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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 2001

Members Present

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Please be seated. Good afternoon, colleagues. Before we go to Ministers' statements, I am pleased to recognize this week as Public Service Week across Canada. This week, we recognize the employees for their dedicated service to the public sector.

The Legislative Assembly marked Public Service Week with long service awards handed out to our current Legislative Assembly employees with ten or more years of government service. The following people received their ten-year long service award: John Anderson, Donna Friesen, Dave Inch, Glen McLean, Vera Raschke, Doug Schauerte and Brian Thagard.

Myles Moreside and Karen Short both received their 15-year long service award, and the Clerk of our Assembly, Mr. David Hamilton, received both his 20-year and 25-year long service award. Congratulations to all of the award winners. We appreciate all of your hard work and we look forward to your continued dedication to the Government of the Northwest Territories and to this Legislative Assembly.

-- Applause

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Minister Steen.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 21-14(4): Canada Transportation Act Review Panel

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to report to the Legislative Assembly on my presentation in Yellowknife on March 27, 2001, to the Canada Transportation Act Review Panel.

The panel was appointed by the federal Minister of Transportation in June 2000 to undertake a comprehensive review of the Canada Transportation Act and related legislation. The focus of the review was competitive rail access and the overall effectiveness of the current legislation and regulatory framework in dealing with public policy issues. The panel also welcomed recommendation related to other modes of transportation.

Over the past year, the panel met with interested parties in each province and territory and has since received over 190

written submissions. Based on the extensive consultation, submissions received, and their own research, the panel's final recommendations to the federal Minister of Transport will be compiled in a report scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, my presentation to the panel included the following key recommendations on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

First, the Government of the Northwest Territories recommended that section 5 of the Canada Transportation Act be amended to present a clear vision for a national transportation system that puts citizens' interests first, that describes the Government of Canada's interests, role and commitment to the national transportation system, and that assigns departmental or agency responsibility to meet the federal commitment. We urged the panel to recommend to the federal Minister of Transport that any revision to the national transportation policy account for regional differences in transportation needs and recognition that Canada's various jurisdictions, large and small, provincial and territorial, have differing capacities to participate in the delivery of policy at the national level.

Second, a key recommendation focused on the allocation formula for federal funds under a national transportation investment strategy. A per capita allocation formula for national infrastructure programs seriously disadvantages sparsely populated northern territories. The Government of the Northwest Territories strongly urged the panel to recommend to the federal Minister of Transport that the formula for allocation of federal transportation-related funds be established on need-based criteria other than strict per capita allocation.

Finally, the Government of the Northwest Territories strongly urged the panel to recommend that the federal government should have a defined role in road transportation, the most important transportation mode in Canada. In particular, through a new vision for transportation in Canada and through a new national transportation policy, the federal government should take the bold initiative of earlier governments and use its spending power to tie Canada together from sea to sea, and to facilitate the development of the North's huge non-renewable resource potential.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the panel finds our recommendations worthy of inclusion in their report. After the federal Minister of Transport receives the report, he will then consider the recommendations and decide what revisions and amendments to the Canada Transportation Act would be appropriate. I will advise the House of these developments as they occur.

At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will be tabling a copy of the Government of the Northwest Territories submission to the

Canada Transportation Act Review Panel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Vital Manuel's Trip Report on the Alberta Special Olympic Summer Games

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, I would like to use my time today to read you a report on a trip, prepared by Vital Manuel. Vital has been a constituency worker of mine for several years, assisting the office staff and helping with constituency work. He has also served for some years as a page for this Assembly.

Recently, Vital attended the Alberta Special Olympic Summer Games and, with his team members, won a bronze medal. I would like to read his report, if I may.

Mr. Speaker, this is addressed to Premier Stephen Kakfwi:

My trip to the Alberta Special Olympic Summer Games

The games were held in Calgary May 11th to 13th. I was chosen to be part of the NWT Special Olympics five-pin bowling contingent. I was one of the ten bowlers chosen. The bowlers were made up of two teams. Team one consisted of Danny Tanche, Gabrielle Nukapiak, Julie White, Clara Tutcho and Corey Foot. Team two was made up of Corinne Lafferty, Monica Felix, Janet Berard and Mervin Olikoak and myself.

We all trained out of Yellowknife under Head Coach Judy Russell and Coach Lynell Broadbent. The coaches accompanied the team. We did a lot of practising before we went to the games. We trained hard because we knew we were competing against 405 bowlers from across Alberta.

We left Yellowknife by plane about seven o'clock Friday morning, May 11th, and returned about eleven o'clock Sunday night, May 13th.

In Calgary, we stayed at the University residence with all the other athletes. We all felt proud of our performance at the games. Team one won a gold medal and Team two won a bronze medal. In addition, there were several individual team member medals, including one gold medal, three silver medals and two bronze medals. We all shared the successes.

For me, I felt proud to be representing my city and my territory. I also felt that it would make my parents feel good to know that they gave me the strength and encouragement to be the best I can be. As well, it helps everyone understand that people with disabilities are whole people like everyone else, who live full lives and contribute to society. I was grateful for the opportunity...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Kakfwi, the time for your Member's statement has expired.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

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

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I was grateful for the opportunity, and I hope that our team will do well at the National Summer Games that will take place in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, next summer.

I am also grateful that you asked me to share this story with you. You have been a great support to me and a great role model for me. I feel truly privileged.

Respectfully submitted,

Vital Manuel

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Kakfwi, and congratulations, Vital. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement on Direct Appointment at the Territorial Women's Correctional Centre

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week in the House, I raised the issue of the Minister of Justice's intention to make a direct political appointment to the warden's position of the Territorial Women's Correctional Centre.

Mr. Speaker, this issue is still out there. The concerns are still there. In fact, I can communicate to this House that the community is basically in an uproar over this particular matter. The Minister and the government are seen to be totally bypassing hiring processes, bypassing the issue of experience and qualifications, even bypassing the Department of Justice, I understand. Not to mention qualified Northerners who may be out there and would be interested in this particular job.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to reiterate the concern. This is one of the flagship programs for the Department of Corrections. It has an excellent staff, an excellent warden and reputation,

and a program that is the envy of all other jurisdictions in Canada.

By making this kind of direct, political appointment, the Minister is putting that particular program at risk, in my opinion. I have had the community leadership indicate to me, I have had staff indicate to me and many constituents indicate to me their concern about their issue and the fact that this is being done in such a way. When the Minister is here during question period, I want to ask him if he will reconsider and do the right thing: put this position back out to public competition and let the job be won by the most qualified, able and experienced Northerner. Thank you.

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

Member's Statement on Expanded Down Payment Assistance Plan

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I have a statement regarding the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation and the Expanded Down Payment Assistance Program, also known as EDAP. Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation states that its overall objection is to help families and individuals obtain homes that meet their specific needs. Yet the EDAP program fails to meet the specific needs of the families and individuals of the smaller communities in the North.

Mr. Speaker, the EDAP program was introduced by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, replacing six other programs that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation previously offered. These programs were the Down Payment Assistance Program, the Purchase Program, the Access Program, the Forgivable Loan Program, the Direct Lend Program and the Home Improvement Program.

However, the consolidation of many programs into one has left significant gaps in the coverage offered by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. First, the EDAP program requires that clients arrange conventional bank financing or private mortgages, and cover the portion of costs that are not covered by the corporation under the program. EDAP clients have to privately finance between 95 percent and 30 percent of their new home.

There are no banks or financial institutions in most of the communities in the North. In such instances, it is difficult if not impossible for residents to make private arrangements. Also, in many small communities, a greater number of residents are engaged in seasonal work or a multitude of part-time occupations, as opposed to larger centres where there is a greater percentage of residents employed full time by government agencies.

Residents engaged in seasonal work find it harder to obtain even the smallest private mortgage, a prerequisite of the EDAP program. Therefore, the EDAP program does not meet the mandate of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation in that it fails to meet the specific needs of the residents of the smaller communities.

Mr. Speaker, the EDAP program is primarily suited to larger regional centres and appears to be of limited use to the residents of other communities in the North. The reason that it is so important that the Northwest Territories Housing

Corporation develops an appropriate program for all residents in the Northwest Territories is that the housing program in the North is getting worse, in absolute terms, rather than better.

According to the Northwest Territories Housing Needs Survey 2000, the number of households found to be in core need in the Northwest Territories had increased by 237...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. McLeod, the time allocated for your statement has expired.

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

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

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the smaller communities, the economy is less well-developed and more intervention is required. Let me illustrate this with an example from my riding of the Deh Cho, Mr. Speaker. The Northwest Territories Housing Needs Survey 2000 states that the Hay River Reserve has the highest proportion of core need in the entire South Slave district at a tragic rate of 61 percent. The community of Enterprise follows closely with a rate of 54 percent. The community that I come from, Mr. Speaker, Fort Providence, has a rate of 40 percent. Compare these rates to 11 percent for Yellowknife and 14 percent for Fort Smith, Inuvik, and the town of Hay River.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for this government to get serious about the housing problem in the Northwest Territories. We cannot simply ignore the problem and hope it will go away. The challenge for the Minister of Housing and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is to develop an appropriate program that will address the needs of our population in a meaningful way. Let us do it now, Mr. Speaker, and not allow another generation to grow up in substandard housing conditions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Volunteer Organizations

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to stand today to speak again on the importance of the volunteer sector here in the Northwest Territories. We need to recognize the tremendous contribution of volunteers, especially in this, the International Year of Volunteers. They are young and old, male and female, black hair, grey hair, red hair, no hair, or even green hair, as I might have later on when I volunteer for Cops for Cancer, Mr. Speaker. They care about people. They want and they can make a difference in the lives of others, as well as their own.

Statistics tell us that Northerners lead almost all other Canadians in volunteer activity. According to the 1999 Labour Force Survey, 41 percent of Northerners participated as volunteers during 1998. There are 571 registered, non-government organizations, or NGOs or not-for-profit groups in the Northwest Territories. These groups and many more that

are not registered under the Societies Act are collectively referred to as the volunteer sector.

Mr. Speaker, these volunteer groups generate a surprising 1,732 jobs. They represent six percent of our labour force, with \$69 million in salaries. What other benefits does government receive from this third sector, as the volunteer sector is sometimes called?

They provide a tremendous range of programs and services to the residents. They play an important role in supporting active citizenship and well being. Mr. Speaker, I believe this government could do a better job of supporting them.

For instance, many groups do not know by the close of their fiscal year whether they will be able to have continued funding for the following year and can indeed keep their doors open. We as a government must provide timely and adequate funding and let those groups get on with their program delivery. Multi-year funding agreements should be the norm when there is an established track record and a history of results.

With regard to value for money, I wish I could get as good a rate of return as this government gets for its contributions to non-government organizations. They are experts on leveraging funds from the federal government, the private sector, and fundraising in various foundations. They might even be able to give the Minister of Finance a few tips on this matter.

I believe we need to do our part for the non-government organizations in support of long-term funding programs. That is my message, Mr. Speaker. We need to form a new relationship with our volunteers, recognizing the vital role they play in our society. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Open and Accountable Government

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we as Members of this House, as elected representatives of the people, are here to account for the actions of this government. Mr. Speaker, there have been several issues I have had a lot of problems with, especially when you find out that projects have been deferred in Member's ridings without the Member being notified or aware of these issues.

We hear of new initiatives through appropriations to the tune of \$56 million, yet many of these initiatives are not previously authorized to the tune of \$33 million.

Mr. Speaker, we have a role in this House. We all play a role with regard to Members and committees within this Legislature, where we have a process of involvement. We have a process to ensure we have accountability of departments and expenditures by departments. Also, a process for the public to take in regard to the business planning process.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of these initiatives that are presently in front of us are all new initiatives. A lot of these initiatives have not even been informed by Members of committees, but yet, Mr. Speaker, they continue to happen.

Mr. Speaker, there is a reason for all of these processes. We have policies in the way transfers will take place and how Members and committees will be informed on how those transfers have taken place, and given the opportunity to affected Members that those transfers will be reinstated some time down the road, that the money will not be totally taken away from your riding without your involvement or without you having a say in the matter.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, it seems like there has been, in regard to how these processes changed drastically from the previous Assembly. Mr. Speaker, we as Members in this House, who are on committees and what not, are finding it difficult to react to issues that are new initiatives that we are not even made aware of. As a government, we have to be more open to the people out there and more open to the Members of this House.

I think it is important that when we do have these new initiatives, when we make these new expenditures, we should allow...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krutko, the time for your Member's statement has expired.

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

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. I for one feel that we do have to allow for a public process or a committee process to do its job to ensure that these new public expenditures and initiatives happen through some process that we have input into, not reacting to issues after the fact.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Minister responsible for Finance questions later.

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

Member's Statement on Tax Regime For Small Businesses

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to speak a little about tax policy. I think we have had extensive discussion on tax policy, specifically the committee the Minister is setting up to look at personal income tax, the TONI committee, I believe it is called. TONI, as we know, will allow us some flexibility in setting up our own tax regime, and we are simply following other jurisdictions.

I would like to talk a little bit about small business tax, Mr. Speaker. The media has picked up recently on some comments made by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. I know that currently there is a review of BIP underway, and I believe recommendations have come before Cabinet.

One thing that interested me in the initial review of BIP was a comment that reducing the small business tax rate in the Northwest Territories from its current five percent to zero percent would only cost the GNWT in lost revenues \$1.6 million

per year, Mr. Speaker. That is not very much. It is really a minimal cost when you factor in the companies that might relocate because of the advantage and file taxes in the North.

Obviously we would not collect more taxes, but when you look at this in terms of job creation and spending from small business, I think it is clear that this is something we would want to move toward, Mr. Speaker.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which apparently represents 200 northern firms, has stated that the Northwest Territories used to be an attractive jurisdiction to file taxes in, Mr. Speaker, and that is no longer the case. They have indicated that while the Northwest Territories is at five percent, other jurisdictions like B.C. at 4.5 percent, Ontario at four percent, and Alberta, the lowest at 3.5 percent, are clearly leading the pack now, Mr. Speaker.

In the past, I have also commented on thresholds for small business and suggested that we might want to look at our \$200,000 per year taxable income threshold for small business and raise it to something more in line with \$400,000 or so, Mr. Speaker.

At this time, I would like to urge the Minister to come forward quickly with tax relief for small business. I think we all know about the Alberta advantage but, Mr. Speaker, let us make sure that we do not get too familiar with the Northwest Territories disadvantage that they are currently talking about with regard to small business tax rates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Property Tax Relief for Seniors

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that affects our seniors population in the North. Mr. Speaker, I thought this would be particularly appropriate at this time, as just last week, during Seniors' Week, we spoke so eloquently in this House about how this government should fully support our seniors.

The issue I wish to draw your attention to, Mr. Speaker, is the issue of property tax relief for seniors. Mr. Speaker, senior citizens and disabled persons may apply for property tax relief under the Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act. Mr. Speaker, in tax-based communities such as Hay River, MACA provides 50 percent of the property tax relief, and local governments in the communities provide the other 50 percent. In other communities, MACA provides property tax relief directly to the eligible property owners.

Mr. Speaker, a concern was raised to me recently that a senior citizen in Hay River, and a constituent of mine, who had reached the age of 65 had to pay the full amount of the property tax for the coming year. This was due to the fact that his spouse was still working.

Mr. Speaker, the Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act basically states that if one member of the household is working, then this family member is not

dependent on the senior citizen, thus the senior citizen does not require any support from this government to pay his bills.

Mr. Speaker, this act was written back in 1989 and does not reflect the true cost of living today or the cost of maintaining a home. I suggest that this act be changed. If we need to justify the change, Mr. Speaker, we can borrow a line used by our honourable Finance Minister. When looking for support to increase the BCC loan limit from \$1 million to \$2 million, he said: "This limit has been in place for roughly ten years. Accordingly, it is time for change."

Mr. Speaker, residents in the nine NWT communities do not pay property tax. I think it is inappropriate for this government to penalize senior citizens who live in tax-based communities by making them pay the full amount of their property tax. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Members' Code of Conduct

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the last while, a code of conduct was mailed out to all government employees. It provided clear direction for employees by outlining their rights and responsibilities. Mr. Speaker, as Legislators, we also have a very clear set of guidelines. Shortly after being elected to office, we were given a Member's manual, which includes conduct guidelines.

As Legislators, we are expected to govern the Northwest Territories and to hear the voices of all our people, to preserve our traditions and bridge them with new ways to build our future, to provide legislation, policies and services for the good of the people as individuals, families and communities, to promote the equality of all our people, to distribute resources fairly and justly, and to respect and honour our land and all its inhabitants.

Mr. Speaker, I am highlighting these guidelines because I think they are often overlooked when studies, strategies and reviews are done for and by the government.

Over a year ago, all MLAs met in Fort Providence to create a plan of action for the life of this Assembly. The framework that was developed was called Towards a Better Tomorrow. It is a framework because it was our goal to get input from residents and to develop a comprehensive action plan.

I realize that Towards a Better Tomorrow is considered a living document. However, many of our so-called new initiatives are really an extension of work done by past governments. They are not really the vision of this Legislature, as they do not include the voices of all people.

For example, I have repeatedly asked for changes to current strategies and reviews. I am also assured that, as the studies are living documents, my input will be taken into account. Unfortunately, beyond these assurances, I never see any adjustments made to include my region. As Legislators, we are expected to do our best to fulfill our duties to the legislature, the public, our constituents and each other with integrity and honour. We owe the public the responsibility to work for the

well being of all residents in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on The Need to Put Words Into Action

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I as well would like to speak on the strategies, planning and implementation of those by our government.

Mr. Speaker, it is an issue I have raised in the past and I have told my constituents that we have heard enough of studies, strategy and planning. It is time to put some dollars on the road so we can get something done.

Mr. Speaker, I have a number of examples of our strategies and planning where on one hand, we say we are going to get some input from you because we have this Intergovernmental Forum Secretariat, or this consultant to do some work. On the other hand, we are giving money away.

AN HON. MEMBER: I will take it.

MR. ROLAND: Yes, Mr. Speaker, many people will take that money. Mr. Speaker, it is an ongoing problem from past governments and we seem to have gotten into the habit that I consider to be a bad one. We are spending before we know exactly what the map is going to look like.

A couple of examples, Mr. Speaker. The Cuff Report is coming out near the end of this month, days after the Social Agenda Conference. We have an Intergovernmental Forum Secretariat that is looking at regional reorganization and what the government will look like after self-government starts to take hold in the Northwest Territories. On the other hand, we already have departments implementing some of their own plans.

Mr. Speaker, another example. Yesterday, during committee of the whole review, there was discussion on some expenditures put forward by this government that were not supplementary. One is in the area of transportation, and it referred to strategy 7 in the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy, Mr. Speaker. It was on airport planning and development.

Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity last night to go through the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy. It is quite specific. It identifies what strategy 7 is. Mr. Speaker, strategy 7 is strictly highways. It lists the highways up and down the valley and says we are going to do work on those highways and prepare for the development of the Northwest Territories.

There are a number of other issues that were identified under the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy as reasons for expenditures. Mr. Speaker, that strategy has not been fully adopted. It was shopped to the federal government and we have maybe one percent of a down payment, as it was called, in this past winter's session.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Roland, the time for your Member's statement has expired.

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

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, while we have little more than two years left in this government, we have talked about what we want to do for residents of the Northwest Territories. I urge this government to now start taking concrete action, action that will see resources going to residents of the Northwest Territories, whether it is front-line workers or businesses to take advantage of the resource development that is going on. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will have questions to the appropriate Minister. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Construction of Multi-Use Facilities in Small Communities

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in this time of unprecedented opportunities for economic development in major areas like diamonds, the pipeline, oil and gas and hydro, our government has been running around the country, the North, and the world. Trades and opportunities.

Our government is spending \$11 million on maximizing employment. However, Mr. Speaker, where is it going to be spent in our small, predominantly aboriginal communities? There is no economic development there. If there is no economic development, how do we maximize employment in those communities?

There is one good example, Mr. Speaker, that this government could participate in. Our colleague, the Member for Nunakput, told us of a multiuse centre in Paulatuk that was finished in April, which was a combined effort between the federal government, the GNWT and Aboriginal Business Canada.

The new centre ties in a hotel, a visitors' centre, northern retail store and commercial offices. An additional multi-user room would be used for course classes this fall. I encourage our Northwest Territories government to develop this type of unified project in other Northwest Territories communities.

It was conceived in the spirit of cooperation and resourcefulness. From concept to construction took two years. The multiuse building opened at the end of April and DIAND gave \$350,000 towards the construction of the \$4 million facility. It was through the Economic Development Opportunity Fund. Getting one single building instead of four separate buildings was cheaper in the long term.

The project was not without a few hitches of course, Mr. Speaker, nothing is in the Northwest Territories. Getting groups together to sign leases was gruelling. However, this project illustrates the way it has dipped around obstacles and fosters self-sufficiency in aboriginal communities, and also to create economic development that will take advantage of the \$11 million in maximizing...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Nitah, the time for your Member's statement has ended. Perhaps you could just repeat that last paragraph if you get unanimous consent.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There being no nays, Mr. Nitah, you may conclude that last paragraph for sure.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, investing in northern employment in the areas of oil and gas does not do much for our small aboriginal communities. We need to develop economic development in our communities. Projects like this will help in creating employment and also help in developing our tourism industry. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. Doug Hutton, who is the president of the King Motion Picture Corporation of Edmonton, a video and television production company that has quite a history of northern production. Welcome to the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize in the gallery Mr. Ken Laviolette, band councilor for the Salt River First Nations, and Henry Beaver, the negotiator for the Salt River First Nations. It is a pleasure to have them in the Assembly today. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Welcome to our gallery. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the president of the Union of Northern Workers, Georgina Rolt-Kaiser.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. I would like to say welcome to all of the people who have taken some time to come and see the Legislative Assembly in action today. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 72-14(4): Attention Paid to the Needs of Small Communities

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier, the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi. The many studies, strategies and reviews that have been brought before our Assembly continually exclude my region, despite my bringing forward band council resolutions and petitions indicating regional support for initiatives. I am always told that my suggestions will be considered, but they never go beyond that. I would like to know what direction the Premier has given to the Ministers to ensure that all communities are included in the studies, strategies and reviews of this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 72-14(4): Attention Paid to the Needs of Small Communities

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was under the impression that the Dogrib region was being quite well served by this government. It lobbied for years, for instance, to have the highway paved. We have found the money, resources and commitment to do that. In fact, we accelerated that project. We have worked with the Dogribs over the last four years to see successful conclusions to several negotiated agreements with BHP and other companies, ensuring that they are receiving benefits from diamond exploration and production. I believe we have paid much attention to the Dogrib region in recent years because of the incredible pace of development that occurred in that region. We have worked every which way we can to ensure that the negotiations that they are engaged in, as well as being supportive, are given the attention that they deserve. We have limited resources. We cannot always respond as quickly as we would like. We have other communities and regions that also deserve some of the attention and resources that we have. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 72-14(4): Attention Paid to the Needs of Small Communities

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad this government supports some of the activities that are happening there, but my questions were more regarding infrastructures and projects. Mr. Speaker, it is very frustrating when asking questions. I am referred from one Minister to another and given no answers. Although the Ministers are involved in these initiatives, I feel that all this is happening and the buck is being passed from to the other. Can the Premier work with his colleagues to ensure that when questions are raised, they are answered directly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 72-14(4): Attention Paid to the Needs of Small Communities

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I believe that when Members are asking questions, they should get the answers they are seeking. If not, I will work with Ministers to ensure the answers that are requested are as forthcoming as possible. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 72-14(4): Attention Paid to the Needs of Small Communities

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when questions are asked in the House to Ministers, they seem to have a fear of answering, in fear that they might give up a project in their own ridings. I would like to ask the Premier if he can direct his Ministers to consult with Members on this side of the House for future projects and initiatives? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 72-14(4): Attention Paid to the Needs of Small Communities

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As much as possible, and especially where we are obliged to do so, we consult. As Members know, sometimes there are slight hiccups, but none of these are ever intentional, for instance, in situations where we need to respond quickly and decisively. Yes, as much as possible and where we can, we will commit Ministers to consulting the MLAs on the work they are undertaking in their respective communities. Thank you.

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

Question 73-14(4): Notice of Deferred Capital Projects

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board regarding the question I asked on Monday, June 11, from the unedited Hansard. The question about the notice of projects being deferred. I asked the Minister several questions on the matter in regard to notification to himself as the Minister and also, has the Minister checked to see if the Financial Administration Act is being adhered to. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister responsible, has he checked into this and does he have any answers for me today?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 73-14(4): Notice of Deferred Capital Projects

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I have checked into this project and checked with the Financial Administration Manual to see whether or not there was any violation. It appears that there has not been any. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 73-14(4): Notice of Deferred Capital Projects

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also asked the Minister if he could get information back to the House on whether he is aware of the notification process that is in place, where departments have to notify the FMB in regard to any changes to any capital projects. Has he looked into that matter?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 73-14(4): Notice of Deferred Capital Projects

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have checked into this one. Let me tell you that on the project that Mr. Krutko is referring to, the Highway No. 8 project, which is reconstruction from kilometre 0 to kilometre 257, this is one project with a value of \$500,000. It covers a whole bunch of activities within that one project, but it is all one project. That is the way it was approved in the main estimates. If you check the main estimates, you will see one project.

When it comes to the Financial Administration Manual, the manual says that:

"When a department makes an adjustment to a capital project which significantly affects the scope or timing of the project, the responsible Minister will advise the appropriate MLA and standing committee."

In this case, there was some money moved around from one aspect of the project to another one, but the scope of the whole project remained the same. The timing of the project has essentially remained the same. Even though there was movement from culverts to bridge or whatever it may have been, there has been no substantial change at all to the project as a project. Therefore, there is no violation of the Financial Administration Act or the manual. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 73-14(4): Notice of Deferred Capital Projects

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe there are two misinterpretations of the act. There have been major changes in my riding. There have been two projects that have been deferred. That means two projects are not going to happen within this timeframe in the 2001-2002 fiscal year. There is a change with regard to the timing of the project.

Again, I would like to ask the Minister: with regard to the scope of the project, which is over \$100,000, or 20 percent of the project, it clearly states under the guidelines, under Article 4.3, item B, that is the area I feel the violation took place. Has the Minister checked in regard to that aspect of the Financial Administration Act?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 73-14(4): Notice of Deferred Capital Projects

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Let me say again that in this case, there is only one project. It is for reconstruction of Highway No. 8, kilometre 0 to kilometre 257. That is all one big project. There is no movement of money from one project to another. It is all within the project. There are a number of contracts within that project, but that is a different matter. There is no requirement under the Financial Administration Manual or the Act to make a report back to Members when a contract within a project is changed around and so on. That is something that is not controlled within the Financial Administration Act or manual.

In this case, we are only dealing with one project. There has been some differences in contract money and how it is being scheduled out, but the whole project has not substantially changed in scope or in timing. There has been no substantial change to the whole project. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 73-14(4): Notice of Deferred Capital Projects

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe there have been 23 contracts let on the Dempster Highway. Twenty-three contracts to an expenditure of \$5 million. There are 23 contracts in that framework of the \$5 million. Out of that, two projects have been deferred in my riding, which is, as far as I can see, a major change in regard to the 23 contracts. Now there are 21 contracts. That is a major change with regard to how the expenditure is taking place.

Again, I would like to ask the Minister: have you been notified that any deferrals to any capital projects have been submitted to your department?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 73-14(4): Notice of Deferred Capital Projects

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, let me say again that when it comes to the changes within the contracts, the contracts that are within the project, that is not an issue that I would monitor as a Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board. That is something between the Minister of Transportation and his department and the MLAs who may be impacted by it. However, it is not a violation of the Financial Administration Manual or Act to be moving monies or timing around on these individual contracts. That is between the department and the Minister and whoever else may be affected.

All I can say, as Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, is that there has not been any violation of the Financial Administration Act or manual. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Handley. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta has a point of order.

Point of Order

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I met with the Minister on this matter yesterday evening. He ensured me that Section 23 of the act, 23(b), was definitely not adhered to. That is my point of order. I believe he is misleading the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Would you please just repeat the last part of your point of order concerning the allegation?

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I did meet with the Minister on this matter yesterday evening to get clarification in regard to the directive and whether he had checked into it. He assured me that he had checked into it, under guideline 4-3(b), and he stated to me, and he had it written out on his piece of paper, that that section was not adhered to by the Department of Transportation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Krutko, would you also clarify which Minister you are referring to, please?

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Chair is having some difficulty in determining whether this is a point of order to a matter that has occurred within the House as far as the procedure is concerned. This matter deals with a conversation that took place outside of the House and may not have had any affect on the procedures within the House.

I do not believe that the Member has a point of order at this time. I am going to refer to a quotation from Beauchesne's 6th Edition Parliamentary Rules, on acceptance of the word of a Member, under section 4-94:

It has been formally ruled by Speakers that statements by Members respecting themselves and particularly within their own knowledge must be accepted. It is not unparliamentary temperately to criticize statements made by Members as being contrary to the facts. That no imputation of intentional falsehood is permissible. On rare occasions, this may result in the House having to accept two contradictory accounts of the same incident.

I am going to ask the Minister if he wishes to comment on that. He may do so only if he chooses to. If he does not choose to, he does not need to. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, since the Member raised my conversation with him, let me clarify what was discussed. Mr. Krutko and I did discuss the Financial Administration Manual, section 4-3(b), which basically says that where there is a major adjustment within a project, both in scope or in timing, then it is necessary for the Minister to advise the appropriate MLA and standing committee.

My comment in the discussion with Mr. Krutko was that there seemed to be a lack of clarity of where the boundary was between Mr. Krutko's riding and Inuvik Boot Lake. This was in reference to Cameron Creek. What I have said is that Mr. Steen had not been aware that a piece of the highway, the Cameron Creek portion, was in Inuvik Boot Lake, and therefore inadvertently moved part of a contract from here that was being done today to finish some work over here. That is as far as it went. That is not a violation of this particular section, but that seems to be the crux of the problem, that there was clarity between whose constituency this was in.

Let me say that the whole project is one project, right from kilometre zero to kilometre 257. I think there may have been an innocent moving of money between...

Speaker's Ruling

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Handley, I think your comments were adequate.

At this time, I am going to rule that there is no point of order. This matter was in conversation that we have no record of in the House. It does not interfere with the procedures in the House and therefore, there is no point of order.

Members will note that we did stop the clock during this bit of a debate in order to continue on with question period. Question period can now again resume. Next on my list is the honourable Member for Frame Lake. I notice a few hands up here. Why do you rise? The Member for Weledeh rises on a point of privilege. Mr. Handley, you may speak to your point of privilege.

Point of Order

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, there has been an accusation that I misled the House. I would like to have that withdrawn. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The Member has asked if the accusation of misleading the House would be withdrawn by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, and this is on a point of privilege. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on the point of privilege, I believe the Minister's response to the questions I asked earlier are inconsistent with the reply which he gave, which on the point of privilege, because he did not give this information, which is not consistent with the information he relieved. I will not withdraw on the point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I have been informed that it is a point of order rather than a point of privilege, and it has been addressed now.

-- Interjection

It has not yet been withdrawn, I am told. Mr. Krutko, there has been a request to withdraw those comments that you had made concerning the honourable Minister. Are you prepared to withdraw them? The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, no.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you for your patience. The Chair was just confirming an item. The Chair did hear the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta allege that the honourable Minister for Financial Management Board had misled the House. By rules of Parliament, it would be unparliamentary to do such a thing. The Chair will again ask the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta to withdraw that remark. Take it back.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, for the sake of proceeding, I will take it back.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The remarks that were made to the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board have been taken back. Now we may proceed. The honourable Member for the Sahtu had his hand up. For what reason?

Point of Order

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, it is a point of order. The House is asked through you to have a serious allegation withdrawn. The allegation as stated, as I heard it, is withdrawn. There is no sincerity in it. It is made simply for the point of saying it so it expedites the process of getting on with business. That is not withdrawing an allegation.

MR. SPEAKER: I am not sure of the purpose of the comments made by the honourable Member, but it is not the Chair's position to determine the level of sincerity, if any or none, of a comment made. The Chair accepts the fact that the Member has withdrawn the comment and we will let it be at that.

Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Question 74-14(4): Stanton Hospital Surgical Ward

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Last fall, as part of the plan to retire the deficit that was faced by Stanton Hospital, the board had proposed that the surgical ward be kept closed. I have heard some rumblings that might be changing at some time. There have been a number of dates suggested for when it might reopen. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services if she could advise the House whether we are going to see the surgical ward reopen, and if so, when?

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

Return to Question 74-14(4): Stanton Hospital Surgical Ward

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, from the latest update I have received from the representative of the Stanton Regional Board and also the administration of Stanton, the intention is to reopen the surgical ward. They anticipate this to be able to happen in September. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 74-14(4): Stanton Hospital Surgical Ward

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this proposal to close the ward was the result of a deficit. Could the Minister advise the House: what is the latest status on the deficit recovery plan for Stanton Hospital?

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

Further Return to Question 74-14(4): Stanton Hospital Surgical Ward

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, some aspects of the deficit recovery plan proposed by Stanton have been approved. Some are in the process of being implemented. Some of the issues around forced growth items have been agreed to with the department, and additional funding provided on those items. Some, there are figures that are included in the Supplementary Appropriation before the House with respect to forced growth. The work of the deficit recovery plan is ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 74-14(4): Stanton Hospital Surgical Ward

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since the Minister has obviously been involved in deciding whether or not certain aspects of the deficit recovery plan may proceed, can she inform the House which aspects specifically have now been approved for the board to implement?

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

Further Return to Question 74-14(4): Stanton Hospital Surgical Ward

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Stanton Inpatient Surgical Ward amalgamation is something that was withdrawn by Stanton as an initiative. There were other various aspects of the deficit recovery plan. One that was approved in March was the privatization of the laundry and housekeeping services within the hospital.

As for the detail of some of the other components, which is a fairly lengthy list of probably eight or ten items, I would have to provide that to the Member in writing. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 74-14(4): Stanton Hospital Surgical Ward

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, could the Minister advise the House as to what sort of process was followed to determine whether or not either she as the Minister or the department would approve the privatization of laundry and housekeeping?

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

Further Return to Question 74-14(4): Stanton Hospital Surgical Ward

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the initiatives that were proposed were put forward by the senior staff of the Stanton Hospital to senior staff within my department. At that time, evaluation and consideration was given to how these items might affect the service levels which are provided at the facility. Upon the outcome of those discussions and negotiations, I was then advised of the two that I referred to being approved and signed off the approval on those as per the recommendation and advice I was provided with. Thank you.

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

Question 75-14(4): Housing Units for Yellowknife Seniors

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. One of my colleagues, in a statement earlier today, referenced the housing situation in the Northwest Territories. I would like to specifically address the situation for seniors. They are the fastest growing part of our population. Many more seniors are deciding to stay in the North.

Would the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation advise what initiatives he is looking at to bring forward to address seniors housing in Yellowknife? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 75-14(4): Housing Units for Yellowknife Seniors

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My shutout has been broken. Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation will be calling for a request for proposals for 44 units. We are looking at developing eight barrier-free units that will be used for disabled and also for seniors who want to maintain their independent housing lifestyle.

As well, Mr. Speaker, in the year 2003-2004, we will have made a contribution of \$1 million towards the seniors in the city of Yellowknife where they can help develop for their housing needs. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Supplementary to Question 75-14(4): Housing Units for Yellowknife Seniors

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All of those are very good news. I would like to explore a little bit more the aspect of seniors. Of the 44 units and the eight barrier-free, would any of those then be dedicated specifically to the needs of seniors? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 75-14(4): Housing Units for Yellowknife Seniors

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are looking at and considering allocating a number of those units to seniors who want to use those units for their own lifestyle. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 75-14(4): Housing Units for Yellowknife Seniors

MR. BRADEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To the news of the \$1 million going in the fiscal year 2003-2004, this is capital funding and it is welcome. One million dollars will go so far. I would like to ask what other partners or mechanisms could be brought in to further enhance this initiative? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 75-14(4): Housing Units for Yellowknife Seniors

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point, there is only one invitation for proposal, and that is through YACCS, the Aven Manor. They seem to be the major proponent to the proposal. We will continue to work with them as well as continue to accept invitations from other interest groups to help the seniors progress in reducing the seniors' needs. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 75-14(4): Housing Units for Yellowknife Seniors

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, capital funding is difficult to find, but it is out there. Where organizations and facilities really run into difficulties is with long-term operational funding. Can the Minister advise whether he is developing approaches that will assist in ongoing operation costs for seniors' housing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 75-14(4): Housing Units for Yellowknife Seniors

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to advise the Member as well as the House that the NWT Housing Corporation continues to look at other options as we progress in terms of trying to meet all the seniors' and housing needs across the territory. Specifically in Yellowknife, we are committed to communicate with other interest groups and advocacy groups to...**inaudible**... fulfill those obligations. Thank you.

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

Question 76-14(4): Maximizing Northern Employment

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I talked in my Member's statement about all the development happening in the Northwest Territories and major funding identified by the government of the Northwest Territories to the tune of \$11 million to maximize northern employment. Knowing there is hardly any economic development in our predominantly smaller, aboriginal communities, I would like to know, from the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment in his role as Minister of Employment, how much of that \$11 million is going into the communities I represent, Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 76-14(4): Maximizing Northern Employment

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Maximizing Northern Employment Program is a \$6.5 million program we released last week. It has various components to it. With regard to the specific location by community, we certainly have not dealt with identifying where each community's benefit lies. It is a program that provides an equitable distribution of funding across the Territories in all programs.

For example, we have an initiative that is encouraging the private sector, which includes aboriginal governments, municipal governments, to employ graduate students, for example. The communities the honourable Member represents are certainly in line to be able to apply for that funding. That is one example. We have thrusts in that whole area that the communities can be considered for. We will certainly do our best to ensure there is across-the-board equity across the territory. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 76-14(4): Maximizing Northern Employment

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that there is \$6.5 million identified in this supplementary budget with additional money to be coming in the near future. I asked the question, how much money is going to the communities I represent? His answer is band

councils or aboriginal organizations should hire people. They do not have the money to hire people.

In terms of graduate students, the education system has failed the communities I represent. There are no graduate students.

I ask again, how much money has been spent in those two communities and in the rest of the Northwest Territories outside of Yellowknife, Inuvik, Hay River and possibly Fort Simpson? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Too many questions in there. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes, you can answer any one of those three.

Further Return to Question 76-14(4): Maximizing Northern Employment

HON. JAKE OOTES: I will attempt to provide a bit of an overview, Mr. Speaker, of the program. We have approximately nine thrusts in the Maximizing Northern Employment Program, and those thrusts range from the hiring of students for the summertime. We have a \$1 million student hire program, whereby we subsidize employment to the tune of five dollars per hour. That is available for any organization throughout the territory.

Then in Maximizing Northern Employment, we have a variety of programs of ensuring that, as I said, graduates from programs, they do not necessarily need to be from the specific community, but they could be employed by the community for a year's time during which we support that with dollars in the event that the community wishes to hire graduate students.

That is the present example, Mr. Speaker, and I do believe that we are very equitable across the territory and certainly very equitable to each of the communities. There is certainly no attempt on our part whatsoever to suggest that this is going to be strictly limited in certain areas.

With regard to specific dollars, I do not have that kind of information in my hands here at the moment, Mr. Speaker, and it will obviously take a bit of time once these programs are totally instituted. It will take the cooperation and the participation of communities to see where exactly these dollars will go. We certainly encourage communities to contact us and to be a participant with us. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 76-14(4): Maximizing Northern Employment

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again the Minister, and a lot of what the GNWT does, has demonstrated that they do not have an inkling or understanding of the challenges that smaller communities face in the Northwest Territories. He is saying that these organizations should hire undergraduates from other parts of the territory. There is no office space, there is no space to put them in, Mr. Speaker. There is no infrastructure. The infrastructure in our communities is not adequate enough for that to happen. I ask again, how much money is being spent in those few communities. It seems to me that this plan was put together without really thinking it through. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 76-14(4): Maximizing Northern Employment

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think this is a program where we have had cooperation and coordination from all government departments, and it is a very, very, very good program, Mr. Speaker. I want to emphasize that because it is putting \$6.5 million into various areas throughout the Northwest Territories. I think there is an opportunity here for a lot of organizations to be able to contact us, to participate and to obtain funding for certain specific projects. For example, we have a program called the employment support initiative. As I stated, that is to employ graduate students for a year's time, and we will support that with funding.

Additionally, we have the aboriginal government and private sector partnership fund. The communities can come to us and make proposals, and that is being operated by the Department of Renewable Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. What they need to do is put a proposal forward under this program whereby they can obtain funding. I believe we are moving forward very well in this area, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your final short supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 76-14(4): Maximizing Northern Employment

MR. NITAH: Mr. Speaker, every day we hear in this House about the shortage of housing in our communities -- shortage of this, shortage of that. I do not think the Minister has recognized this in the development of these plans. How can you hire people from other communities when you cannot house them? How can you hire people and maximize employment when there is no economic development to hire people and maximize employment in the communities of people from the communities or people from outside the communities? I say again that it has not been well thought out. I think this is a very good employment strategy for various communities, but not for small aboriginal communities in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, that is a statement and not a question.

MR. SPEAKER: I just want to caution Members that question period is for questions. Members' statements are for Members' statements. Your rules state that questions must not be argumentative or debate. They must not be hypothetical, trivial, vague, frivolous, seek an opinion, and they should be short and to the point. That was just a comment. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 77-14(3): Direct Appointment at the Territorial Women's Correction Centre

MR. MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, my questions are addressed to the Minister of Justice and they follow up on my Member's statement on the issue that was raised in this House last week in regard to the intention to make a direct political appointment of the warden's position of the Territorial Women's Correctional Centre, bypassing the hiring process, the issue of experience and qualifications, the Department of Justice, and

of course the many qualified Northerners who may be out there who work long and hard to get their education and experience.

My question to the Minister is, has that direct appointment gone to Cabinet and been approved yet? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Justice, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 77-14(3): Direct Appointment at the Territorial Women's Correction Centre

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, the Cabinet authorized a direct appointment. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 77-14(3): Direct Appointment at the Territorial Women's Correction Centre

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister indicate when this direct appointee will be put in place? Given the questions and concerns about this issue, does he have any plans to ensure there is a proper transition? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Justice, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 77-14(3): Direct Appointment at the Territorial Women's Correction Centre

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the process has not been concluded, meaning the offer has not been accepted yet. The process is in place. Once that gets done, the timing will be determined. Yes, once the timing is identified for the transition, then yes, there will be a transition period. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 77-14(3): Direct Appointment at the Territorial Women's Correction Centre

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister indicate to this House what the political factors were that drove the Minister to make this kind of political patronage appointment, flying in the face of all the other accepted processes we have as a government for hiring Northerners in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Justice, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 77-14(3): Direct Appointment at the Territorial Women's Correction Centre

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we did try an open competition earlier on in the year, and that ran its course for a number of months. That concluded unsuccessfully, and then we had to reactivate a retired warden in the meantime to run the correctional facility on a part-time basis. In the meantime, looking at the personnel that was there and the abilities of the individual we were considering, I determined that we have the prerogative, as Minister and Cabinet, to do direct appointments. This prerogative has been

done quite often, and it is still going on today. We have found many qualified people through this process to take on key positions throughout the whole government.

As the honourable Member knows, that has been going on and will probably continue to go on in this government. Through this process, with guidance and good direction, we will be able to develop our own aboriginal northern people to good management positions. We can also do it through the open competition. However, this form of appointing people and putting them into key positions with guidelines has worked as well. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 77-14(3): Direct Appointment at the Territorial Women's Correction Centre

MR. MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I believe that most of the Minister's response was auspicious. There are political, direct appointments for the right reason that takes into consideration the experience, as he said. Then there are political, direct appointments for the wrong reasons, and that is what this is.

Mr. Speaker, there are many other aboriginal Northerners, educated women out there, degreed women out there, some who even applied in this competition who did not even get the dignity of a reply when they had an interview.

For them to say that they have chosen an individual from the bottom of the interview process and are moving her in, bypassing everyone else, it makes no sense. Mr. Speaker, if political patronage is going to be the order of the day, then God help the civil service, and God help the hiring practices.

Mr. Speaker, the question is how can the Minister do this and put the program in jeopardy for such a politically motivated reason?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Justice, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 77-14(3): Direct Appointment at the Territorial Women's Correction Centre

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Territorial Women's Correctional Centre in Fort Smith is a territorial correctional facility. It is not a Fort Smith facility. Therefore, as Cabinet, we have the responsibility to ensure that the programs are run, not only in the Fort Smith Women's Correctional Centre, but also in Hay River and Yellowknife. We are also building new facilities in Inuvik for the youth. Throughout the whole system, we have to identify people who we think are suitable for positions in management. We will continue to do so. Thank you.

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

Question 78-14(4): Timing for the Implementation of Government Strategies

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question follows in line with my Member's statement on the

government's practice, as we see the strategies that are underway, the planning, the consultants doing work, whether they are from southern Canada or those from within the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I made reference to a specific document. It is on my binder here. It says Towards a Better Tomorrow: A Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy for the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, we have heard of documents being considered living documents. I would like to ask the Premier what is his definition of a living document? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 78-14(4): Timing for the Implementation of Government Strategies

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many of the documents we have developed, the strategies, the agenda, are considered living documents simply because it is the prerogative of Members of the Legislature who put it together in the first place, to change it as they see fit and when it is necessary and proper to do so, that nothing is cast in stone. We are living in times of rapid change, tremendous opportunities that need to be seized when they present themselves. The fact that some people, I will not include myself so much, but some people have used the term living document to reflect that. I am in agreement with it. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 78-14(4): Timing for the Implementation of Government Strategies

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My concern with what is being termed as a living document is that although you have a document and you are reading it in one hand, they are changing it over in left field and they are spending dollars before it gets officially approved. I would like to know from the Premier that if there are changes to any of the strategies or planning or implementation programs that are going on, if there are changes, that Members of this Assembly will be notified before they are implemented and dollars are expended? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 78-14(4): Timing for the Implementation of Government Strategies

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, when we think it is necessary to make fundamental changes, all Members of the Legislature should be made aware of it. As I said, sometimes there are hiccups. We do overlook occasions when we should be doing them. Whether we are obliged to, aside from that, I believe that politically, we have made a commitment to work as closely as we can with Members of the legislature. We will continue to try to live up to that commitment.

At the same time, as a Cabinet and as Ministers, we have the responsibility and the authority to manage the business and the portfolios that we have been assigned to the best that we can

under the legislation that provides that to us in the best interest of the public. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 78-14(4): Timing for the Implementation of Government Strategies

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier inform Members -- as they feel it is politically correct to do -- of this House before they make changes and expend dollars on programs, when Members already have a document that they feel is under advisement and under review? Will they inform Members before they expend dollars on that? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 78-14(4): Timing for the Implementation of Government Strategies

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have made a commitment to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight to look for ways we can improve our relationship with Members of the legislature. They have set the agenda for this government with us as Ministers.

As Ministers, we are tasked to carry out and manage the affairs of government in a way that best reflects the agenda that we have agreed to accept on behalf of the legislature.

So where there are changes made to the course of action that we understand we have taken, where possible, as quickly as possible, yes, we will try to keep the Members informed. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 78-14(4): Timing for the Implementation of Government Strategies

MR. ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, where, if, when... there is a lot of loose terminology in there and it is like saying that we can park the USS Enterprise underneath the living document Towards the Better Tomorrow. We still have the galaxy out there. It looks very big and bright, but we cannot get into it, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, things are changing on a daily basis. Will we have firm commitment from this government that they will inform Members before expending dollars on programs before those changes happen? Let the Members know. We understand the emergency cases, Mr. Speaker, but the ongoing political decisions made, all Members need to be aware of. Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 78-14(4): Timing for the Implementation of Government Strategies

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is also speaking in very general terms, with no specific details or examples of what he is talking about. With all due respect, I am trying to be as general in encompassing my responses as possible.

However, it is not always possible to give Members information on decisions we make as we make them. Sometimes they are made by Cabinet and then Members are informed. Sometimes they are made and it is not always possible to contact the Members as quickly as we can. However, the important thing, to reassure the Member, is that the commitment is there and we are, and we will continue to try to keep Members as informed about the work that we are undertaking on their behalf. Thank you.

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

Question 79-14(4): Tax Relief for Seniors

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in keeping with my Member's statement, my question is for the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, in most of our seniors programs, there seems to be a cutoff point where you either fit in the category where you get all the benefits, or you do not get any of the benefits.

Mr. Speaker, under the Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Relief Act that was written back in 1989, senior citizens can apply for property relief. This act is an old act.

I was wondering if the Minister could inform this House whether there is anything being done to revise this act or bring it up to date? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 79-14(4): Tax Relief for Seniors

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the department is working diligently to try to rectify some of the inadequacies within that policy. It is going to take some time. We had some timeframes developed for that. We are also reviewing the old policies of a number of the departments, seeing where we could make improvements, and that would be reported back. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 79-14(4): Tax Relief for Seniors

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the present act, some, especially tax-based communities, the municipal government pays half of the property under the act and MACA pays the other half. Can the Minister inform me as to who has the final say as to who qualifies for the property tax relief and who does not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 79-14(4): Tax Relief for Seniors

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I am familiar with the policy at this time, I believe that municipal

governments are responsible for administering the policy as it ties in at the tax-base level.

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

Supplementary to Question 79-14(4): Tax Relief for Seniors

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Could the Minister inform us as to what the limit is that one member of the household can earn and senior citizens can still qualify for the tax relief?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 79-14(4): Tax Relief for Seniors

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not familiar with the situation, the problem with the specific Member, but I will have our department check into it and get back to the Member. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 79-14(4): Tax Relief for Seniors

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in most households, both members of the household pay for the cost of operating a home. Would the Minister consider looking at a situation where if only one member is working and the income is very low, would the Minister look at providing at least half of the tax relief to the senior citizen? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 79-14(4): Tax Relief for Seniors

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I believe if it applies to a senior, we can take a look at it very closely. I will get some answers back to the Member. Thank you.

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

Question 80-14(3): Small Business Tax Policy

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions flow from my earlier statement and they are to the Minister of Finance about our small business tax policy, Mr. Speaker. My question is, with these issues before us, and internally in his department currently, I am wondering what direction this Finance Minister will be suggesting to his colleagues around the Cabinet table with regard to small business tax. Thank you.

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

Return to Question 80-14(3): Small Business Tax Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, following on earlier questions and answers, I will assure the Member that as we look at our tax structure, we will certainly attempt to do it

through the normal business planning process and consult with the Members.

On small business taxes, we are monitoring what is happening across the country and realize the need for us to remain competitive. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 80-14(3): Small Business Tax Policy

MR. BELL: I am glad we recognize the need to stay competitive. I was making that very statement on September 15, 2000. Nothing happened for this year, so I am concerned, although we say we are paying attention, we do not seem to be following through with anything.

I am wondering if the Minister can let us know when Cabinet will come back specifically with the report on the review of BIP. Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 80-14(3): Small Business Tax Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, BIP is on my desk. It will be going to Cabinet within the next meeting or two, if it does not get on the next agenda. I expect to be able to have it available to Members as soon as it is approved by Cabinet. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 80-14(3): Small Business Tax Policy

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I assume from that there will be some discussion certainly of small business tax rates and something will be coming back. Can the Minister indicate if small business tax threshold, which currently is pegged at \$200,000, is also on the agenda for discussion? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 80-14(3): Small Business Tax Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, if I remember correctly, the advice we got after we went out to consultation on the draft BIP was that the business community felt that we should keep tax issues separate from the BIP. Their advice is to deal with it as a tax issue, not as a piece of the Business Incentive Policy. If I remember correctly, that is the approach we have taken to it.

As we prepare our main estimates for the business plans and main estimates for the next year, then we will certainly be looking at the BIP and how it applies, but also at taxes generally. That will be the approach we will use. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 80-14(3): Small Business Tax Policy

MR. BELL: Thank you. When the Minister says he will be looking at taxes generally, I take that to mean tax rates as well as thresholds. I am wondering if the Minister will just confirm that for the record, that they will be looking at both rates and thresholds for small business? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 80-14(3): Small Business Tax Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will be looking at both rates and thresholds. I say that without making any commitment to changes on either of those. We have to look at the total impact. As Mr. Bell has said, if we went right to zero on corporate taxes now, it would cost us about \$1.6 million or so. If we raise the threshold and then go to zero, the impact is much bigger. It is fairly complicated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 81-14(4): Efforts to Meet Core Housing Needs

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. The surveys have indicated to us that the core needs are an increase in the community. To me, that indicates the programs currently in place are not working. I would like to ask the Minister, what is he doing about this situation? Is he looking at new options for the communities? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 81-14(4): Efforts to Meet Core Housing Needs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I am very pleased to advise the Member, as well as this House, that we have been trying to set new direction on how we can meet the ongoing problems of bank financing in the small communities that do not really qualify. We have been trying to leverage other local, development dollars with NWT Housing Corporation dollars to maximize the type of housing construction needed, as well as trying to develop some housing markets in those communities. It has been a valiant effort, I believe. The program changes that we are presently addressing are required. Hopefully, we will be able to simplify the programs and make it much more client-affordable. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 81-14(4): Efforts to Meet Core Housing Needs

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. I raised a concern in my Member's statement today about the EDAP program. In the communities I represent, we have very few people who qualify for the EDAP package. Those who do usually end up having problems with

meeting their financial commitments. I would like to ask the Minister if he can tell me if there is indeed a larger percentage of the funding that is in place for EDAP going into the larger centres?

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

Further Return to Question 81-14(4): Efforts to Meet Core Housing Needs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Mr. Speaker, we have allocated funding to every community across the Northwest Territories to meet the housing needs as identified in the Housing Needs Survey. There is some flexibility we have been trying to employ as we work with those in greatest need. For instance, in the band communities, we have been trying to get the banks to write some mortgages, and also where the NWT Housing Corporation can and will, where permissible, guarantee those mortgages. There are a number of different factors that we have in play that we are trying to forward up some of the housing construction needs. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 81-14(4): Efforts to Meet Core Housing Needs

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. In the communities I represent, again I have to state that we are getting very few EDAP houses. Our applications are increasing annually. I would like to ask the Minister if he would commit to looking at designing an appropriate program that would serve the residents of the smaller communities. Would he commit to doing something of that nature? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 81-14(4): Efforts to Meet Core Housing Needs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have simplified the homeowners delivery program as much as we can. We have tried to condense the number of other programs that are out there that the communities can have access to. We recognize that the smaller communities are treated differently than the major, metropolis areas of the Territories. At least in larger communities, there is a market.

In the smaller communities, we have tried to adapt our programs where it becomes more efficient so that the communities can access these programs.

We understand the fiscal problems that confront those communities, so we are still working in terms of policy and the NWT Housing Corporation Act to redress those very key questions that the Member has asked. Thank you.

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

Question 82-14(4): Adherence to the Financial Administration Manual

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members should remember what has taken place in the 13th Assembly in regard to how capital projects were changed. Finally a decision was made to amend the Financial Administration Act to ensure that did not happen. There are Members on the opposite side of the House who were ordinary Members at the time, who basically were part of that decision to change the Financial Administration Act to ensure this type of irresponsible movement of money is accounted for. I think that we as a government have to ensure that when we have such things as the evaluation of how budget controls are in place, that we follow them.

I would like to ask the Minister of Finance again, with regard to the Financial Administration Act, and with regard to the guidelines and where it states that when a department makes any adjustment to a capital project which significantly affects the scope, which is \$100,000 or 20 percent of the project in this case, we are talking about \$500,000, or timing of a project. The timing of a project, in the letter I received from the Minister, states...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krutko, in the interests of time for question period, please make the question shorter. It is your second time around.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will make it fast. So the timing of the project has now been delayed by a year, which clearly states for a year or more that the project has, the responsible Minister will advise the appropriate MLA and standing committee of any adjustment regarding interest changes to the property and report it to the Member and the standing committee. Again, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, exactly why is it that the two capital projects of \$500,000 have been moved from my riding to the Member of Inuvik Boot Lake's riding does not fit within that category?

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

Return to Question 82-14(4): Adherence to the Financial Administration Manual

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, again I think we have different definitions of what a project is. Technically, the project is the way it is described in the main estimates. The project in this case is \$5 million. Even though some of the contract amounts may have been moved around, the project scope is still \$5 million. The timing for the whole project is still the same. It is just the contracts within the project that have been moved. It has not affected either the scope or the timing of the project, that is the \$5 million. Only contracts have changed. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 82-14(4): Adherence to the Financial Administration Manual

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe there are 23 capital projects within this contract. Out of the 23 projects, two have been deferred which are over the \$100,000 or 20 percent

of those projects. I would like to ask the Minister again, do you agree that a project, a whole bunch of projects, make up a capital project in regard to the expenditure of the \$5 million? There are 23 projects.

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

Further Return to Question 82-14(4): Adherence to the Financial Administration Manual

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, it may seem like we are splitting hairs here in definitions, but the project is the overall project, as I said, the way it is laid out in the main estimates. The project is \$5 million. The 23, as Mr. Krutko calls them projects, are really contracts within that project. When I read the Financial Administration Act and the Financial Administration Manual, it does not make reference to contracts within the project. It just talks about the project. I have to take the definition that is conventional here and that is what is laid out in the main estimates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 82-14(4): Adherence to the Financial Administration Manual

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is exactly the problem we have. The whole interpretation of projects which are moved from one Member's riding, which affects my ability to ensure employment and opportunities in my riding, has been jeopardized by the department moving two projects out of my riding into someone else's.

This precedent has been set in the 13th Assembly and we are dealing with it here again. I would like to ask the Minister, as the Minister responsible for ensuring that the Financial Administration Act is adhered to, why is it that you are not following it?

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

Further Return to Question 82-14(4): Adherence to the Financial Administration Manual

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I did not quite catch the last word, but I think the question is why am I not following it. We are following both the Financial Administration Act and the Financial Administration Manual because we are using the conventional definition of project.

What happens within it, it can be any number of little contracts. That is what is moved around in this case, but those are not projects. I cannot say any more, other than we are following it. There has not been anything wrong, in terms of the Financial Administration Act or manual.

I think, as I mentioned earlier, Mr. Steen, the Minister of Transportation, may not have been aware of where the constituency boundaries were and there was money moved from this contract to that contract and that is what seems to have created the confusion, but that is not a violation of the Financial Administration Act. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 82-14(4): Adherence to the Financial Administration Manual

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, it is clear, in regard to the consultation guidelines for capital projects and budget adjustments. There has been an adjustment to this capital project, where two projects within a capital project have been deferred or cancelled for a year.

So there has been a change to the existing capital project, as it existed, in the passing of the main estimates, which we approved for \$8 million, where there were actually tenders put out for this specific work. As a government, we spent money to buy the culverts, which are in place already.

I would like to ask the Minister, in regard to the consultation guidelines, there has been a change to the capital project, which has now been adjusted. Do you agree with that?

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

Further Return to Question 82-14(4): Adherence to the Financial Administration Manual

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, no. The information I have is that the project was budgeted at \$5 million. It is still \$5 million. Money may have moved from one contract to another, but the project is still the same size. It is the contracts that have moved around.

Mr. Speaker, I will speak with the Minister of Transportation and try to understand it a little better. If there is something there, then I would certainly get back to the Member. However, the information I have is that the project is still \$5 million, which is the amount that it always was. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. That was indeed the final answer, because time for question period has ended. Item 7, written questions. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: I seek unanimous consent to return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery, before we proceed on to new items. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Ootes.

REVERT TO ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Dr. Judith Knapp, superintendent of the Yellowknife Education District No. 1, here in Yellowknife, and Pam Petten, the director of educational services. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Welcome, Dr. Knapp and Mrs. Petten. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 5-14(4): Maximizing Northern Employment

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a written question for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment regarding Maximizing Northern Employment.

The GNWT has identified significant funding for Maximizing Northern Employment in the Northwest Territories. I would like to know what percentage of the total budget will be going to employment in the communities of Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution. I would appreciate it if you can break the percentage of total budget into a dollar figure and the types of projects the budget is going to. I hope for a quick response. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to the opening address. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 9: REPLIES TO THE OPENING ADDRESS

Reply 1-14(4)

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a lot has happened in the North in the last few months when you talk about pipelines, the hydro dams, and also considering the capacity we need to take all of this on. Yet, Mr. Speaker, in a lot of our communities, we are dealing with some elements many people do not like to speak about. Mr. Speaker, I am talking about suicide.

Mr. Speaker, in my riding in the last five months, there have been two cases of suicide. I feel as a government and a people, we have to do more to raise this issue, to make sure people understand that there are resources out there, there are people there to talk to. We do have to deal with the social issues in our communities; alcoholism, drug abuse, literacy, homelessness and also realizing that we have a bigger social problem out there than we would really like to believe.

We do a lot in regard to making grand statements, travelling to major centres: Houston, Texas, New York, Ottawa and Calgary. As a government, we do not really put our hands on the issues that affect the people in our communities day in and day out.

Since these two suicides, there have been numerous cases of attempted suicides. I feel that as a government and a people, we have to realize the hurt, the pain and the realization that this problem is not going away soon.

For myself, coming from the community of Fort McPherson, I have been affected by some 17 to 20 suicides. I have been affected directly by some 25 alcohol-related accidents in our community. Mr. Speaker, these problems are still there.

We can talk about exporting all of the resources in the world, all of the energy in the world, to southern institutions and people in the southern part of Canada and the United States, but we cannot even pinpoint the problems that we have in our

communities day in and day out. People are living, actually living, with a disability of grieving, because we go through so many deaths in our communities. It is affecting everyone from myself as an elected leader to the child in the classroom.

I believe that this government has to do more, way more, than what we are presently doing. I for one see an injustice of treatment in programs being delivered. We have one alcohol treatment centre in the Northwest Territories. We all realize the biggest economic problem we have today of assimilating the people in the North from getting employment is not having the basics. They do not have the ability to work because of alcohol problems, literacy and the social stigma that is put on these people because of their dependency on income support.

I feel that we can have all the dreams of the world reaching the moon, but unless you deal with the problems at home, we may as well forget about that spaceship, because it is not going to take off because there is not going to be enough people to get into it to launch it.

We are spending millions of dollars on studies, millions of dollars on conferences, yet we do not have the resources to open up another alcohol and drug treatment centre or have a program so people who have alcohol and drug problems to go to so that they are able to pass the drug and alcohol tests they need to get employment in the oil and gas industry.

We talk a lot about economics. In this House, I hear very little about the thing that means the most to our people, which is the land and the environment and the wildlife that sustains them for hundreds of thousands of years. I think as a government, we are losing sight of the basic reality of what people really believe in.

An elderly lady stopped me in Aklavik a couple of weeks ago and told me outright "You better stop that pipeline because it is going to have an effect on our people worse than what we are seeing now." I believe her. We have seen the boom/bust scenarios. I was around during the 70s and the 80s in the Beaufort. The idea was it was two weeks to make it and two weeks to spend it, because we thought the road show was going to go on forever and a day, and it did not. Because of that boom, we are paying for the social problems that come with economic booms.

We have alcoholism, suicide, FAS/FAE problems in our schools. Those did not just fall into our laps. They were put there by a system that became too economically minded to grasp the human side of development. The big mighty dollar is there to grab a hold of, but not realizing there is a human implication.

There are pros and cons to everything. There are pros to development. It will bring you a lot of green money, give you a lot of jobs. The pipeline scenario is a four to seven year window. After the pipeline is built, the oil is flowing through the pipe or the gas, then what?

I think we as a government are starting to really lose sight of the human side of government. Yes, we can say we can export our power to southern Canada. We will be like Quebec, dam all the rivers and send all the power to New York or wherever else, so they can light up the night sky and they can burn power like there is no end to it.

Yet in the North, we do not even have a strategy on energy, regarding what are we going to do once the oil and gas or minerals have been exploited and are all gone? What is going to be left for us to take care of our heating needs, our power needs, and our reliability to ensure there are resources for the next couple hundred years to sustain the people in the North? We are not even talking about that.

I for one feel we have to do more. I keep talking about community capacity. Community capacity to me means more than saying community empowerment, giving you a nurse, giving you a policeman, giving you a social person. There are other people who fit within that loop we are aiming in our communities: the mental health workers, the alcohol and drug specialists, the people who deal with muscle disorders, the people who deal with the whole aspect of infrastructure.

We have infrastructure in our communities that is 20, some cases 30 years old. Yet there is nothing in the plan to realize that sooner or later, the infrastructure will need to be replaced. We keep putting these band aid solutions to reacting with problems. The big one to me is dealing with human health.

In my riding, there has been a problem with regard to water in Fort McPherson: THMs, which is known to cause cancer. We have another problem in Aklavik in regard to trihalomethanes, H. pylori, which has been recognized as another carcinogen that causes cancer.

Doctors have requested that this government do studies on the population of Aklavik to deal with this problem, but yet today, they cannot find resources to do those studies. Yet you can spend hundreds, if not millions of dollars, on studies in regard to Med-Emerg reports and other studies and having conferences.

I think that something has to change there. I think the communities have the resources to begin that development, but they have to have the commitment from governments to ensure that they have access to those resource people.

We talked about speech therapists in the Northwest Territories. One person to represent 33 communities. That person is going to be run off their feet. We do have problems in regard to speech.

I for one feel that we have to do more in the area of expanding the resources that we have and the resource people who are in our communities, giving them the tools to do the jobs that we expect them to do. Not give them a desk and a typewriter and say, "Okay, it is all yours". Then when they get frustrated, they phone to send people out to alcohol and drug programs, they have no money in their budget so, "Sorry. Come back next week. Maybe we will send you down to Hay River".

There is no money for alcohol and drug programs to really do justice to the problems. I think that it is important that we seriously revamp programs that are not working.

I for one feel that we have to ensure the ability of people are really adhered to and the basic fundamentals are being given to people.

Education is key to our problems. However, the biggest problem that we have in our system is literacy in our communities. I think that it is something that goes hand in hand with poverty.

Poverty in our communities is abundant from our social statistics. We have people who are dependant on a system, because they cannot do with simple things, such as reading and writing. We have people who cannot get a job because they are unable to read or write.

I think we have to somehow realize that we cannot just piecemeal a project. We cannot say, "Okay, we have this money over here for education. We have money over here for health. We have a little bit of money over here for community development, through Municipal and Community Affairs." Somehow, those dollars have to work together to formulate that there is enough there to do justice to do a program.

If we are not going to fund programs properly, there is something wrong with that picture.

I for one feel that we have to involve communities in regard to the major impacts that are going to take hold. We cannot play regions off against regions. We have processes that are in place that hopefully will get people on the same playing field.

The Deh Cho have just begun a process. We have claim settlements in the northern regions, in regard to the Inuvialuit, the Gwich'in and the Sahtu. The Dogribs are well on their way.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, there is no real hands on implementation of these agreements. We have a Wildlife Act, which is hopefully going to be coming to this House in the next short while, which will implement sections and obligations that are in land claim agreements, such as the Gwich'in, which will give the boards the responsibility and the ability to do what they were appointed to do. We will also have a public process in regard to economics and how those developments will happen.

For years, we have heard of devolution. Transferring responsibilities from Ottawa to the Northwest Territories, and the aboriginal people in the North to handle oil and gas resources.

On one hand we are talking pipelines, we are talking hydro development. However, on the other hand, the jurisdiction still sits in Ottawa. I for one feel that we have to do more to change that process so that people really understand what do you mean by royalties? What do you mean by benefit agreements? What do mean by social economic agreements? Or for that case, what do you mean by the Northwest Territories Oil and Gas Act? What does that mean? Does that mean that now all of the oil companies are going to have to come to the Northwest Territories and say "Well, here is my license. I want to drill." What does it mean?

As a government, we can never lose sight of who we are here to serve. We are here to serve the people -- not people with big, big pots of money; pipeline companies, hydro companies, the United States government, because that is who is driving the ship. It is not us. I think it is important that we seriously look at the problems of suicide in our communities, alcohol and drugs, literacy and in dealing with the basic fundamentals of life for most people. They are still there.

I think something does not jive in this picture. I think it is important as a government that we do take the time and initiative to really fix those problems before we start imposing new problems on problems that already exist.

I have been involved in aboriginal politics for some 15 years. I started off working in the oil patch in Norman Wells and went back to Fort McPherson and got involved in the then Mackenzie Delta Regional Council. That was in 1984. That is when the Inuvialuit were just getting their agreements in place. A lot of these problems that I saw in 1984 are still there today.

I think it is important that we as government and politicians really look at where we are going, how we are going to get there, and exactly who we are really here for. I know it is easy to say "Well, quit drinking, quit doing drugs, and everything would be taken care of." You cannot turn a light bulb off that has been burning for 15 years, where someone has had to deal with the problem of suicide, or alcohol-related problems in our communities which have compounded themselves to, in my case as I mentioned earlier, 17 people I knew personally who have committed suicide. Twenty-five people who have died of alcohol-related accidents. I think it is important that we do not shy away from suicides. We do not shy away from deaths that may not be seen in the context of natural -- they are happening.

We have to do more to improve our social envelope and social problems before we take on the bigger problems which are out of our control, and are in the control and domain of the federal government or large multi-million dollar diamond or oil companies that can swallow us up, considering the budgets they play with compared to the budget we have to administer programs and services in the North.

We have to ensure involvement in all aspects, from children to our elderly, and also that there is an open process to ensure that all programs, expenditures and plans we have as a government are either accepted or reviewed, or had input (good or bad). It has to be an open process.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 16-14(4): Government of the Northwest Territories Submission to the Canada Transportation Act Review Panel Regarding the Canada Transportation Act, March 27, 2001

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled Government of the Northwest Territories submission to the Canada Transportation Act Review Panel, regarding the Canada Transportation Act, March 27, 2001. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member from the Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Tabled Document 17-14(4): Strategic Plan for the Settlement of Enterprise

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled Strategic Plan for the Settlement of Enterprise, dated April, 2001.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for the Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Tabled Document 18-14(4): Letter From the Chief of the Aklavik Indian Band Regarding a New Health Centre

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table two documents: a letter from the Chief of Aklavik to the Premier in regard to the new health centre, and the effects in regard to the Gwich'in Agreement and how the government is not living up to it.

Tabled Document 19-14(4): Letter From the Minister of Transportation Regarding Deferred Capital Projects

Also, a letter I received from the Minister of Transportation, dated May 28, 2001, in regard to the deferral of projects in my riding.

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

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 5-14(4): Extended Adjournment of the House to July 23, 2001

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, June 15th, 2001, I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that not withstanding Rule 4, that when this House adjourns on Friday, June 15th, 2001, it shall be adjourned until Monday, July 23rd, 2001;

And further, Mr. Speaker, that at any time prior to July 23rd, 2001, if the Speaker is satisfied after consultation with the executive council, the Members of the Legislative Assembly, with the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment.

Mr. Speaker, we 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. Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Motion 6-14(4): Appointments to the Board of Management

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, June 15th, 2001, I will move the following motion:

Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that the Legislative Assembly thereby appoints as follows:

- The Honourable Joseph L. Handley, Member for Weledeh, as a member of the Board of Management; and
- The Honourable Jim Antoine, Member for Nahendeh; Mr. Leon Lafferty, Member for North Slave; Mr. McLeod, Member for Deh Cho, as alternate members of the Board of Management.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Motion 7-14(4): Censuring the Actions of the Executive Council

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, June 15th, 2001, I will move the following motion:

Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the Executive Council is censured in the manner in which it made minor changes to the 2001-2002 Capital Investment Expenditure Budget, as agreed by the Assembly without the prior notification, involvement and support of the affected member on the standing committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Motion 8-14(4): Establishment of Independent Commission on Members' Compensation

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, June 15th, 2001, I will move the following motion:

Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that the Legislative Assembly hereby appoints Mr. Fred Carmichael and Mr. Robert Clark as the commission on Member's compensation;

And further that the commission shall:

1. assess and review the indemnities, additional indemnities, allowances, expenses and benefits provided to Members to determine the appropriateness of the amounts provided;
2. assess and review the reporting requirements and procedures for Members expenditures to determine the level of accountability acceptable to the public;
3. review any other matter that the commission considers relevant respecting the compensation scheme provided to Members.

And furthermore, that the commission shall report with its observations and recommendations to the Speaker by October 1, 2001, and the Speaker shall cause the report to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly without delay if the Assembly is in session, and if the Assembly is not in session, as soon as reasonably practicable,

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion, Motion 7 that was given today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 7-14(4): Censuring the Actions of the Executive Council (Carried)

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the Department of Transportation has confirmed that improvements to the Dempster Highway in the Fort McPherson area have been postponed and that funding moved to address the Campbell River bridge reconstruction project near Inuvik;

AND WHEREAS two projects previously approved by this Legislative Assembly have now been deferred indefinitely to ensure significant funds are available for the completion of the Campbell River bridge reconstruction project;

AND WHEREAS the Minister of Transportation has indicated that the two deferred projects will not be proceeding until the next fiscal year;

AND WHEREAS directorate 302 of the Financial Administration Manual requires the Minister responsible to advise the appropriate MLA and standing committee when a department makes any adjustment to a capital project that significantly affects the scope or timing of the project;

AND WHEREAS the Minister of Transportation did not provide the notification required in the Financial Administration Manual, either to the affected Member of the Legislative Assembly or standing committee;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the Executive Council is censured for the manner in which it made minor changes to the 2001-2002 capital investment expenditure budget as agreed to by the Assembly without the prior notification, involvement and support of the affected Members and standing committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, having gone through a similar process with regard to this in the 13th Assembly, where a project was moved from the previous Speaker of the Legislative Assembly's riding to a Minister's riding at the time. This issue was debated fully in the 13th Assembly because of this type of ability for the department to move a project from any Member's riding to another riding without notification. Because of that, there was an adjustment made to the Financial Administration Act to ensure that no

projects over a specific amount were going to be moved without notification.

In this case, there is a real fundamental principle that we all abide by in this House, and it is to be informed on what goes on, on a day-to-day matter that affects ourselves as Members and it affects our constituency, when capital projects are being taken out of our riding.

I think it has to be fundamental. The basic principle of a government of our consensus-style of government is openness. To allow all Members on this side of the House and the Cabinet Ministers on that side to work together cooperatively so we know what is going to happen. So we are not caught by surprise, where we find out, after the fact, that two projects have been cancelled in your riding.

I think that it is imperative that as a government, we ensure that openness continues.

The whole reason to have a directorate such as 302 is to ensure that there are rules laid out so everybody plays by the rules. You cannot have a rule one day and then decide the next day to check it out because it is going to take too much time to consult and bring it back to a standing committee, for them to really realize what the implication of that change is.

I think that it is important that we do follow the rules that we set and that we ensure that we have a fair and open process.

I believe that this motion is in line, in regard to ensuring that that process is there and that we do have an open, accountable and a consensus style of government that really means what it means -- consensus, open government.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask Members, my colleagues, to support this motion, because if it can happen to me, it can happen to any one of you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the motion. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to speak to the motion. Although there are two interpretations of projects, the money amount is the big-ticket item.

When money is moved from one riding to another riding, the Ministers of departments involved should make the Member aware of what is happening. The project in question, the dates, say it was March 28th that the project was moved and the responsibility of the department is that they have to declare, by the end of the fiscal year, March 31st, a few days later, make everybody aware that there is going to be a substantial amount of money changed.

Although the budget considers it one project, I am sure there are a lot of project managers in different areas. It has to be regarded as a number of projects, not only one. To that, I support the motion and, as most Members know my concerns of all the activities out there, I am very suspicious of everything that is happening now. I just want to say that I support the motion fully.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. To the motion. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, as Mr. Lafferty has pointed out, there are different definitions here of what a project is. Clearly I believe that a project is different from what is outlined in here.

However, Mr. Speaker, this motion was just given to us a few minutes ago. I would like to ask if we can take a break to allow us to take a little time to consider this matter before we go any further. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. We are speaking to the motion and your request is not quite in order. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to proceed to speak to the motion. Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of things in here. I think one of the "WHEREAS", that says "WHEREAS directive 302 of the Financial Administration Manual requires the Minister responsible to advise MLAs" and so on.

That is correct with regard to a project. A project, though, is as they are laid out in the capital plan. We cannot mix a project and a contract up. There is nothing that refers to a contract.

What Mr. Krutko and Mr. Lafferty are referring to, is really a contract within a project. The project is still the same size. It is still the same scope. It is still the same timing. The only thing that has moved around is the contract. There is nothing in the Financial Administration Act or the Financial Administration Manual that refers to moving contracts around.

This is more than a technicality, Mr. Speaker. This is important because it is the way we build our main estimates and the way we describe our projects. It has to be standardized because we cannot begin to use interpretations that Members may choose to put on it. We have to use what is conventionally described as a project.

I am of the view, after reviewing this matter, that the Minister responsible for Transportation has not violated the Financial Administration Act or the Financial Administration Manual. There is no evidence at all of that. As far as I can tell, the project is still the same size. What he has done is move money from one contract to another contract, but all within the same project.

Mr. Speaker, all I can say to the Members is that this is serious. This is not something we should treat lightly. In this case, there has been no violation of the Financial Administration Act. We have to use the standard definition of a project. This motion is serious in censuring the actions of the Executive Council, but there has been no violation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Members to look very carefully at this and consider the definitions that we have to work by. We have to have rules that are standard and that we can all agree to. They cannot simply be based on a Member's interpretation of what a contract is and what a project is. It is a standard definition.

Mr. Speaker, as I say, this is a serious matter and I ask the Members to treat it seriously. Has a project been changed? The answer is no. Has there been violation of the FAA or the FAM? The answer is no. Therefore, this motion of censure is invalid. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to this motion and hopefully clear up some confusion that centres around this particular issue. Mr. Speaker, it was never the intent of the department to cause this much of an issue by deferring these two particular contracts that we had for the first part of the Dempster Highway. The department did divert money from those two projects towards the bridge project, the Campbell Creek bridge.

In the past, the department has been following a process whereby we inform MLAs as a matter of courtesy when we move money from one section of a riding to another riding, although it is within the same project. We have done this. We have also informed Members when we move money from one project to another project. We have done that in the past. We are well aware of what is required.

When we interpret the specific reference under the Financial Administration Act, this particular clause, we interpret it to mean a budgeted project. The budgeted project is \$5 million of the whole Dempster Highway. We know that we have within there some projects, or whatever you want to call them, contracts, but they are not the specific project that is referred to in the Financial Administration Act. That is how we have been operating.

I was hoping that through further discussion, possibly under the supplementary appropriations, we could have assured the Member that not all the \$950,000 went to the bridge. In fact, \$550,000 of this money, some of it went back into his riding through other contracts and other projects, if that is what he wants to call them.

Now, if I want to be more specific, I would show that the Campbell Creek bridge required another \$425,000 to meet the tender. We needed \$425,000 to keep that project on speed because it had a high-priority. We have done that. That left \$550,000 out of the \$950,000 of the projects.

Those \$550,000 now add up to this. We had a public tender contract and it was awarded to Geometry Aquatic Study Arctic Red, for \$92,100. Gwich'in Development Corporation geotech investigation of kilometre 143, \$30,000. That was awarded and it was a public tender.

Then, yet to be tendered, we have culvert replacement, kilometre 0 to 20, which was one of the original projects, we have allotted \$200,000 to that. That is out to public tender right now.

We kept \$202,000 out of this money for miscellaneous surveying and administration. The total comes to \$950,000. We did not spend the total \$950,000 in the Inuvik riding.

What our letter indicated to the Member was, should there be money able to go back into that project, we will put the money back. That is exactly what we are trying to do by retendering the public tender for kilometre 20 culvert replacement. We put it back for tender. However, we do not have the same amount of money to do the job.

However, we did indicate in the letter to the Member that we would do this, this year, if possible. If not, the project then is referred to next year, but regardless of how you look at this, there were no infractions, as far as I am concerned, to the Financial Administration Act. I do not believe I should be censured or anyone else on this would be censured. I definitely

will not support the motion and I request Members to seriously consider what is being said here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. To the motion. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, very clearly this motion, titled Censuring the Actions of the Executive Council, to me, is indicative of the level of frustration on this side of the House. I think this particular issue referred to in the motion is what would be seen to be the straw that broke the camel's back.

It speaks to a very specific issue. My own sense is that the level of frustration has been building for some time and there has been a lot of issues out there, in my case, that need me to look at this motion and what it is suggesting we do.

Mr. Speaker, I find it very unfortunate and unacceptable that the Cabinet chose to deliberately ignore the Public Service Act. I think it is very unacceptable that they would engage in political patronage.

Committees have repeatedly been bypassed on issues. We have written letters. We have begged and pleaded to be involved, but yet it continues to happen. There seems to be an unfortunate focus of the government, in many cases, on form over substance.

The issue of movement of monies; how it is moved, where it is moved. We are dealing with one of the biggest sups in legislative history. A lot of that money could have been and should have been in the business plans.

Mr. Speaker, in a lot of cases, the perception of Cabinet has been that some are very high-handed, dismissive and arrogant. Is this a violation of the FAA? I do not know.

The Member has made a good case. He has been very passionate about it, but very clearly, this motion is a wake-up call to Cabinet that all is not well in the House the people of the Northwest Territories built. There are issues that are out there. Do not look at this as a simple matter, that it is indicative and symptomatic of other issues.

This is consensus government. We have very few tools in our disposal to actually get the attention of Cabinet. They say they "take stuff under advisement." They will "give it the consideration it deserves. We will think about it."

The reality is this is a lever that we have, and for whatever reasons Members have around this House, it has come to the point where there is a motion of censure on the floor.

Mr. Speaker, it is something I think we have to look at. Whether this motion is defeated or passed, the reality is we have some work to do to keep things together. This is symptomatic. It leads to the broader question that with this motion of censure, given the time of our term, that the issue of a mid-term review be put on the table. This is a very serious matter.

I think it is a time for people to listen to this, for other Members to take note that this is, while very specific in the content, Mr. Speaker, symptomatic of some of the broader problems. There are issues here that have to be dealt with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the motion. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do agree that this motion comes from the frustration level on this side of the House. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, this is an issue on transportation, specifically highways. Highways -- and it does not matter which province -- are pan-territorial and should be recognized as that. There will be highways going through different ridings. You cannot very well expect to pave in a certain riding and not pave the rest. It should be recognized in the policy that requires the Minister to inform Members when they move capital projects from one riding to another.

Maybe the highway system should be excluded from that policy, Mr. Speaker. Maybe there should be some kind of investigation, or somebody should look into that, the fact that why are highways, which are pan-territorial issues, in this policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. To the motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is definitely a very serious issue that is before us. Mr. Speaker, I am aware of frustration levels of Members on this side of the House, who have tried to work and do the work of the people of the Northwest Territories.

The specific motion that is before us refers to the Financial Administration Act, directive 302. The complaint is that project dollars were moved from one riding to another. Mr. Speaker, the project of the Campbell Creek Bridge happens to fall within my constituency, which is news to me. I thought it was Inuvik proper, but I guess the boundaries of Inuvik go beyond that. I also know that it falls in the area of land claims as well.

Mr. Speaker, this is a matter that has been building. Things have happened since we started the 14th Assembly. No matter what happens, we are all aware of the results of that.

Mr. Speaker, specifically, I want to refer to a copy of the letter Mr. Krutko received from the Minister. It talks about the second year of the reconstruction project at Campbell Creek, which is located on the Dempster Highway, which is approximately 20 kilometres from Inuvik. It says the project funded under the department's highway reconstruction budget, and it identifies \$5 million for 2001-02. It talks later on about:

"It was therefore necessary to defer the work on other projects within the budget. Two projects were deferred: culvert replacement and embankment widening."

Mr. Speaker, another area that has been discussed earlier in the House today was within the guidelines of the Financial Administration Act, I believe it is directive 302, guidelines 4.3(b):

"When a department makes any adjustment to a capital project, which significantly affects the scope, \$100,000 or 20 percent of the project budget, which is ever greater, or timing, for example a year or more delay of the project, the

responsible Minister will advise the appropriate MLA and standing committee."

Again, it seems like we are going to go down to splitting hairs here. In the directive, we speak to the fact of the capital project, any change in the capital project. In the letter to Mr. Krutko, it refers to the Campbell River reconstruction project specifically. It refers to two projects that were deferred, culvert replacement at kilometre zero to kilometre 20, and embankment widening from kilometre 127.6 to kilometre 130.6 on the Dempster Highway.

Mr. Speaker, we get down to the splitting of hairs here because one can determine in the definition, or the letter -- and the gist of the letter refers to projects, and specifically identifies the Campbell Creek reconstruction project. It specifically identifies two other projects. I had the opportunity while this discussion was going on to look at the main estimates. Under the main estimates document, it speaks of a \$5 million capital project, Dempster Highway, the whole length of it, Mr. Speaker.

I feel the same frustrations as Members on this side of the House. In fact, for a number of times in questions trying to seek out further information, we have had to try and put pieces together. We have had to approve things after the fact. Some things seem to have changed mid-stream, and that is why there is a discussion on living documents, Mr. Speaker.

Here is a concern that has come up and has triggered this. As I have heard other Members, when you pull the trigger, it is pretty hard to stop the bullet from coming out the end of the barrel.

It is a difficult situation, Mr. Speaker. Difficult because technically, one can argue the fact that we approved a \$5 million figure in the main estimates documents, then we would have to lean towards what Minister Steen just stated, that it is one project.

In his letter, he does speak of a project funded under the Dempster Highway reconstruction budget of \$5 million. How fine do we want to split hairs? Is this going to be a wake-up call to Cabinet to start providing more information or reacting in a more timely manner to Members on this side of the House? I am not sure. As well, I do not want to make a move on this motion without being very clear as to what the issue is.

I have other reasons why I could support this, Mr. Speaker. I have raised a number of critical issues in this Assembly and they have not been addressed to date. This motion is very specific, Mr. Speaker, very specific.

Right now, I am having difficulty supporting the motion as it sits. I understand where the Member is coming from, I understand the issue. If I wanted to split hairs very finely, Mr. Speaker, I could agree that the projects that are referred to are different projects than the main one that is identified in the main estimates, for the simple reason, Mr. Speaker, that in committee review of the main estimates, the numbers are broken down into further detail and specific numbers to projects are identified. But that document is not the one before us, Mr. Speaker. The main estimates document is the one we have to look at.

On one hand, I could say from the information I know of, and each project had an identified figure, that has been changed.

However, to the letter of the law, Mr. Speaker, I would have difficulty supporting this at this time because this is a very specific motion to the moving of dollars on one project.

I must say to Cabinet that if I were to go to the other, as I see, infractions or slip-and-sliding or dipping-and-diving, that I could easily support a motion of this nature.

Mr. Speaker, to the specific one here, with the transportation dollars being changed, it is very specific. We could get into legal definitions broken down. However, at this time, although I support where the Member is coming from on the issue -- all Members have that option and the right to raise issues in the House and make these motions -- I do not believe the Member has done it lightly.

I support his initiative but, at this time, because of the nature of the motion and the specific nature and having to follow the law, what we approved in this House, I unfortunately find myself in a position where I cannot support the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to make a couple of comments on this motion. Many of my colleagues have expressed that there is a high level of frustration. I will have to agree with that.

However, I have to clarify. I think that a lot of the frustration is coming from one department and having to live with plans that were set by the 13th Assembly. Many of us have been pounding the table on this issue and trying to get the plans adjusted, really to no avail.

Yet we see and hear from colleagues that there are changes and monies being transferred. I have to say that the current practice is really unacceptable. I have been in positions where Ministers have gone into my riding, into my communities, and had meetings without notifying me. I do not think that is proper practice.

I have had Ministers go into my communities and make deals and sign agreements without notifying me, putting me in a position where I was very uncomfortable.

However, I think it is going to come down to what is really the definition of a project. That is something that is going to make my decision. I have not had the opportunity to research and look this whole issue up. It is something that has come up quite unexpectedly.

I do not believe that I can see a technical violation under the Financial Administration Act as explained by the Members of this House.

I am going to be voting against it on that basis. However, I wanted to state that all of this could have been avoided if some of the Ministers would have provided common courtesy to Members on this side of the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too am somewhat torn when looking at this motion. I certainly heard

the frustration from the Member for Mackenzie Delta and from the Member for North Slave.

I face another problem. I am not a lawyer, or perhaps even a linguist, to know exactly how to define the word "project". It really does appear to come down to a difference of opinion as to how to do that.

All that I can do is look at the letter from Minister Steen to the Member about the projects, as they were termed in that. Then I can look at the FAM and see how the word project is used there and listen to the case put by the Member for Mackenzie Delta and the responses by Mr. Steen and Mr. Handley.

I find myself torn because, in many cases, it does seem that the Member may have a case here. What it really comes down to, as Minister Handley said earlier today, a situation where we are splitting hairs.

I was somewhat disturbed a few minutes ago when Mr. Steen was talking about how Ministers respond to Members when talking about moving money around in their budgets and MLA notification. He talked about how doing things as a matter of courtesy. He may not have intended it this way, but it almost sounded like this was over and above the call of what was necessary.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that notification should be done as a matter of course. I think the guidelines set out in the Financial Administration Act and the Financial Administration Manual, in our style of government, should be seen as an absolute bare minimum. I think there should not be a ten percent level. If we are talking about a \$5 million project, ten percent is half a million dollars. That represents a huge contract in some of our constituencies.

I think it should be looked at on a case-by-case basis, and perhaps in some instances, the Minister should be prepared to contact Members when changes in the scope of projects are as small as \$5,000 or \$10,000. I would say that, if nothing else, I would hope Cabinet recognizes this is in fact a wake-up call. We are not satisfied with just hearing from Ministers when the absolute minimum requirements are met. We want to hear when projects in our constituencies are going to be significantly affected, whether that is \$5,000 or \$500,000.

Given our style of government, which is consensus, we have made a commitment to do business differently. We have made it a commitment to be more involved, of all Members, when we are making decisions about government in the Northwest Territories. One of the difficulties for Ministers is that means it takes a lot more time to do the job -- a lot more time.

It means that you have to spend a lot more time talking to Regular Members without changes in policies and plans, about making sure they are involved in the reasons for the change, and doing your best to get support for those changes, rather than just going ahead and doing them. It is a very time-consuming job. To build a true consensus is very difficult. It is slow. One of the things many people have often said about the consensus government is that it is tremendously inefficient. In that way, it may be. However, when you build that consensus, then you know you have the will of the majority behind you. Spending the time to do that is absolutely important.

What I find really unfortunate is that this situation, with a motion coming forward like this, we have to take a look at the words

and try and come up with what the definitions are. Really, I am not technically capable of deciding whether or not I can split the hairs finely enough to know exactly how a project is defined.

I can tell you that morally, I feel I could support this motion. I think the Minister has failed to keep the Member adequately informed of changes that have affected a project in his constituency. As I understand it, the dollars that would have likely gone to a company in his constituency are now going to another constituency. That is an important change in our small economy.

Morally, I can see a reason to support this motion. I am having trouble deciding at this point whether technically, the merit is there. Mr. Speaker, I am hoping in the next few minutes as other Members speak, they will be able to bring some more clarity on the technical side to this issue. I have to have some more information to have my vote totally swayed. If it was a moral issue, I could say yes right now. I have to look at the technical way this motion is worded. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. To the motion. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, when issues of this nature come before us, we are asked to, as my colleagues have already stated very well, look not only at the particulars of it but the underlying or overriding message that a given issue or proposal might send. Then we take our stand and we live or die on the consequences.

I try to pick my hills, Mr. Speaker. Which are the ones worth battling for and which may be putting one's political arm at risk? My colleagues have already gone over a number of areas here. I guess on the specific issue here, I tried to see where it is that the overall project is being threatened or dramatically altered up to its completion. I do not see anything here that says that something has been eliminated or changed that dramatically. It seems that essentially this is, because of the way tenders and contracts and things have come about, it seems more expedient for the department to have managed them in a certain way, that meant moving the resources at this time for part of the project somewhere else.

It would seem, and it is even indicated in the motion, that it is a matter of one year on a specific project. It is not as if something is going to be left idling year after year. I do not see where mortal harm has been done to the completion of a major transportation initiative in that region.

Like my colleagues, I do see the signal that underlies this, that Ministers and the executive need to be ever mindful of the fact that the authority that they carry today was given to them by all of us when we first met at the start of our business early in the year 2000. That authority was not given lightly. It was given with a degree of trust that they would honour the mandate of communicating, consulting and moving forward with us on what would seem to be relatively routine matters.

In some areas, we have been disappointed. There has been some discussion, Mr. Speaker, about that whole realm of consensus government and the style with which we treat it, and with which a number of other Canadians look at us with some envy at the freedoms we have. Along with that freedom comes responsibility to acknowledge the relationship that we must care for, nurture and protect.

I see in this motion an underlying message that the more effort the executive puts into nurturing and strengthening this relationship, the less we will be inclined or required to do this kind of thing, and the more defence our system will build against such things as party politics, which some people see as an alternative. I do not, I would rather see us protect the system of government that we have now. This is one way we can do it.

As I said when I started out, Mr. Speaker, I pick my hills. This is not one I wish to advance on, and I will not be supporting it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are several questions here, but I think in the end this boils down to one very fundamental question, and I guess that is whether or not the government violated the FAA. I think if you look at the letter of the legislation, Mr. Speaker, you can clearly make a case that they did not violate, technically, the letter of the law, but I certainly feel that they violated the intent.

I think the intent is there to protect Members' constituencies and the people in those constituencies that we serve. I certainly understand Mr. Krutko's frustration.

I think one thing is clear for me, Mr. Speaker, and that is that we never needed to get to this point. I think that when Mr. Krutko raised the issue at the beginning of this session, initially he was told, "Well, you were wrong. Nothing moved from any constituency to another, so essentially, you are out of line here." Then the Minister went back and checked and in fact, Mr. Krutko was correct and a project had been deferred in one constituency and did take place in another.

Further to that, he was then told "Well, in any case, there was no violation of the Financial Administration Act, so we did not have to tell you, but we have sent you a letter."

I think the attitude here was more the thing that irked the Member. I probably think the Financial Administration Act was not violated, but I think principles of good judgement and courtesy to Members were violated by the department. I certainly understand why Mr. Krutko has raised this issue.

I think we have to be very careful here with the consensus process that we hold dear, because I think it has the possibility of being on its last legs if we see more of these kinds of things.

That would be unfortunate, because I think it really comes down to the amount of effort that Ministers are willing to put into the job that they do. It would not have taken much for Mr. Steen to contact Mr. Krutko's office and clear this up, give him some heads-up so that he would be able to inform his constituents. I think that would have been the courteous and the correct thing to do. I am disappointed that it was not done in this case.

Unfortunately, since I do not technically think the Financial Administration Act was violated, I cannot support the motion. However, I do believe the government violated principles of good judgement and courtesy to Members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. To the motion. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words on this motion. As it stands right now, I was hoping somebody could give some definition as to what we are really talking about here, this project and how much violation there is.

From the understanding that I have right now, I do not think I will be supporting this motion. In saying that, I do agree with many of the comments that have been made on this side of the House.

I remember, Mr. Speaker, shortly after I became a Member and there was a huge project going on in Hay River with the construction of the West Channel Bridge. That project did come under budget, and there was \$400,000 taken from that budgeted project and moved north. The first thing that came to my mind was why was I not given a chance to use that money somewhere? It was already budgeted for the riding. It sure would have been nice to have had some input as to where that money could be used. There was none. That probably was not a violation. It did not change the scope of the project, but when money is budgeted for a riding, it would certainly be nice to be able to use all of that money.

I know we would all like to have more capital dollars to spend in our ridings and stuff to come by. One of the most frustrating things I find in dealing with Cabinet or this government is to sit in a committee meeting and to have a department come before us with an expenditure of any amount -- \$500,000, \$1,000, \$1 million -- and they have all the project work done on it, they have all the consultation work done on it, they throw figures before us and in a matter of a half an hour, we have to try and justify it and try and say yes, it is a good expenditure. They did it all right. We have to prove that.

It is extremely frustrating. When we try to get a project in our ridings addressed and get money for it, there is never any money anywhere.

I can appreciate the frustrations that are on this side of the House. I felt the same thing. As far as is the act truly violated? Are we splitting hairs? I do not think I could support the motion on splitting hairs, but like most Members, I do feel the intent behind this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. To the motion. Mr. Krutko, you have the final word.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish the Members would have more of an open heart and understanding of the whole process that we go through from the planning process, business plans, where a department comes in and presents the facts. There is \$5 million for a highway project, and these are the projects. There are 23 projects. There is going to be a bridge project, there is going to be a culvert project, there is a widening project, there is a crushing project, every one of those projects is known within a committee.

We are aware of those projects. If those projects are acknowledged to ourselves as Members on this side of the House through the public review process, the business planning process, we are aware that there were supposed to be 23 projects, and now there are 21.

If that can happen to me, any of the other ridings that are affected by highways, Highway No. 3, Highway No. 8, Highway

No. 1, a similar process could be going on right now where we are not even involved. We agreed to the main estimates based on the dollar item, but the dollar item is based on a number of projects within that dollar item.

In the case of the \$5 million for the Dempster Highway, there were 23 projects. There was a list given and presented to Members through the business planning process. We are all aware of it, so for us to say that we were not aware of it is not true. For a department to stand there and say "Well, sorry, it is \$5 million I am going to put into a highway system and I can do whatever I like with that \$5 million. If I want to build a bridge over the Peel River, go for it, because I will support it any day, but that is a \$5 million project."

In that case, the department can go ahead and do it without telling the Member for Inuvik or any other Member who may be affected that a capital project was moved from one area to the other. It is clear from the Minister's letter. He specifically states projects in his letter four times. One referring to the reconstruction project on the Campbell Hills Creek, and those projects that were funded on the Dempster Highway. It says "these projects". It does not say the project. It says "these projects".

I think it is clear that they are trying to fluff the issue by saying any adjustment to a capital project which significantly affects the scope of the work, and it says "any adjustment to a capital project which significantly affects the scope of the work". It has affected the scope of the work. There are two projects where the Minister stated that \$950,000 has been moved from the area on the Dempster Highway from the south side of the Dempster to the north side of the Dempster, \$950,000.

The majority of that work is in my riding and it has now been moved to the Inuvik area. I think that for us to state that we are not aware of projects in general. We are aware, using Highway No. 3 for instance, there is a widening project going on at one end of the thing. There is a bunch of work planned for the Ingraham Trail. There are all these projects which we debated, discussed and spoke on in the business planning process.

If we can state, going out of the planning process, approving an amount of money, regardless if it is \$5 million or \$55 million, those dollars were earmarked for specific projects within the scope of those moneys.

Again, I would like to ask my colleagues to support me on this motion because I believe a violation has taken place. If we do not stand up for this now...this was a major issue in the 13th Assembly. There was a motion passed with regard to the whole area of budget adjustments. Again, we are back in the 14th Assembly, debating the same thing where that side of the House is expending monies anyway they wish without informing any Members on this side of the House. With that, I ask for your support, colleagues, because if this can happen to me, it can happen to you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Is the House ready for the question? All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS**Bill 6: National Aboriginal Day Act**

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Bill 6, National Aboriginal Day Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. 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. Bill 6 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Antoine.

Bill 7: Powers of Attorney Act

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 7, Powers of Attorney Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. 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. Bill 7 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Bill 8: An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. 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. Bill 8 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

Bill 9: Commercial Vehicle Trip Permit Act

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 9, Commercial Vehicle Trip Permit Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. 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. Bill 9 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

Bill 10: Public Highway Improvement Fund Act

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 10, Public Highway Improvement Fund Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. 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. Bill 10 has had first reading. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Ministers' Statements 1-14(4), 3-14(4), and 4-14(4), Bill 1 and Bill 4, with Mr. Delorey in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I call committee of the whole to order. We have a number of items to deal with: Minister's Statement 1-14(4), Minister's Statement 2-14(4), Minister's Statement 3-14(4), Minister's Statement 4-14(4), Bill 1, and Bill 4. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to recommend that we try to conclude Bill 4 today, and perhaps start on Bill 1, if we should happen to get that far along on Bill 4.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): The Chair will call a short break and we will come back to review Bill 4.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I will call committee of the whole back to order. We are here to review Bill 4. Does the Minister have any witnesses he wants to bring in?

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

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. We are on Transportation, operation expenditure, airports, not previously authorized, \$85,000. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you. Just a question on this \$85,000 from the territorial government to fund an airport, which is a responsibility of the federal government.

I know it was part of the non-renewable resources activities that are happening, but as Mr. Roland said, it was not identified in the plan. So because of that, I wonder if the Minister can tell me how they can justify something that is not already in the plan? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, this is not identified in the business plan because we were still under negotiations with the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy.

There is provision for it in the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy. I think it is in strategy 12, where it talks about community infrastructure, including airports and barging facilities and so on.

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

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you. Just another question. As we are putting \$85,000 to federally funded infrastructure, are we going to be doing this for all the diamond activities, also for other regions? Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, this is not a federally-funded project. Airports are the GNWT's responsibility. Thank you.

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

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you. It is good to know that. Now I know where to get the money for the airport in Rae-Edzo. I was told by the department before that the territorial government did not build airports.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, we are not building any new airports. We did have all of the existing airports transferred to us a number of years ago. All of the existing ones are GNWT responsibility. It is our responsibility for maintenance, any upgrading, reconstruction that is necessary with them.

The exception to that, Mr. Chairman, is private airstrips. For example, the one at Ekati or the one at Diavik, those are not our airports. Those belong to the mining company. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. We are on airports, not previously authorized, \$85,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the reference to strategy 7, I have reviewed it and I do not see anything referring to the Norman Wells airport plan. I would like to ask the Minister exactly how is it that such an item you state is part of our responsibility under the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy, No. 7? There is no response in there to airports. It mostly deals with the all-weather road to increase the exploration development and also the consideration of the Mackenzie Highway from Wrigley north. I would like to ask the Minister, where did you come to the assumption that the Norman Wells airport plan was part and parcel of that section of the strategy?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the airport projects are not necessarily included in here. This is a summary document. They are included in the overall Transportation Strategy.

I might also point out, Mr. Chairman, I do not know if I said it was strategy 7, but it is actually in strategy 12.

-- Interjection

Is that what it says in the book?

-- Interjection

Yes, in the book it says seven, but it is actually 12. If you have the Non-Renewable Resource Strategy in front of you, there is a section on Sahtu, Deh Cho and Beaufort Delta regions, a provision in there for funding for \$1 million a year for emerging development projects and so on. It does not break it down item by item for two reasons.

One is that development is happening at a pace and in places that we have difficulty predicting exactly where it will be. Second, as years go on, we are looking at a four-year strategy, it is very difficult to predict from four years from now where all the activity might be. It might all be in Tsiigehtchic. We do not know. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a Member asking a question yesterday to the Minister regarding the strategy, he stated clearly that the responsibility for the project is being agreed to because of our responsibility under the strategy. Now you are telling me it is another section of the strategy. I am not too sure exactly what to believe here. I would like to ask the Minister: is it strategy 7 or is it strategy 12? The wording under airports states strategy 7.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, as I just said, there is a mistake in the book. It is a misprint. It should read strategy 12. If you take a look at the Non-Renewable Resource Strategy, you will find it on page 44 in appendix C. It is in 12, not in seven. There is a mistake in the book. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There seems to be some inconsistency. One day it is in seven, the next day it is in 12, tomorrow is it going to be 13 or 15? The point I made earlier is there are always items within the whole strategy. With the supplementary, you are only talking about one aspect of this strategy, yet there are all of these other elements to the strategy regarding the other communities up and down the valley, the winter roads, ensuring we have money put into the winter roads that is not there now, ensuring there is a winter road opening to Colville Lake which is now part of our transportation expenditures.

I want to ensure there is an opportunity for other communities that will be affected by this strategy. We do lack a lot of infrastructure and resources to ensure that they have the fundamentals. Most communities, in case there is an emergency, should have the ability for a helicopter to land, so there should be a helicopter pad. We should be ensuring, when there is a shift change taking place in the communities, that they do not have to find their own way to the regional centres -- Inuvik, Norman Wells -- that they can be picked up in their home communities and transported to the work sites.

I think with this one, we do have to get it clear on exactly what the money is going to be used for and why it is we have only focused on one community and not all of the other communities.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, let me say that as development happens in the regions, we want to be sensitive to where the needs are. The Non-Renewable Resource Strategy outlines generally, over a four-year plan, where we believe the expenditure will have to happen. In this case, we have predicted that we need up to \$1 million per year in the Sahtu, Deh Cho and Beaufort Delta regions for this kind of community-based infrastructure.

It is very difficult to predict four years ahead of time and lay out a whole plan of where we will go. We may build it and make improvements in the wrong place. The Norman Wells one was identified as a priority because of the amount of activity in the Norman Wells area, not necessarily right in Norman Wells, but in that area.

Mr. Steen has more information on the airport planning and expenditures proposed for the Inuvik and Fort Simpson region, so Mr. Chairman, I will refer to him.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Minister Steen, do you have anything to add to that?

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the department is in the process of completing a development plan for the Inuvik and Fort Simpson airports in the 2001-02 business plans. We are in the process right now of addressing the impact on those two specific communities in relation to oil and gas activity. Norman Wells in particular has not had its airport updated since 1984.

We are now trying to address a catch up, really, with the impact on that particular airport and the needs of the oil and gas activity are being reflected in the fact that there is more and more activity at the airport. We have to develop some kind of plan as to how we are going to lay out these needs at the airport. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister tell us if there are any other airports that are under the same scenario, or the same problem where they have seen a real increase in the traffic at the airport?

I will use another area, Inuvik. There has been a major increase in the traffic at that airport. Are they going to have an update in their plan? Are they in the same problem as Norman Wells? Is it just Norman Wells, or are there other airports whose plans have not been updated since 1994?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as I just finished stating, the Inuvik plans are being updated in this business plan. We are in the process of doing that right now.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Where did you find the money to do the update of that plan? Was that for Highway No. 8?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Chairman, I believe it is part of the business plan and the budget approved for 2001-02.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. We are on airports, not previously authorized, \$85,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Motor vehicles, not previously authorized, \$1,800,000. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am glad that the Minister is in agreement. This expenditure is reassuring. I would like, for the record, the Minister to reassure the House that these start-up costs and this ongoing administration, the expense to administer this going forward, will be eventually charged to the highway fund that is being set up in order that the tolls collected will be used to pay for the administration and start up, and not in fact general revenues. Can he reassure us, for the record, that in fact will be the case? Any expenditures or capital used in administering or setting up this highway toll collection system will in fact come out of the fund?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I can reassure the Members that any of the expenditures for the highway toll fund in preparation will come out of the toll. It will not come out of general revenues.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Motor vehicles, not previously authorized, \$1,800,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Community access roads, \$136,000, special warrants.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Total department, special warrants, \$136,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Not previously authorized, \$1,885,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. We are moving on to Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, operations expenditures, corporate management, not previously authorized, \$2,955,000. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just to want to make a point here that there are an awful lot of projects here that are tied into the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy -- I am sorry I am so used to calling it the NERD strategy -- and we have talked about \$8 million to date in Maximizing Northern Employment in this supplementary appropriation. I have not seen a penny in here for tourism. We talked earlier in this session about the importance of tourism. I wonder if the Minister could speak to the investment that his department is making in tourism and specifically in tourism

promotion, and why we have not seen any additional funding going in this year. Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, let me say that we did leave \$1,275,000 in the budget for tourism. That was there in anticipation of having the hotel tax in place. There was \$900,000 that was left with the tourism association and there was \$375,000 left in RWED. The tourism sector did get a big boost this year because we did not take that money back.

This money in here for aboriginal government and private sector partnerships of \$1 million is not limited to just oil and gas and big industry. It could also very well be used for tourism if that is where the interest from the aboriginal government and private sector was coming from. It is not limited to other sectors.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. Can the Minister just confirm that the tourism money that he was talking about was passed on to the Northwest Territories Arctic Tourism body? Could he also advise us, is that now in their continuing base funding? Is the department going to keep that money available in subsequent years?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, it was put in as base money. It was not one-time funding. Unless we vote otherwise, it is there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Corporate management, \$2,955,000, not previously authorized. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the aboriginal government and private sector partnership fund, I would just like to see if I can get a bit more of an explanation about who the potential customers or clients can be for accessing this fund? Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, we expect that aboriginal governments will be able to access a fair bit of money through the Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy money with the federal government. There will be a requirement when they do that, a request for us to cost share. I expect to see a lot of applications over the coming year where they will want to, and they have done it already, get money for the federal government and we will be asked to put in money. That is one source.

The other is with the private sector. Many of the oil and gas companies, in their desire to come and do business up here, have already indicated that they want to get involved in training projects and employment projects. For example, Akita and the project in Inuvik where they moved a drill rig in. They have made a contribution and expect us to make a contribution.

I cannot really predict all of them, but what we are saying to the aboriginal governments and private sector is that we are

prepared to cost share in joint ventures that result in an increased workforce. Thank you.

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

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to know how this fund will be different from other business programs that this government has, like the Northwest Territories Development Corporation, the Business Development Corporation. What is the difference here? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Unlike the other funds, Mr. Chairman, this one is focused on employment related activities. It is focused on training and creating employment for people. The programs through the Northwest Territories Development Corporation are more towards the operation of a business, where they will buy preferred shares or will subsidize a number of subsidiaries.

This is different. This is focused on getting Northerners jobs.

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

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, then accessing this would essentially amount to a contribution that this government would make to any given initiative? It is not a repayable loan, or something of that nature. It is a contribution to a good business idea. Is that basically what we are looking at? Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, that is essentially what it is. We hope that by working jointly with aboriginal governments and private sector, we can make our \$1 million contribution towards training and employment that would be worth \$3 million, for example. This is meant to encourage others to ante up in terms of their contribution. If we do not contribute, then there is a very limited amount that the private sector will do, nor will the aboriginal governments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Corporate management, \$2,955,000, not previously authorized.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Resource management and economic development, not previously authorized, \$591,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Environmental protection, not previously authorized, \$170,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total department, not previously authorized, \$3,716,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. We will move on to Executive, capital investment expenditures, Financial Management Board Secretariat, budgeting and evaluation, special warrants, \$100,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total department, special warrants, \$100,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will move on to Municipal and Community Affairs, capital investment expenditures, regional operations, special warrants, \$3,918,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total department, special warrants, \$3,918,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will move on to Public Works and Services, capital investment expenditure, asset management, special warrants, \$3,413,000. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am aware that this project has been carried forward from the previous year. I would like to know when it will be completed and if the project scope has changed.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will refer this to Mr. Voytilla.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Voytilla.

MR. VOYTILLA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is our sincere wish and hope and plan that this will be completed this year. The project scope has not changed on the project. However, the cost has increased because of inflation and wage costs, and some necessity to change the design because of some developments as the renovation design was worked up in more detail. They needed to add additional resources to the project.

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the area of petroleum products, is this all due to capital carry-overs?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, that is correct. Those are all capital carry-overs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Asset management, special warrants, \$3,413,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister give us an idea how much money has been spent to date in regard to the Laing Building? This thing has been around for quite some time. There has been a lot of money spent in the

past on renovations and upkeep. It seems like it is an ongoing process. For the amount of money that has been spent to date, we probably could have built a few more buildings. Do you have a general idea on how much money has been spent to date on the Laing Building in regard to upgrades and upkeep, just within the last five years?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I do not expect the Member is asking what has been spent over history on that building. There is a lot of work that has been done since it has been built. In this most recent project to upgrade the building, the only work that is ongoing right now is work on the elevators. That is \$750,000. That work is not yet finalized, so it is ongoing right now.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not asking for the history of the cost in regard to the operations and maintenance of this building. I am talking about when the decision was made to look at doing the upkeep, or looking to bring it up to certain standards, which I believe just happened within the last five years when that decision was made.

To date, it has come up several times through the budget process and through supplementaries. Personally, I have no problem with that. It is a government building, a government asset. Sooner or later we have to realize there has to be a conclusion to this. Do you have any idea as to exactly, since the decision was made to make a major investment or make improvements on that building, how much has been spent to date?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, going back a few years ago, there was an effort to sell the building, but we did not get any offers that were worth anything. The decision was made to renovate it instead, upgrade it. In addition to what is here, I would estimate there has probably been \$500,000 that has been spent. That is in addition to what you see listed in the book. That is \$3,207,000 plus the \$900,000 plus \$500,000 or so.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Asset management, \$3,413,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Not previously authorized, \$900,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Petroleum products, special warrants, \$187,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total department, special warrants, \$3,600,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Not previously authorized, \$900,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will go on to Health and Social Services, capital investment expenditures, directorate and corporate services, special warrants, \$325,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Children's programs, special warrants, \$192,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Primary and acute care programs, special warrants, \$2,101,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Not previously authorized, \$10,652,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is a large amount that has not been previously authorized. I would like to know from the Minister exactly what was the emergency that called for such a major increase of \$10,652,000, which is a large amount when you consider the main estimates was for \$16 million.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: I will let Mr. Voytilla answer that.

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

MR. VOYTILLA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has been an acceleration in the schedule for the completion of the project due to some very successful negotiations with the firm that is doing the work. As a result, they will complete the project construction much quicker, making it open quicker, and all that is being done without an increase in the total cost. The project has been very successful and we are now in a position to see it completed earlier.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Voytilla. Primary and acute care programs, not previously authorized, \$10,652,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Health and Social Services, capital investment expenditures, community health programs, special warrants, \$808,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total department, special warrants, \$3,426,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Not previously authorized, \$10,652,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. We will go on to Justice, capital investment expenditures, registries and court services, special warrants, \$126,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Not previously authorized, \$1,500,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Community justice, special warrants, \$1,345,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Total department, special warrants, \$1,471,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Not previously authorized, \$1,500,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. We will go on to Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, education and culture, special warrants, \$1,160,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Total department, special warrants, \$1,160,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. We will go on to Transportation, capital investment expenditures, airports, special warrants, \$922,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Not previously authorized, \$640,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Highways, special warrants, \$2,154,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Not previously authorized, \$850,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Ferries, special warrants, \$160,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Total department, special warrants, \$3,236,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Agreed. Not previously authorized, \$1,490,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Just clarification on that \$350,000, it does not really state where that \$350,000 came from with regard to the aurora strategy 7, and it talks about \$100,000 for planning improvements of the Bear River ice crossing at Tulita. I would like to ask the Minister with regard to that amount, exactly what is the outcome that you are looking at? Are you considering the possibility of a bridge across the Bear River at one time? This is quite a bit of money for a strategy, so I would like to ask.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Krutko, what page are you on? We are on total department.

MR. KRUTKO: In regard to the \$350,000 under highways at the top of the page in regard to the \$100,000 for planning improvements on the Bear River ice road.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. That \$350,000 is part of the \$850,000 that we agreed on. Did you want to go back to that page?

MR. KRUTKO: Yes. Can we go back to highways, \$850,000?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree to go back to the \$850,000 on the previous page?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: With regard to the \$350,000, \$100,000 is for planning improvements to the Bear River ice crossing on the Tulita winter road realignment. Presently, the crossing system is that they go out from Fort Norman across the Mackenzie, then they come in under Bear Rock because of the Bear River, which is a fast moving river and it does not freeze until possibly December or into the new year. That is the system they use.

Are we going to improve the transportation system by trying to cross a river system which to date has not been crossed by our road system? What is the outcome of that plan? Are you looking at eventually building a bridge across the Bear River?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will refer that to Minister Steen.

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

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the department is planning to update the information we have on that particular crossing. It is causing us a lot of problems and we are hoping to find a route that would allow for earlier crossing of that particular river. It would also allow for earlier access to the oil and gas activity in the Sahtu. The project itself actually involves some aerial photography and engineering aspects of the whole river mouth area, so that we

can come forward with some kind of plan to allow for earlier crossing.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is quite a bit of money to see if you can possibly cross the Bear River on an ice crossing. Ice crossings are usually built in the winter time, so I am just wondering, if anything, should you not be doing your test during the freeze-up period so you can see if it is even feasible to build an ice crossing at those points? Is there something else we are not being told as to what those dollars are for? That is quite a bit of money for planning, \$100,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the information we have provided is a collection of geotech **hydraulic** and environmental data, \$70,000; Aerial photo work is \$90,000; and preparing engineering design reports is another \$90,000. Total for this year, 2001-02, is \$250,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: I would like to ask the Minister, at what point in time was the department going to notify the committee responsible for overseeing the Department of Transportation on these particular matters so we can see how these strategies and dollars are being expended in the business planning process? We are going to be getting into that process in September and October, so I would like to know why this was not put off until the business planning process, so that committees could have a chance to look at this to see how exactly all of these expenditures fit into the overall department? When you start pulling money out through a supplementary to the tune of \$850,000 which has not been previously authorized, so that you can do these special projects and use the Non-Renewable Resource Strategy as the means of getting it through a supplementary -- why was it not put through the business planning process?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, these were not put into the business planning process for the same reason I mentioned before. Development is happening very quickly up the Mackenzie Valley. We want to be ready to respond to it. We want to spend the money where it is needed. When we prepare business plans for the current year, and that goes back a year ago, we did not know whether or not the development was really going to happen. We did not have the agreement with the Minister of DIAND for \$3 million plus for bridges and so on. All of that came after.

To put it off and not do it this summer would mean having to put it off for another year. I think we do not want to slow down the opportunity for people to benefit from the development that is happening. We feel it is a worthwhile expenditure and, unfortunately, it does not fit within the budgeting cycle, but I think it is worth it to do it now. Let us get the benefit from the development. Thank you.

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

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Chairman, if I may add to that, we as a department experienced some problems with the federal authorities in receiving permits for our accelerated bridge program, and that resulted in some work this year being put off and hoping that it will take place next year. It is because we did not have these studies completed, we did not have the information available to them. Federal Fisheries are requiring more and more information now on these stream crossings and the river crossings, so therefore we are preparing ourselves for our applications. In order for us to qualify for federal funding, we have to have our programs and studies in place so that we can have the projects going forward as planned and therefore qualify for funding from the federal government. We do have a timeline to meet in order to complete these projects for the federal government.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. The chair recognizes the clock as being 6:00 p.m. I will rise and report progress.

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

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 4, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2001-2002, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 3: An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act

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

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Handley. 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. Bill 3 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, a meeting of the Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act at adjournment today, meetings for tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of Cabinet House Strategy, at 9:30 a.m. of Cabinet and FMB, at 9:00 a.m. of Accountability and Oversight, at 10:30 a.m. of the Board of Management, and at 12:00 p.m. of Governance and Economic Development.

Orders of the day for Thursday, June 14, 2001:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 11, Architects Act
 - Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Wildlife Act
18. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 6, National Aboriginal Day Act
 - Bill 7, Powers of Attorney Act
 - Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicle Act
 - Bill 9, Commercial Vehicle Trip Permit Act
 - Bill 10, Public Highway Improvement Fund Act
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 1-14(4), Sessional Statement
 - Minister's Statement 3-14(4), Fiscal and Economic Update

- Minister's Statement 4-14(4), Update on the Social Agenda
 - Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Credit Corporation Act
 - Bill 4, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2001-2002
 - Committee Report 4-14(4), Response to the Report on the Human Resources Management Study
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
 21. Third Reading of Bills
 22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, June 14, 2001, at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:07 p.m.