may have some flaws and some problems with it. I would like to know when we can get the details on the summer program? Things like names, phone numbers, and locations kids can expect to go to look for employment? Mr. Speaker, the question is when will we receive the details? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 77-14(2): Summer Student Employment Program

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated before, this is a program that is coordinated by the Executive. I would ask this question be referred to the Minister responsible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. It is a little difficult here, but you cannot defer this question. Another Minister may wish to take the lead in responding to that question, if it is not in your portfolio. We will allow the Premier to make that decision. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 77-14(2): Summer Student Employment Program

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Details. When? Who do I ask? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The Premier has indicated he would like to respond. Premier Kakfwi.

Further Return to Question 77-14(2): Summer Student Employment Program

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the question is being asked about this government's summer student employment program. That is for students who wish to be considered for job opportunities within this government, its departments and agencies during the times they are not attending school.

It is right about this time, I suppose in March, where we start to get applications and letters of interest from students attending university and institutions. They write letters indicating they are interested in being considered for employment during the summer.

Between May and September, when students are off for the summer, is the time when the employment opportunity is available for them. That is when we try to make available to them the opportunities within the different departments and agencies.

As far as I understand it, the resumes and applications are received by this government during March. They are processed in a database. This is made available to the regions, departments and agencies. That is how it works. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 77-14(2): Summer Student Employment Program

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will direct my question to the Premier. We are all starting to get phone calls, we are all starting to get resumes faxed to our offices. We are concerned that we have to get back to students with something concrete.

The time is fast approaching when they will return. I would like to get something back to my constituents who are away at university. I have mailing addresses now for them at university. It becomes much more difficult when they are in transit. So my real concern is that we will not have any information for them before they step off the plane or, heaven forbid, should they have to drive Highway No. 3 to get back to town.

-- Laughter

So I am wondering if we can have a timeline as to when we will have phone numbers and contact people so we can start to disseminate that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Premier.

Further Return to Question 77-14(2): Summer Student Employment Program

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is important to deal expediently with the requests and phone calls

from students. They can be referred to myself if the MLAs want to do that. We can also, this afternoon, provide the MLAs with phone numbers and a mailing address where these resumes and applications can be dropped off. Thank you.

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

Question 78-14(2): Examination of Spending Reduction Options

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

As stated in my Member's statement, the government of the 13th Assembly made some very deep cuts in programs and public service jobs. Mr. Speaker, I am aware that this government will be looking for ways to address our fiscal situation. Could the Minister please inform the House if in fact there is a working group looking at possible cuts as we speak?

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

Return to Question 78-14(2): Examination of Spending Reduction Options

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, yes, there are several working groups headed up by deputies that are looking at various ways of achieving greater efficiencies in our government. I do not think that looking specifically at cuts is part of their mandate, but I think that as they look at how we can be more efficient as government departments, boards and agencies then I suppose some loss of jobs could occur. But we do not have a group looking specifically at cuts. We are looking at efficiencies though. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 78-14(2): Examination of Spending Reduction Options

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker could the Minister inform the House as to where we could anticipate some possible job losses in the public service?

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

Further Return to Question 78-14(2): Examination of Spending Reduction Options

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are looking at a number of areas; included in there are our own government operations. We look at efficiencies and ways of streamlining. As we go through departments we could, for example, look at whether or not we could collapse two different divisions that are providing the same service. We also could look at boards and agencies. We are looking at energy efficiencies as being another way of cutting our costs. We are looking at our capital program. We are looking at a whole host of opportunities, like the way we purchase, for example.

As we do this we are being very comprehensive and looking at all aspects of government operations and trying to determine where cuts might be made. Right now Mr. Speaker it is a bit early for me to be able to identify specifically where cuts will be made. We need to get the reports back and do the analysis. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 78-14(2): Examination of Spending Reduction Options

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my Member's statement, we have a large number of public service employees out there that are aware of the fiscal situation that this government is in.

I would like to ask the Minister, if he could give us some assurance that a public announcement will be made in a timely fashion, to give the public service employees out there some assurance of the jobs that they do have.

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

Further Return to Question 78-14(2): Examination of Spending Reduction Options

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, we do not have any plans to make cuts. It is not part of a plan. I can assure you that as we develop our plans then we can be making more definitive statements. But I think, as the Premier indicated earlier with the no layoff policy; although the policy does not exist, we still live by that same set of principles.

If it is at all possible to manage our budget without having any layoffs, then we would prefer that. Because layoffs impact not only the individuals but also on us in terms of our population. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 78-14(2): Examination of Spending Reduction Options

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this possibly is one area that we could get some assurance from the Minister. We have talked about the federal budget that just came down. If there is any benefit to the Territories at all, would the Minister anticipate that we may have enough benefit there to maintain what we do have in the private sector as far as jobs and public service programs?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I will have to have clarification on the question. I did not really understand it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Delorey, perhaps you could just restate your question?

MR. DELOREY: Simply that with any benefits that we may receive from the federal government in the budget that just came down, does the Minister anticipate that this will be enough to maintain what we do in terms of public service jobs and programs?

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

Further Return to Question 78-14(2): Examination of Spending Reduction Options

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Definitely we will receive some benefits out of the federal budget, in a number of areas such as we mentioned; health and social transfer, forestry, geosciences and so on. We will get some benefits. But whether or not this is enough is a little bit difficult to judge at this point.

I expect it is going to be enough to maintain what we have in some areas. But as I mentioned earlier, in other areas like health and social programs, I do not believe there is going to be enough. It is too early to be definitive on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Question 79-14(2): Free Vote on Pipeline Motion

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

I listened yesterday very intently as Mr. Steen spoke in committee of the whole during the consideration of The Report of the Minister's Forum on Health and Social Services.

I know that it is not contrary to the rules, but it is almost unheard of for a Minister to speak to a government document. Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if this was an indication of a new openness in government, where we will see more discussion and free votes from Members of Cabinet.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, my question is will the Premier now allow a free vote on the important motion on the Mackenzie Valley pipeline when it comes up for discussion this afternoon.

-- Applause

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

Return to Question 79-14(2): Free Vote on Pipeline Motion

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, I do not see where the two are related. But in the latter part of the question, he is asking whether there is going to be a free vote on the matter. It has been customary for the Premier and Ministers to abstain from voting on motions on legislation that is intended to provide direction to government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Premier Kakfwi. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Speaker, the Premier is right. In my experience it is extremely rare for the government side to vote on a motion. But it is also extremely rare for a Cabinet Minister to criticize government policies. Mr. Speaker, looking at page 309 of the unedited Hansard from yesterday, it appears that Mr. Steen was critical of Health and Social Service's policy governing medical travel, and further suggests that we eliminate health boards since MLAs can represent communities. Mr. Speaker, is it now the position of this government that we eliminate health boards and have MLAs represent the communities?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. I think there is a bit of confusion over the questions here. I think we dealt with two different issues. I will allow you to return to the first issue you were dealing with and ask a question based on that.

Supplementary to Question 79-14(2): Free Vote on Pipeline Motion

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was asking about a change in government policy, where government does not normally speak to issues in this House or vote on motions before the House. It appeared in yesterday's discussion that there had been a change in policy. Minister Steen was clearly critical of some of the government's policies. I was asking whether or not Mr. Steen was speaking as a Cabinet representative and giving us a government position?.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The question deals with the government's policy. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return to Question 79-14(2): Free Vote on Pipeline Motion

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We thank the Member for raising the issue. It is true that Ministers are not expected to ask questions of other Ministers, or to question the other policies of government in this House or in committee of the whole.

I have spoken to Mr. Steen. It is understandably confusing to recall when the forum was traveling in the communities, many of us, including ourselves, appeared before the Minister's forum, making some comments, offering advice, our views and our opinions. Unbeknownst to Mr. Steen, we had expected that once the forum had continued its work, we also contributed our input to that report.

When the report was appearing here in the committee, it was not expected that Ministers would be allowed to continue to comment on the report. We have dealt with it. It is understood and that should put that issue to rest. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 79-14(2): Free Vote on Pipeline Motion

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that response and the fact the policy on government Members speaking to documents in this House has not changed. However, I would like to put this specific question to the Minister again. Did the Minister express government policy yesterday? Does this government now have a position that health boards should be replaced with MLAs?

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

Further Return to Question 79-14(2): Free Vote on Pipeline Motion

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have read Hansard. I do not see any explicit statements made to create the impression the Member is eluding to. No, Mr. Steen was not espousing government policy when he made his comments yesterday. Thank you.

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

Question 80-14(2): Impact of Division on NTPC Rates

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I pose these questions to the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. I would like to try some of the unanswered questions I had, specifically regarding the potential cost of the division of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation between Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. The previous government indicated there would be a five percent increase in cost when this split occurred.

Can the Minister indicate whether that is still the number the 14th Assembly and Cabinet is looking at?

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

Return to Question 80-14(2): Impact of Division on NTPC Rates

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to go over the background on this again, the Government of Nunavut decided they wanted to form their own corporation in Nunavut. A transition agreement was reached that would take effect on March 31, 1999. In the interim, the corporation runs the power plants in Nunavut as well as its employees. Nunavut has indicated they are looking for a systems manager. The corporation has expressed an interest in being that systems manager. So far, there is no response on that.

With regard to the process of division, there will have to be a process to divide the assets and liabilities between the two territories. The information I have does not address yet, other than information we have been provided, the amount the impact will be on the west. I will have to look into that further. Thank you.

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

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given the short time before the end of question period, I seek unanimous consent to extend question period.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There are no nays. The clock will be reset for one hour. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary to Question 80-14(2): Impact of Division on NTPC Rates

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given the fact the Power Corporation is such a significant asset and provides such a critical service, there is expensive work done. The five percent rate increase was very clear and was one of the big issues. Can the Minister indicate whether he is aware this five percent rate increase is on the table and was one of the consequences of splitting the corporation in two? Are we going to absorb that cost, or are we going to pass it on to all of the ratepayers? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 80-14(2): Impact of Division on NTPC Rates

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, Nunavut is looking for a systems manager. I am not sure of the status of that at the moment. Should we not be successful to have the corporation remain as the systems manager for both the west and the east, there will no doubt be impacts upon the corporation. The information I have been provided with so far indicates we would have to have layoffs, possibly at headquarters. There may have to be a rate increase. That would have to be done through the Public Utilities Board. At this particular point in time, I do not have any further information, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 80-14(2): Impact of Division on NTPC Rates

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like the Minister to clarify whether he does not have the information or whether the corporation is totally unprepared and has not done any planning, and the Minister is not aware as a result of that? Or have they done all sorts of planning, but the Minister has not had time to be briefed?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 80-14(2): Impact of Division on NTPC Rates

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is information I do not have. To the best of my knowledge, the corporation is meeting with both governments to look at both the division of assets and liabilities.

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

Supplementary to Question 80-14(2): Impact of Division on NTPC Rates

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, could the Minister indicate whether he would be in the position to speak knowledgeably of this issue when we gather in March, so we can address the issues of layoffs and rate increases? So we can address the issue of what happens if NTPC is removed as a supplier in Fort Simpson, and what that does to things like the power subsidy? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 80-14(2): Impact of Division on NTPC Rates

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I am getting up to speed on the corporation, both on the Nunavut issue and on the Fort Simpson issue. I am in the process of meeting with officials from Fort Simpson. I will be attending a meeting in Fort Simpson within the next week. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 80-14(2): Impact of Division on NTPC Rates

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister is aware of some of the impacts, given the fact we are going to lose 40 percent of the jurisdiction of NTPC. Is the Minister in the position to quantify the potential layoffs that may occur as a result? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 80-14(2): Impact of Division on NTPC Rates

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not in a position to put exact figures on the number of layoffs at this particular time. Thank you.

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

Question 81-14(2): Aboriginal Treaty Rights for Education

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Mr. Ootes, this is related to a question I asked you a few days ago, which you took notice. Can you or your department start a process that will determine the amount of dollars that has been routed through this government for aboriginal post-secondary education as a right from the treaties? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Before the Minister answers, may I ask Members to direct their questions to the Chair, which will then be directed to the appropriate Minister. Do not directly address the Minister. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 81-14(2): Aboriginal Treaty Rights for Education

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that funding is provided on the basis of the transfer agreement from Ottawa. It is not specifically identified according to treaty rights. The allocation to the department is done on the basis of funding from the Financial Management Board according to the budget it establishes. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 81-14(2): Aboriginal Treaty Rights for Education

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister then answer the question; why are there different forms of grants and loans for different ethnic groups within the Northwest Territories? Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 81-14(2): Aboriginal Treaty Rights for Education

HON. JAKE OOTES: I would have to be aware of specific grants and loans that the Member is referring to. I believe our departmental grant and loan system is established according to the agreements in place. There is a cooperation agreement between the territorial and federal governments which provides funding for French language services and aboriginal languages. If that is the agreement the Member is referring to then, yes. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 81-14(2): Aboriginal Treaty Rights for Education

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The funding provided for language development and the amount for the different ethnic groups is not my question. My question is; why are there different types of student financial assistance for different ethnic groups if the money was not slated for different groups?

If the money was not coming from the federal government to the Government of the Northwest Territories for treaty Indians, then why are they treated differently from the Metis, the Inuvialuit and the non-aboriginal people? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 81-14(2): Aboriginal Treaty Rights for Education

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I presume the Member is speaking about the Student Financial Assistance Program, where we provide a grant for the Dene for living allowances, and provide a remissible loan for Metis and Inuit and those schooled in the Northwest Territories.

The reason for that is because the Metis and Inuit were taxed on the grant. That was a concern in the ministerial forum. It was a big concern publicly, that the Inuit and Metis were taxed on grants that are given; hence the proposal was to move a remissible loan that was not taxed in the hands of those students. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 81-14(2): Aboriginal Treaty Rights for Education

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Minister assumes there is some work in progress that will pass within the committee system. However, I will try to repeat my question again in exactly the same words. Funding for non-aboriginal, Metis and Inuvialuit and status Indians are administered and provided differently. The expected results are different, why is that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 81-14(2): Aboriginal Treaty Rights for Education

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the Member is speaking of the Student Financial Assistance Program. If that is the case, then, as I mentioned, there was concern expressed publicly and through the ministerial forum that Dene have the ability not to be taxed for grants, whereas Metis and Inuvialuit are taxed on grants and hence the change in the provision of remissible loans. Thank you.

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

Question 82-14(4): Development Agreements in Land Claims

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine. It is regarding the obligation that this government has under the Gwich'in Land Claim Agreement, and I will read it:

Section 21, Sub-Surface Rights 21.1.4: The Government of the Northwest Territories shall involve the Gwich'in in the development and implementation of any northern accord on oil and gas development in the Northwest Territories, which is negotiated pursuant to an enabling agreement dated September 5, 1999, between the Government of Canada and the Government of Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to know from the Minister, has the priority of the government in its obligation to this land claim agreement changed? I feel the government is going off into another area of trying to transfer the revenue-sharing dollars of this government without completing its obligation in this land claim agreement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 82-14(4): Development Agreements in Land Claims

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Gwich'in Final Agreement that the honourable Member is speaking of is a tripartite agreement between the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the federal government and the Government of the Northwest Territories. The implementation of this final agreement is the responsibility of the three parties. We are committed to seeing that the agreement is implemented according to the agreement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Antoine. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 82-14(4): Development Agreements in Land Claims

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Northern Accord Agreement I talked about was signed some 12 years ago and to date nothing has really happened, yet land claim agreements have been signed, and ratified by the aboriginal First Nations. I would like to ask the Minister when he sees this becoming a reality?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 82-14(4): Development Agreements in Land Claims

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the honourable Member knows, there have been a number of attempts in past governments to try and realize this Northern Accord, this devolution. We are working on it now as a government along with the MLAs and the aboriginal governments. There are certain conditions put in place on that.

Recently in October and January, when federal Minister Robert Nault was here discussing this particular item, he was saying there has to be a critical mass of support by all the different parties before we move ahead. I would like to see a quick timeline to do that, but the conditions are such that we have to all work together in trying to make this Northern Accord a reality. It is going to take some time, I do not know how long, but the sooner we all work together and get to common ground, the sooner we would realize this Northern Accord. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Antoine. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 82-14(4): Development Agreements in Land Claims

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the amount of development taking place, especially in my riding, it is critical this section of the Gwich'in Land Claim Agreement be concluded so they can receive the benefit of the land claim agreement that was signed and negotiated in good faith between the aboriginal First Nations and this government. I would like to ask the Minister what the groups are to do if development occurs without this agreement being concluded?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 82-14(4): Development Agreements in Land Claims

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the federal government has the control over our lands and resources in the North. That has been the case for a long time. None of us in the North like it, and we would like to make some changes.

In order to do that, all of the groups, including the Gwich'in Tribal Council, of whose final agreement the honourable Member is referring to, passed in as a clause, but there are conditions put in place by the federal government. Those conditions state we have to try to get everybody on board. Hopefully, everybody is in sync with this. It is going to take some time to work with the aboriginal governments to develop a position so we can move on it.

In the meantime, the federal government still has control over our gas in the Liard Valley, our oil down in the Sahtu, and the diamond mines north of Yellowknife. They have the control. We do not like it, but that is the way it is right now. What we are trying to do is create an environment where we can all work together to negotiate with the federal government the devolution of our natural resources so we have the control in the North. It is going to take some time. We are working with the aboriginal governments to make this happen.

We had a meeting yesterday with the aboriginal representatives of most of the aboriginal governments to start talking about this. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 82-14(4): Development Agreements in Land Claims

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, regarding the section of the agreement I read out loud, this is an obligation this government committed to. They signed the settlement of these land claim agreements. I would like to ask the Minister if he will consider the possibility, for those land claims agreements that have this commitment included, that this government agrees to negotiate solely with those groups to settle the commitment in their land claim agreements?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 82-14(4): Development Agreements in Land Claims

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess it would be good to do that. But the way we are approaching it is we are trying to work with everybody at the same time. The president of the Gwich'in Tribal Council attended the meeting yesterday.

There are specific concerns for each claimant group. We are trying to work together in the North so everyone can benefit. We are talking about have and have-not regions. There are some claims that have been settled. There are conditions that have been included which we are working to implement. This goes beyond the Gwich'in Land Claim Agreement. This encompasses all of the different regions in the North. We are trying to be inclusive and try to talk to everybody at the same time. I think if we are all together, we can make a better deal than only dealing with one region. Thank you.

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

Question 83-14(2): Oil and Gas Industry Training

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes. It is regarding the oil and gas potential we have in the Beaufort Delta. I feel the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has an obligation to ensure people are trained so we have a skilled workforce in place to take on these jobs when developments take place.

I would like to ask the Minister, in light of the amount of money that was put into developing the mining industry, what is the Department of Education, Culture and Employment doing to ensure we have the same opportunities for developing the training programs for the oil and gas industry?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 83-14(2): Oil and Gas Industry Training

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development is leading an interdepartmental approach to oil and gas development.

One of the programs is developing a human resource development committee, which will be chaired by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. It will be tasked to look at projections of the type of volumes in jobs that are expected to be developed along with the development of oil and gas.

It will be necessary to have a promotion campaign on that program. Those are the types of things a resource development committee can undertake. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 83-14(2): Oil and Gas Industry Training

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, regarding the regional strengths where we have diamond potential, oil and gas, forestry, et cetera, will the Minister consider developing an oil and gas training strategy to be implemented in those regions that are impacted by oil and gas development?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 83-14(2): Oil and Gas Industry Training

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe there will be a three-year schedule of activities to promote human resource planning and career development for oil and gas development.

This will take place for both the Liard area and the Mackenzie Valley area. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 83-14(2): Oil and Gas Industry Training

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that sounds great, but I believe three years is too long to wait. This government has to develop these initiatives now. We have to have the people trained now, so we can take advantage of the development when it occurs, so our people will be able to have jobs available to them.

I would like to ask the Minister if he will be developing these scenarios into the business plans of the department, to ensure there are funds available to the regions, to ensure the education dollars are spent in those different economic sectors?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 83-14(2): Oil and Gas Industry Training

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are very aware of the tremendous potential oil and gas will bring to the Mackenzie Valley. The potential for jobs for Northerners is substantial. We are in the process of developing the human resource strategy. We are also working with organizations such as the Community Mobilization Organization and community groups. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 83-14(2): Oil and Gas Industry Training

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there was a lot of money put into training people for the mining industry. It is great they received their share of money. Now I think it is time for the government to refocus its dollars and put it in other potential areas.

Oil and gas is the sector that will stimulate the economy of the whole Northwest Territories, unlike the diamond industry. I would like to ask the Minister if he will seriously consider putting dollars into the area of oil and gas training for the communities that are impacted by it?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for the department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 83-14(2): Oil and Gas Industry Training

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, the potential for jobs in the oil and gas industry is tremendous. Mr. Krutko is correct. It will likely exceed the diamond industry. We have to be aware of the potential, and I think we all are.

We have a human resource development committee underway to look at the various areas. A report has already been prepared on the volume and nature of jobs. This is a preliminary report. We are all interested in pursuing this particular project. Thank you.

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

Question 84-14(2): Accounting for Capital Assets

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Department of Finance. It relates to tangible capital asset accounting. I am wondering if the Minister can tell us if the government is on track for a change over to this new system as of June, when the new budget comes down? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 84-14(2): Accounting for Capital Assets

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government is currently doing an assessment and inventory of our tangible capital assets. I am not sure whether we will have

it fully implemented in the year 2000-2001, but I expect it will be fully implemented within the 2001-2002 budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 84-14(2): Accounting for Capital Assets

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was not aware we could fully or partially implement this thing. I did not think we had a choice. I thought it was either we do it or we do not. If we do not have the asset inventory completed, I would assume we would have to have the whole thing put off for a year. Am I mistaken? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 84-14(2): Accounting for Capital Assets

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I will take that question as notice, because there are assets in different categories of value. I am not sure we would have to add the whole thing. I will take it as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Handley. When a Minister takes it as notice, it is just notice. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 85-14(2): Update on Power Rate Review

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is addressed to the Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board, regarding the legislation governing the Public Utilities Board, which is currently under review for revision and updating. I would like the Minister to update this House as to the status of that review. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 85-14(2): Update on Power Rate Review

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since I have not been in communication with the chairman of the Public Utilities Board since the first week of my portfolio, I will take this question as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. The Minister has taken the question as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 86-14(2): Highway Maintenance Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Transportation regarding the limited amount of dollars we have to maintain our infrastructure. As we heard in the House, some \$6 million a year is spent to maintain Highway No. 3.

Yet, they get \$2 million a year for the widening project, which has been spread out for some ten years, to upgrade the Dempster Highway. They get \$700,000 dollars to maintain the winter roads in the Mackenzie Delta.

Mr. Speaker, we have some 2100 square miles of hard top roads. We also have some 1600 square miles of winter roads. I would like to get some assurances from this government for all of the communities outside of Yellowknife who are not part of Highway No. 3 that the dollars that are in that department will continue to be there to maintain our roads. They will continue to be there to keep the roads safe and avoid the amount of potholes, dust and the accidents on our highways.

I would like to ask the Minister what kinds of assurances can his department give the smaller communities outside of Yellowknife there will be money available for them to continue to maintain roads other than Highway No. 3?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 86-14(2): Highway Maintenance Funding

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government has put forward a highways strategy plan. It is still being reviewed. It still has to be considered and accepted by this new government. Until it is, there are no major changes planned for our capital and our O and M expenditures. That is all I can say. Whatever you have had as an outline of your O and M or capital in the past, the Department of Transportation has made no major changes to them. We would have to assume direction from this House if we want to make changes. That is the best response I can give, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 86-14(2): Highway Maintenance Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe we have not implemented or maintained the existing road system. There are some major problems. Roads slide due to permafrost. There is waving of the roads due to improper maintenance. I have seen it first hand in the highways south of Enterprise and the Liard highway towards Fort Liard. There is a major problem there, especially where you have soft spots that could cause major accidents.

I believe the biggest problem we have is the amount of traffic we see, especially on the Liard highway and the winter roads towards Fort Norman. Will the Minister commit to doing a review to see what the costs of those impacts are, which were unforeseen in the last couple of years?

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

Further Return to Question 86-14(2): Highway Maintenance Funding

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department has ongoing studies on the impact of traffic on our existing systems. This includes impact from industries, such as oil and gas and mining. We do ongoing studies in relation to what we need for O and M, in relation to what we need for capital just to maintain our existing transportation infrastructure. In response, Mr. Speaker, we have ongoing studies. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 86-14(2): Highway Maintenance Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to know if the Minister's Department has contingency plans for a major washout because of a flood? Or due to the impacts of these major developments, especially in the Fort Liard area and now in the Beaufort Sea? We are going to see some major impacts on our highways, especially where this is gravel.

Does the Minister have a contingency plan or funds available on the side, in case of emergencies or some major projects, to upgrade these highway systems?

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

Further Return to Question 86-14(2): Highway Maintenance Funding

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take the question as notice so I can properly respond to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Steen. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 87-14(2): Resource Development Programs

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Mr. Speaker, no disrespect to my honourable colleague, Mr. Krutko, on his initiative of pushing the pipeline. When diamonds were discovered, there was great initiative by this government to spend a lot of energy and resources on secondary industries surrounding the diamond industry.

I am afraid that with the recent developments in the oil and gas industry in the Northwest Territories, that might be repeated. This government has put other industries such as forestry, tourism, manufacturing, and fishing on the back burner. I would like to get some assurances from the Minister that with this new gas pipeline initiative, those renewable resource industries are not going to be put on the back burner, so those people who depend on these industries are not going to be second class citizens to the diamond industry and the development of oil and gas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. I shall direct your question to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

Return to Question 87-14(2): Resource Development Programs

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is correct that the renewable resource industries are extremely important. We have good forestry potential in the south part of the Mackenzie Valley, and in some of the other areas. Additionally, the fisheries on Great Slave Lake are extremely important. We have a commercial fishery running out of Hay

River. There are other areas, such as the manufacturing industry, which is coming to the fore here in the Territories. We need to replace imports and manufacture more products here in the North.

All of those have equal importance when it comes to the need to address support and funding. Some of this may be done through the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, such as the forestry industry. I am not familiar with what programs they may have available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question is for Mr. Kakfwi, the Minister responsible for...

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry, Mr. Nitah. The initial question was for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. The Premier can, if he chooses to, answer the question. The initial question was directed to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. Please continue with your question, Mr. Nitah.

Question 88-14(2): Government Support of Manufacturing

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. What is this government doing to ensure there is a market out there for things that are manufactured? For example, what is this government doing to look into the manufacturing of homes we sell to other governments and within the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. That is a different question. I will redirect your question to the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, the honourable Premier.

Return to Question 88-14(2): Government Support of Manufacturing

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the question was directed to the government, asking what the government is doing to support the manufacturing sector. The answer is we had taken on a policy in support of manufacturers a number of years ago. The details of which escape me at the moment, but its intent was to give a preference to the purchase and utilization of products manufactured in the North for use in the North by those buyers and users that can be influenced by government. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 88-14(2): Government Support of Manufacturing

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know the diamond and mineral industry is important to the Northwest Territories, as is the oil and gas industry. But there are all kinds of industries outside of those two areas. What is this government doing to vigorously look at different options of economic growth, outside of the mining and oil gas industry in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. I shall direct the question to the honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return to Question 88-14(2): Government Support of Manufacturing

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a need for a broad economic plan and strategy. We have engaged a group to develop an economic strategy for this government to consider. We expect that strategy to be completed and made available to this government in April.

This strategy will help this government consider ways and means by which to develop a broad, balanced economic plan which will ensure we pay attention to all of the different sectors, including agriculture, forestry, mining, oil and gas, arts and crafts, the fur industry, and all the different sectors of our economy in a balanced and transparent way. Thank you.

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

Question 89-14(2): Commitment to Respond to Questions

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is addressed to the Premier. Mr. Speaker, as we are ready to take our leave from the Legislature, I would like to note there are many questions which have gone unanswered and taken as notice.

I would like the Premier to commit that at the next gathering in March, he will ensure all his Ministers have had adequate time to be fully briefed on their responsibilities. That way, when we raise these important issues on behalf of our constituents, we can receive answers, and the public who put us here can hear the answers to these very important questions. Thank you.

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

Return to Question 89-14(2): Commitment to Respond to Questions

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The questions asked by Members in Legislature are important to the people in the constituencies of the Northwest Territories. Of course, we will treat them with the respect and the consideration they desire. We will commit to trying to answer questions as thoroughly, as clearly and as quickly as possible.

We said early in the session that many of the Ministers are new, and have been prevented, in part by myself, from getting briefed on the details of their departmental responsibilities. I have deliberately ensured they have focused on the general priorities and needs of government before focusing on their individual departments.

This has prevented them from walking in here with the confidence and the quickly acquired knowledge they all wanted to have. I am still very proud of all of them.

We will, of course, make sure the answers that have not been forthcoming will be forthcoming for all the questions we have not answered and taken as notice. We will strive to do that. I thank the Member for the question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I placed a question yesterday to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. I would like to continue that line of questioning relating to THMs and the drinking water for the residents of Fort McPherson.

The Minister stated yesterday she is aware of the problem and there is an urgency to find solutions to the problem. Regarding an article I tabled yesterday in the House in MacLean's magazine, a similar problem was identified in Nova Scotia. They also had THMs in their water system. That article states the alarm bells were ringing because this group of chemical by-products are suspected of causing bladder cancer, colon cancer and possibilities of still-borns.

Mr. Speaker, one of the concerns I have is the whole method we have of monitoring cancer statistics, and what not is done through the cancer registry. Usually, at that time, it is too late. You have to have cancer in order to be on the registry.

I would like to ask the Minister, is there any possible way her department, which is responsible for the health and well being of the people in the Northwest Territories, can find a method that will address the concerns of the people I represent? Can they find a method that will give them some comfort that there will be the necessary preventative measures taken, especially with the technology we have, x-rays, mammogram machines and so on? Can they make an effort to go to the community and ensure that there will be an ongoing monitoring program? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the ongoing monitoring of the health concerns of the people in Mr. Krutko's community of Fort McPherson will be dealt with through their visits with their health care practitioners and the professionals who work in that community.

I am not sure if there is any other way to monitor the health concerns the Member speaks of. We are confident as a department that this is somewhat being done with the use of Brita water filters, which every member of the community was given. That particular situation continues to monitor the drinking water in Fort McPherson for THMs on an ongoing basis. We found the monitoring has been very successful. There has been a reduction of 70 percent of the THMs in the water, just using this method.

Mr. Speaker, the Member is speaking of potential health problems. The question is somewhat hypothetical. There is no evidence at this point in time that there will be health problems in the future. I want to assure the Member again the parties that are working on this situation realize it is of great importance to the community. My department will continue to work with the other departments involved to ensure this is addressed as soon as possible. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the region I represent asked for a public inquiry because of the health care service we receive in our communities. Yet we have to wait a month to see a doctor. Many times, people go to the health centre time and time again, and are later diagnosed with cancer.

If you think the simple thing is to go to the nursing station and they will take your blood...we do not do that. We have to either fly to Yellowknife or go to southern institutions to get this treatment. I would like to again ask the Minister if she would seriously consider looking at a preventative measure program to be implemented immediately in the community of Fort McPherson, to ensure the residents this government is seriously considering the preventative process we have in place so THMs will not cause cancer down the road? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to work with the Member to discuss any screening or monitoring he feels his constituents do not have access to through the health care services provided in their community. I would be happy to hear what he might propose. Specifically, what the Department of Health and Social Services should do to address his concerns. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not avoiding the issue. The question I asked is talking about the THMs in Fort McPherson. I think that is not being dealt with here. Through the research I have done to date, there is a major concern, because no one really knows the long term effects of this chemical.

The solution of using Brita filters...we are talking about little, portable filters you put about half a gallon of water in and stick in your fridge. That is what the people have in their community. The Brita filters we have in place are only good if we are making sure they are monitored to ensure the filters are changed on a regular basis.

The water they have in the houses are placed in 200 gallon portable units, which are inside the house. That is where the THM sits until you take it out of a tap. I think the Minister can state that the Brita filters prevent it, but I would like to know from the Minister, can she guarantee the residents of Fort McPherson that the guidelines that are in place to ensure these Brita filters are continuously changed so they will serve their

intended purpose? If they are not changed, they are not doing any good to anybody.

I would like to ask the Minister where did she get her advice on the Brita filters and how productive are they if you do not change the filters?

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

Further Return to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I receive my information from the chief medical officer of the Northwest Territories. Ongoing analysis of Fort McPherson's drinking water indicates Brita filters are very effective in removing THMs. Prior to issuing the THM health advisory on November 30th, 1999, the Environmental Health Services of the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Board made arrangements for testing the effectiveness of Brita filters with Fort McPherson's drinking water.

A series of samples were analysed, which compared the THM levels of water from the treatment plant before and after it was passed through the Brita filters. The results indicated an approximate 70 percent reduction in THM levels in the water that was passed through the Brita filter. This reduced the THM level well below the interim maximum acceptable concentration of 0.1 milligrams per litre, established in the guidelines for Canadian drinking water quality.

Based on these results, staff at the Inuvik Health and Social Services Board advised residents of Fort McPherson, during a public meeting held on December 9th, 1999, to filter their drinking water with a Brita filter, and to follow all filter flushing and replacement instructions to maintain water quality. Municipal and Community Affairs distributed Brita filters to community residents and ongoing weekly testing of the effectiveness of Brita filters continues to indicate they are very effective in lowering the THM levels in water. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is great they have done this test. I would like to know what happens to these Brita filters after you use them for three weeks in the fridge? What if you have a family of seven, all of whom are using these filters consistently after three or four weeks? What kind of guarantee can this Minister provide the residents of Fort McPherson that by using the Brita filter system, you will have a 100 percent guarantee after three weeks of use? Can the Minister provide this?

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

Further Return to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate to the Member that this is a matter

of concern, not only to my department but also to the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, it is important for the residents of Fort McPherson to carefully follow the instructions that have been provided with the Brita filters. The Brita filters are an interim measure until a new water source can be accessed for the community. It is the best we can do in the interim. I would encourage residents to follow the instructions carefully.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult for me as a Minister to guarantee residents will do this. If there is any further information or public awareness we can provide in the community, we are certainly willing to take a look at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 91-14(2): Independent Testing of Fort McPherson Water

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. I would like to ask the Minister if he would consider looking at an outside professional to perform tests regarding the water problem in Fort McPherson? Someone who is outside the Government of the Northwest Territories, or existing laboratory services we have? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 91-14(2): Independent Testing of Fort McPherson Water

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Health and Social Services, and Public Works and Services are the three departments involved with the community right now, trying to resolve this issue. They are trying to establish a long term solution of getting a good, fresh water supply.

In the interim, we are trying to clean up the existing system by using the Brita water filtering system. There are a number of tests going on. I will try to identify who is doing the testing, and we will see if there is a requirement to bring in an outside agency, as the honourable Member is requesting. I would like to assess what we are all doing in terms of testing the water. I know there are serious concerns in the community of Fort McPherson about the quality of water. If there is a health hazard, we certainly want to identify it. I will seriously consider the suggestion made by the honourable Member here today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The time allocated for the extended question period has expired. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**Written Question 8-14(2): THMs in Fort McPherson's Drinking Water**

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My written question is regarding THMs in the Fort McPherson drinking water.

During the second session of the 14th Legislative Assembly, the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services noted the urgent problems that residents of Fort McPherson were having with their drinking water.

I referred to an article in MacLean's magazine, January 24, 2000, which indicated the community of Endfield, Nova Scotia, has also had problems with trihalomethanes (THMs). That article stated that alarm bells were ringing because this group of chemical by-products is suspected of causing cases of bladder and colon cancer and possible stillbirths.

The Minister responsible for Health and Social Services is requested to:

- 1) Advise how she plans to make available to the residents of Fort McPherson all necessary preventative technologies, like x-rays and mammograms, which will allow for the possible early detection of these types of cancers.
- 2) Provide residents with guidelines for the effective use of Brita water systems.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, return to Written Question 5-14(2), Probation and Parole Services, asked by Mr. Miltenberger to the Minister responsible for the Department of Justice concerning probation and parole services.

Return to Written Question 5-14(2): Probation and Parole Services

In the fall of 1998, the government approved a new probation and parole service. These services will be provided by dedicated community probation workers employed by the Department of Justice.

This project is proceeding in three phases. The first phase involved the transition of providing service within the Beaufort-Delta region. This has been concluded with the hiring of five probation officers. Four had previously performed probation supervision while employed by the Inuvik Health Board. All of these were appointed to these new positions. Three of these positions are located in Inuvik and the fourth is located Tuktoyaktuk. The fifth probation officer was selected by competition and is located in Fort McPherson. Three probation officers have P1 affirmative action status and two have P3 status.

The second phase is ongoing and involves establishing the probation service in the Sahtu and Yellowknife regions. Within

the Sahtu, a probation officer was appointed and is located in Deline. That individual had worked for the Sahtu Health Board providing probation supervision and has P1 status. A competition held for another position within Fort Good Hope is currently under appeal.

Within the Yellowknife area, four positions have been staffed. Three were staffed by competition, and the fourth holds the position as a casual employee. Of these, all had worked with the government previously. One had P1 status, two had P2 status and one had P3 status. Results of a competition for one position within Yellowknife is currently under appeal.

Phase two will be complete once the appeals affecting the competitions for the position in Yellowknife and Fort Good Hope are concluded.

All ten probation workers hired under Phase one and two have just finished a two week intensive training program on the provision of community probation services.

Phase three of this project includes hiring probation officers within Rae-Edzo and the South Slave Region. This will include two probation workers hired in Rae-Edzo and another in Lutsel K'e. It is expected that these positions will be staffed by July 2000.

There will be one supervisor and two probation officers within Hay River to service that community as well as Fort Resolution and Fort Providence. The supervisor will also oversee the work of probation officers in all South Slave. Another probation officer will be hired for Fort Smith. That officer will provide service in that community and any excess caseload in Hay River. These positions should be filled by August 2000.

Two probation officers will be located in Fort Simpson to service that community, Jean Marie River, Fort Liard, Nahanni Butte, Trout Lake and Wrigley. These officers may also assist with an excess caseload in Fort Providence. These positions are expected to be filled by October 2000.

By April 2001, it is anticipated that all community health board employees providing these services in communities will be replaced by dedicated probation officers employed by the Department of Justice.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two documents to table.

Tabled Document 22-14(2): Northwest Territories Law Foundation 17th Annual Report, June 30, 1999

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled, Northwest Territories Law Foundation 17th Annual Report, June 30, 1999.

Tabled Document 23-14(2): Victims Assistance Committee 10th Annual Report, 1998-99

I would also like to table the following document, entitled Victims Assistance Committee 10th Annual Report, 1998-99. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Antoine. Item 13, tabling of documents. The Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

Tabled Document 24-14(2): Inter-Activity Budget Transfers over \$250,000, April 1, 1999-December 31, 1999

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As required by section 32.1 subsection 2, of the Financial Administration Act. I am tabling a list of all interactivity transfers exceeding \$250,000 within departments for the period April 1, 1999 to December 31, 1999. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 11-14(2): Extended Adjournment

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 2, 2000, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh that notwithstanding Rule 4, that when this House adjourns on Tuesday, February 29, 2000, it shall be adjourned until Tuesday, March 21, 2000.

And further, that any time prior to March 21, 2000, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

At the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Before we go on to Item 16, motions, the House will take a short break.

-- Break

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 10-14(2): Pipeline Development (Carried)

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS there has recently been increased interest in the development of natural gas resources of the Western Arctic;

AND WHEREAS Canada has commitments under the terms of the Kyoto Protocol to seek the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, a reduction which can be realized in part through the use of natural gas;

AND WHEREAS these resources should be developed in a manner that provides for the greatest benefit to all parties, including northern people, governments and industry;

AND WHEREAS aboriginal leaders meeting in Fort Liard, have recently expressed their intention to work together to build a partnership to maximize the ownership of, and benefits from a Mackenzie Valley pipeline;

AND WHEREAS the construction of a natural gas pipeline through the Mackenzie Valley area will support the development of additional infrastructure which will benefit all Valley communities;

NOW THEREFORE I move seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that the 14th Legislative Assembly is committed to work cooperatively and in partnership with aboriginal governments to take control of the development of northern resources;

AND FURTHER that this Legislative Assembly urges the Government of the Northwest Territories, in partnership with aboriginal governments, to actively promote the development of a natural gas pipeline through the Mackenzie Valley;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories seeks to maximize the benefits that would accrue to western Arctic communities with the development of a natural gas pipeline down the Mackenzie Valley;

AND FURTHERMORE, that this Legislative Assembly endorses the efforts of the Premier and the Executive Council in seeking, with aboriginal governments, the control of our natural resources and the sharing with these governments of the resource revenues arising from that development.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. We have a motion on the floor. To the motion. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there has been much talk of development in the Northwest Territories. Knowing our certain fiscal situation, it is very important we get on with developing our resources in cooperation with aboriginal governments of the Northwest Territories. It is time we worked together to benefit all residents of the Northwest Territories. Gone are the days when we could make a decision on our own, as a government or as a land claim group. Now is the day when we have to work together to benefit all residents, to provide employment and long term benefits. We are aware that recently the aboriginal leaders in Fort Liard, as stated in the motion, have agreed to work together to pursue the development of a natural gas pipeline down the Mackenzie Valley. I think this is a very important step that we, as a government, get on board, to assist them, and work along side with them. To pursue this, to see this potential developed so that northern residents will benefit from this development.

Mr. Speaker, especially coming from an area for example in the Mackenzie Delta, we went through a boom and bust cycle of the early oil development where we saw the Inuvik region balloon out to almost 7,000 people in the community alone, at certain times during this cycle. But at that time, Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories' people were not ready to assume ownership of a lot of the companies that would take care of the work. A lot of the people, at that time, took positions such as camp attendants, labourers, light equipment operators. Now, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of people who worked through that era and have developed themselves into business men who have new businesses that can take on the type of work that can be done here. We have aboriginal groups who have settled claims and those that are working on settling claims who can take on the job that is being provided here and provide true benefits to northern residents.

I think this is a move, as we have talked about, to work with aboriginal governments of the Northwest Territories. We can come together from this area and show the residents and the rest of Canada we have got it together. We are going to work together and bring results; not just talk about it, but bring results. This is very important today, Mr. Speaker.

We can no longer, as we are finding out as a government, totally depend on Ottawa. As we heard in the federal budget speech, there are some changes happening. But the net impact on the Northwest Territories will not cover the cost of doing business in the Northwest Territories. It grows every year. We, as northern residents, have to come together in a common theme to develop our resources that keeps our environment safe, that see jobs being developed in the Northwest Territories, not just short term, but long term as well, that sees the training being done at an acceptable rate that will not leave people out until the last part of the job is being done.

Gone is the day, Mr. Speaker, where we are the ones that fetch the water and chop the wood, so to speak. We now have the expertise in the Northwest Territories to be able to sign the contracts, to do the legal work. Mr. Speaker, this is an opportunity for us as the Government of the Northwest Territories to work along side the aboriginal governments. To show our own people, to show Canada, and to show the world that we are able and we are ready to march into the new millennium. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. To the motion. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have my name as the seconder for this motion. However, I want this House to note that the support from the Deh Cho First Nations for this motion is conditional.

Mr. Speaker, as the Members will recall, when the aboriginal leaders met in Fort Liard last month, they were ready to talk about a Mackenzie Valley pipeline, to talk about business partnerships, to maximize ownership and benefits of the pipeline. I will remind Members they sent a clear message they wanted it to be built on their terms. It was noted by those leaders we are now at a point where several land claims have been settled and others are currently at different stages of negotiations. The invitation for business, industry and government to approach the leadership on their terms. For my own region, this involves the recognition that the leadership is

still negotiating political development. The Deh Cho First Nations are still discussing their self-government arrangements, which is referred to as the Deh Cho proposal.

Mr. Speaker, this is why today I stand to make clear that Deh Cho has given conditional support for this motion. I will remind Members that the participation from the Deh Cho is dependent on how much progress is made to this process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Nahendeh.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak to the motion and makes some comments on behalf of the Members of the Cabinet. Before I begin, I would like to note, for the record, Cabinet will be abstaining from the vote on this motion as per the usual custom of the House.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, it is important to state that Cabinet and the Government of the Northwest Territories fully supports the intent of this motion.

-- Applause

On behalf of Cabinet, I would like to thank Mr. Roland and Mr. McLeod for putting this motion forward and I hope all Members will support it.

Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of traveling to Fort Liard, along with Mr. Joe Handley and Mr. Mike McLeod, to attend the Aboriginal Leaders' Meeting on Oil and Gas on January 26, 2000. In fact, we arrived at the meeting while they were deliberating on this motion. They had unanimously agreed to work together to maximize ownership and benefits of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline.

Mr. Speaker, this was, indeed, a historic occasion. It was the first time, in my memory, since the Berger Inquiry that aboriginal leaders from up and down the valley and from all regions of this Territory had met to discuss the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. The recent meeting in Fort Liard shows how the attitudes towards development have changed since the Berger Inquiry.

This change has taken place because the aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories have taken huge strides in advancing their rights. They now wish to expand the benefits they received from resource development to include equity participation and ownership, in addition to jobs, training and business opportunities. Mr. Speaker, it was obvious from the discussion in Fort Liard, and the subsequent discussions that I had with aboriginal leaders, that aboriginal governments are ready to take on these types of projects.

More importantly, aboriginal people want to ensure equity participation in this and other large-scale resource development projects in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, this is an important and historic statement, and one fully supported by this government. Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, this government is committed to the intent of this motion. I would, however, like to speak to two of the resolutions in particular.

First, the motion commits the 14th Legislative Assembly to work cooperatively with aboriginal governments to take control of the development of northern resources. Sharing control of northern resources with aboriginal governments is one of the five key components of the Agenda for the New North. This involves the sharing of the management and control of resource development and, more importantly, the revenues that accrue from the development of our resources. The Members of the 14th Legislative Assembly have generally agreed that the agenda will serve as the basis for establishing the priorities and direction for this Assembly. I would also note, Mr. Speaker, Members have agreed that this government must work in partnership with aboriginal governments on issues affecting the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, this government is of the view that the establishment of an intergovernmental forum and an ongoing governmental process is the best way to proceed on pursuing northern control of northern resources. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Premier, Mr. Handley and myself met with aboriginal leaders from across the Northwest Territories to hold preliminary discussions on the establishment of this intergovernmental process. Northern control of northern resources was an issue that was discussed at some length at this meeting.

Mr. Speaker, the second resolution set out in the motion urges the government, in partnership with aboriginal governments, to actively promote the development of a natural gas pipeline through the Mackenzie Valley. Mr. Speaker, it is the view of this government that the Mackenzie Valley is the natural routing for such a pipeline. We are committed to working with aboriginal governments to actively promote this routing and to provide the support required to ensure that this project moves forward.

Before I end today, I would like to, again, commend aboriginal leaders for their accomplishment in Fort Liard. As the next step, aboriginal leaders have struck a working committee, chaired by Chief Harry Deneron of the Acho Koe Dene Band to work on building the business partnership necessary to move this project forward. The Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to working with and providing support to this committee to ensure that their work is successful. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. To the motion. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, will be supporting this motion. I believe we do have to get on with it because there are other jurisdictions in the country that would like to see this pipeline run through their jurisdiction. Mr. Speaker, I am talking about the Government of the Yukon, which passed a similar motion in their House a number of weeks ago. They have been lobbying the Alaska government and people in Congress in the 48th State.

So, I think it is important that this government also takes the initiative to start promoting, not only here in the North, but in other jurisdictions in Canada, Alaska and in the United States.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I think it is critical that this government proceeds with these talks and discussions to ensure that we do put forth a very saleable package because we do have pipeline right-of-ways already in our jurisdiction.

We do have land claims settled in a majority of the areas and we are working on settling in the rest of the Territories.

But, Mr. Speaker, most importantly, I believe this government has to get ourselves ready, not only as a government, but for the people we represent, by ensuring those people are adequately trained and that we have the human resources and the infrastructure in place to take on such a project.

We have an opportunity in the area of the secondary industries. If you look at the trucking industry in the Northwest Territories, you are talking about competition. Right now, there is a surge of trucks available to Robinson's Trucking and the mines of the Northwest Territories because of oil and gas development in British Columbia, Alberta and in western Canada. In order for us to benefit, we have to realize that we do not have much time, Mr. Speaker. They are talking 2007 or 2008 for this project to be up and running.

As a government, we have to ensure we have all the processes in place, claims settled, the Northern Accord devolution process concluded, and ensure that the regulatory processes are in place to take on such a project so that Northerners will be totally involved in the environmental assessment process, and also to ensure that we receive the maximum for economic benefits that flow from such a major project.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the motion. Mr. Roland has the opportunity to sum it up as the final speaker. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank, as well, Minister Antoine for making a statement, although I am somewhat disappointed they will not actually take a vote. It is following tradition, I believe. I would like to state that, as a government, it is time we moved on to the next stage and create a true partnership in the North. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will be requesting a recorded vote on this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. A recorded vote has been requested. To the motion. Question has been called. Mr. Clerk, would you record the vote? All those in favour, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Roland, Mr. Dent, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Bell, Mr. Nitah, Mr. Braden, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, would you please stand? All those abstaining, would you please stand?

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Steen, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Handley, Mr. Allen, Mr. Ootes.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. The results of the recorded vote, Yes-11, No-zero, Abstentions-six. The motion is carried.

-- Applause

Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with the motion. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Braden, you have unanimous consent and may proceed.

Motion 11-14(2): Extended Adjournment (Carried)

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh that notwithstanding Rule 4, that when this House adjourns on Tuesday, February 29, 2000, it shall be adjourned until Tuesday, March 21, 2000;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to March 21, 2000, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters, Minister's statement 1-14(2), Sessional Statement, and tabled document 14-14(2), Our Community, Our Decision, Let's Get on With It!, with Mr. Krutko in the Chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. We are dealing in committee of the whole with Minister's Statement 1-14(2), Sessional Statement and Tabled Document 14-14(2), Our Community, Our Decision, Let's Get on With It!. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

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

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. I will rise to report progress.

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

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Minister's Statement 1-14(2), Sessional Statement and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Is there a seconder for the motion? The Chair recognizes the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland, as the seconder. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day, Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee of Accountability and Oversight immediately after adjournment tonight. At 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning, there will be meetings of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development and of the Standing Committee on Social Programs. Orders of the day for Tuesday, March 21, 2000:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Ministers' Statement 1-14(2), Sessional Statement
 - Tabled Document 14-14(2), Our Communities, Our Decisions: Let's Get on With It!. Final Report of the Minister's Forum on Health and Social Services
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, March 21, 2000 at 1:30 p.m.

--ADJOURNMENT

