



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**4<sup>th</sup> Session**

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## **HANSARD**

**Thursday, October 25, 2001**

Pages 423 – 448

**The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker**



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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

Thursday, October 25, 2001

**Members Present**

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, 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. Braden. Please be seated. Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 33-14(4): Future Status as Premier**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the events of the last 48 hours have caused me to consider my options as a Premier. Yesterday, I heard from Members who I believe expressed confidence in myself and my administration. I also heard from Members who presented me with an ultimatum to act as they wish or to face the consequences of a motion of non-confidence.

Mr. Speaker, under these circumstances, I feel it necessary to consider the conditions that I will face if I stay as Premier. Will I have the support necessary from the solid majority of Members in this House to do the work for a better future for our Territory and our people? Do I have the support of my Cabinet and how will they vote if it was a secret ballot? If I stay on as Premier, will the tension between myself and some Members continue unabated until my term is completed? Can I come to work every day and give my best personal efforts?

Mr. Speaker, I want to do what is best for the Territory, our constituents and our government. If this means that I should resign as Premier, then that is what I should be prepared to do.

I want Members and the people of the Territory to know that this is what is on my mind now. I will consult with the people out in the public, in the communities and I will be asking Members in this House as well individually. I will make a decision on Monday. Thank you very much.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. That, colleagues, was an emergency statement by the honourable Member for the Sahtu, our Premier. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Minister's Statement 34-14(4): Remarks Respecting Communications Director April Taylor**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during our debate yesterday on the report of the Special Committee on Conflict Resolution, I made remarks respecting communications director April Taylor.

My remarks concerned the credibility of her testimony and the nature of disciplinary action resulting from her participation in the events of March 26. I should have known better than to make these kinds of remarks about a public servant who could not defend herself in the House.

Mr. Speaker, during her term as communications director in my office, Ms. Taylor has provided outstanding service to me and Cabinet. I regret if my remarks respecting Ms. Taylor's appearance before the committee may have left the impression that I do not support her. I continue to have confidence in Ms. Taylor.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Minister's Statement 35-14(4): Portfolio Announcement**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise the House that effective 5:00 p.m. on October 24, 2001, the Honourable Jim Antoine has been appointed to the following portfolios:

- Minister of Health and Social Services
- Minister responsible for the Status of Women
- Minister responsible for Seniors
- Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

**Minister's Statement 36-14(4): Change of Command RCMP "G" Division**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform Members of the transfer of command of "G" Division. Assistant Commissioner Bill Sweeney is leaving the North for new challenges in Alberta as commanding officer of "K" Division, and Chief Superintendent Summerfield is joining us from Nova Scotia.

The relationship between the Government of the Northwest Territories and "G" Division is positive and Assistant Commissioner Sweeney can take a good part of the credit for that. I know that he and his family have a lot of affection for the North and will be keeping in touch.

Mr. Speaker, the new commanding officer of "G" Division, Chief Superintendent Summerfield, is no stranger to the North. He is taking up command of a division where he was once a serving officer. He also brings to this position extensive experience and an impressive record.

Chief Superintendent Summerfield has a varied operational, administrative and management background. His duties prior to receiving his commission in 1996 included general police duties, highway patrol, musical ride, instructional duties, plain clothes and detachment commander duties. He served in Alberta, Ontario, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories.

In 1996, he transferred to Halifax where he assumed responsibility for the aboriginal and diversity management programs for the Province of Nova Scotia. He then assumed command of the Cole Harbour detachment. In 1999, he was dispatched to serve with the United Nations Mission in Kosovo as the chief of training for the United Nations Civilian Police.

On his return to Canada he was seconded to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans as a liaison officer for the RCMP. Later he was promoted to the rank of superintendent and most recently served "H" Division as the support services officer in Nova Scotia.

Chief Superintendent Summerfield is a member of the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia, the International Association of Police Officers, the Royal Canadian Legion and the Canadian Airborne Association. He has been awarded the United Nations medals for services in Cyprus and Kosovo, as well as the RCMP long service medal. Chief Superintendent Summerfield is married to Julene and they have four children.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Superintendent Summerfield has been briefed on the issues that face both the RCMP and the Government of the NWT. I look forward to working with him on these issues and exploring exciting and challenging new directions in justice and policing, including restorative justice, First Nations participation in policing, community constables and new relations between the RCMP and the communities they serve. I know that the chief superintendent, like his predecessor, understands the importance of these new directions and shares my confidence that we will make progress together.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank Assistant Commissioner Sweeney for his contributions to the North and wish him and his family good luck in Alberta. I would also like to welcome Chief Superintendent Summerfield back to the NWT. Mahsi.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Minister Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### **Minister's Statement 37-14(4): Ministerial Council on Literacy**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories, through strategic investment, must take the lead in enhancing literacy levels in the NWT. Equally essential to the success of a territorial-wide

literacy effort is a network of partners who are willing to work with government and each other to deliver literacy programs.

These strategic partnerships will help us realize our goal of a territory where all people participate fully as citizens and value literacy as a life-long learning process necessary for personal, social, political and economic development.

Mr. Speaker, many people inside and outside government were involved in helping to develop the NWT literacy strategy. Their valuable input guides our current work and gives direction for future literacy initiatives in the NWT.

One of the most significant recommendations to come out of that public consultation was that a territorial-wide Ministerial Council on Literacy be established. The council, once established, would provide a forum for public input on literacy initiatives on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that the process of appointing the members to the Ministerial Council on Literacy is nearing completion. The council will hold its first meeting in the very near future.

The Ministerial Council on Literacy will have between eight and 10 members. Members will be selected from throughout the NWT and will be individuals with an interest and background in literacy-related issues. Membership will include, when possible, one representative from each of the following:

- a student enrolled in adult literacy and basic education;
- the NWT Literacy Council board of directors;
- the Aurora College Board of Governors;
- a non-governmental organization;
- an official language group;
- an aboriginal organization;
- an employer; and
- a public librarian.

A representative of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and one other government department will also sit on the council. In addition to ensuring the council represents a cross section of society, we will also have at least two representatives from each region sitting on the council whenever possible.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to providing a forum for input from the public, the council will review literacy issues and provide recommendations to the GNWT through myself as Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. The council will also help to ensure that information and project updates are shared with stakeholders on a regular basis.

The council will make recommendations on literacy issues across society relating to individuals, families, communities, non-governmental organizations, business, industry and governments, both territorial and federal.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank those who agree to sit as members of the Ministerial Council on Literacy. You are

demonstrating your commitment to helping us realize our goal of a truly literate territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Minister's Statement 38-14(4): Motor Vehicles Act -- Impaired Driving Amendments**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Transportation, I wish to update the Legislative Assembly on proposed amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act to deter impaired driving in the Northwest Territories. The Department of Transportation has been working with the Department of Justice on drafting new legislative measures to deal with impaired driving in the Northwest Territories.

New provisions are required to establish an administrative process that would allow the registrar of motor vehicles to deal directly with those who endanger the lives of others when they continue to operate motor vehicles while impaired. The new measures will also require drivers who have lost their driver's licence for impaired driving to demonstrate that they have earned the privilege of driving a motor vehicle again.

The Department of Transportation is modeling the amendments on legislation enacted and tested in the courts in other Canadian jurisdictions. They will also take into account the geographical and societal factors that need consideration in the Northwest Territories. As recommended by the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development, the Department of Transportation is preparing a discussion paper on the program elements that must accompany the strictly legislative aspects of implementing the impaired driving strategy.

Mr. Speaker, for the next session of the Legislative Assembly, I expect to bring forward a complete package consisting of the impaired driving amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act as well as a rehabilitation program for impaired drivers with the financial resources to put it in place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Member's Statement on Appointment of Cal Mains as Deputy Commissioner**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just earlier today in the Great Hall, we had the honour of recognizing and swearing in the new Deputy Commissioner for the Northwest Territories, Mr. Cal Mains. For the record, to be preserved in Hansard, I would like to read some excerpts from the Commissioner's presentation into the record today.

Cal Mains has been in the North since 1950 when he first arrived as a young RCMP officer to serve in the community of Aklavik. He served the Northwest Territories communities of

Herschel Island, Tuktoyaktuk and Fort Smith and was also posted for a time in the Yukon before retiring as NCO, staff sergeant in 1969.

At a time in the history of the North when RCMP officers were called upon to be much more than police officials, Mr. Cal Mains embraced his role not only as a peace officer but as a community leader, a teacher, a conciliator and most especially, a friend to the many people he met along the way.

Following his 19-year career with the RCMP in the North, Mr. Mains worked in Yellowknife as the deputy clerk of the Supreme Court and then moved to Hay River to work with the GNWT Department of Public Works and Services and later the magistrate court. He retired for the second time in 1987.

Mr. Mains and his wife of 48 years, Alice, have remained residents of Hay River ever since. In everything he has done, Mr. Mains has always maintained an active interest in the community and this has included during the time of his retirement. To this day, he is an active member of the Hay River Seniors Society and the Hay River legion and is a second world war veteran.

His experience and commitment to the North and dedication to public embody those qualities and traits that are common to so many Northerners and make us proud to be Northerners.

I think it is extremely appropriate that Mr. Mains will once again serve the people of the Northwest Territories when required to do so as Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories. It is appropriate because serving the North and its people is something that Mr. Mains has done from his heart ever since he came to the North over 50 years ago.

It is particularly my pleasure to recognize Cal Mains today as the new Deputy Commissioner. He is a constituent of my riding in Hay River South and I was pleased to have nominated him for this position. I think he will be a very worthy Deputy Commissioner. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

**Member's Statement on Volunteer Airport Firefighters**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about an issue that my colleague, Mr. Delorey, raised yesterday on the volunteer firefighters.

I think the Minister responsible for that area should strongly consider the suggestions made by Mr. Delorey. I want to keep my comments in the area of volunteer firefighters for airports.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, most of our communities in the Northwest Territories, if not all, rely heavily on air transportation. For about 15 communities that is the only lifeline to the outside world. To my knowledge, the volunteer firefighters in each of those communities are strictly for the community. They are expected to react to accidents or incidents at the airport. To my knowledge, there is no training available.

What kind of resources do they have? Do they get any kind of recognition for the volunteer service that they do? What kind of promotions does the department have to recruit volunteers in this area of need?

Today, Mr. Speaker, I will have questions to that effect for the Minister of Transportation. I feel it is a very important area. We all remember clearly the tragedy of October 15<sup>th</sup>. With our severe climate change during this time of year, there are possibilities of that happening all over the North, Mr. Speaker. What are we doing as a government to prepare for that? If it does happen, it would be unfortunate but, Mr. Speaker, we should be prepared as a government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Member's Statement on Hay River Tourism Industry**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak today on the subject of tourism. I have always been a strong promoter of the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker. We have such a wondrous landscape, unique geography and natural settings. Our natural settings are second to none.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of people hard at work in each of our communities who believe strongly in the marketing of our Northwest Territories in order to showcase us to the world. One such person who comes to mind, Mr. Speaker, is a resident of Hay River by the name of Tracey Therrien.

Mr. Speaker, Tracey is the chairperson of the Hay River Tourism Advisory Board. She has always shown a passion for her work in the tourism sector. Tracey has worked very diligently in the promotion and marketing of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, the Hay River Tourism Advisory Board and the Town of Hay River have undertaken a number of ventures in the promotion of Hay River geographical and cultural assets.

Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of projects undertaken in Hay River that have served to beautify Hay River for our residents and tourists alike. Mr. Speaker, this past summer, the Fishermen's Wharf, an outdoor market, opened in Hay River. This unique tourist attraction enables people to purchase fresh fish from our fishermen right on the docks, in addition to locally made crafts and other goods. As well, the Hay River Museum Society operates the Hay River Heritage Centre. The heritage centre is an excellent showcase for Hay River's unique history.

Mr. Speaker, Hay River was host to over 2,000 tourists from around the world last year. This speaks volumes for the many volunteers who give tirelessly of themselves to make Hay River attractive to tourists from around the world.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to be attending the first annual tourism industry conference in Hay River this evening with Mr. Handley and some of my other colleagues. Mr. Speaker, this event is very important in the tourism industry and I applaud the efforts of everyone involved in this venture. I am especially pleased that the tourism industry has selected Hay River to host this conference. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Member's Statement on Housing Inspections**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the most important purchases an individual makes in his or her lifetime is the purchase of a home. Over the years, as a mayor and MLA, I have received many concerns from homeowners whose homes have been built through programs delivered through the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

The majority of these homes are constructed by independent contractors through the tendering process administered by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. The problems brought to my attention are primarily due to shoddy workmanship, projects not being completed in a timely manner and some projects that are never 100 percent completed.

Many times, some of the homeowners, out of frustration, are forced to move into an unfinished house that has the potential for safety and health concerns. Some projects that should take four to five months are still under construction many months after the expected completion date.

Mr. Speaker, inspections for these projects are primarily the responsibility of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. The payment to the contractor is based on delivery of materials and the completion of various stages of construction. Some homeowners have indicated that when the houses are turned over to them, it is not always complete and there is work remaining. In some instances, they are never completed.

Mr. Speaker, when the contractor has received all, or nearly all, the tendered price less the required minimal hold back, there is little incentive for the contractor to finish the project. This leaves the homeowner with an unfinished and substandard home. If the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is responsible for overseeing the building of homes for a segment of people in the Northwest Territories, they should ensure that the inspections are completed in accordance with the current legislation, policies and building codes.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, holdbacks from payments to contractors must be consistent, administered and maximized to an amount allowed by legislation that will influence the contractor to complete the project. Mr. Speaker, I ask what process is in place to ensure the contractors are qualified to undertake the construction of a new home? What process is in place to hold accountable those contractors who consistently deliver substandard workmanship or are consistently behind...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. McLeod, your time has expired.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I ask for 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. McLeod, you may conclude.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I have to ask, are inspections being conducted in accordance with current legislation and policies? Should we have inspections undertaken by third parties who are then held accountable?

We are all aware of the important contribution made by this government to assist the people of the Northwest Territories to become homeowners. We are aware that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's reputation is highly regarded in the field of public housing delivery and construction. For this, we should be proud.

However, Mr. Speaker, the homeowners are trusting the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's experience in housing construction and delivery to ensure their homes are built in a timely manner and to a standard that any of us would expect of our home. Mr. Speaker, this trust has not been misplaced or lost but must be maintained through the continued delivery of superior service to each and every homeowner receiving service from the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. 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 Attendance at the Dene Nation Annual Assembly**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the course of the summer, I am sure that all Ministers and many Members of the Assembly took the opportunity to attend the general assemblies of the First Nations across the Northwest Territories. I wanted to tell the Assembly a bit about one of those visits that I and my daughter Carmen were privileged to make to Tulita early in July to the Annual Assembly of the Dene Nation of the Northwest Territories.

This was a memorable and an adventurous trip for us, Mr. Speaker, because we were able to make the trip, at least partly, in the traditional way, on the big river, the Deh Cho, the Mighty Mackenzie, along with a number of other boats, primarily with members of the Dogrib Nation. I want to thank my colleague, Mr. Lafferty, for making room for Carmen and I on his craft as we made our way up in the journey from Fort Simpson to Tulita.

We were led most ably and safely by Chief Joe Rabesca. I think there were seven to nine boats in our flotilla at various times. As I said, it is an adventure that my daughter and I will not forget. It gave us a new respect for that river, for the land and most importantly, Mr. Speaker, for the people who have lived on it for generations.

We arrived in Tulita safely and in sunshine with a traditional volley of gunfire from the boats. The whole community and assembly came down to greet us. We learned some new skills. I, for instance, learned the Dene way, or the proper way, to put up a tent and keep dry. Unfortunately, I learned it a day too late but that is my problem. We enjoyed immensely the traditional and cultural events of the assembly, the drum dancing, the stick gambling. We saw for the first time a fire ceremony, a very moving part of the culture.

The hospitality, Mr. Speaker, of the Dogrib people on our trip and of Grand Chief Bill Erasmus at the assembly was very, very much appreciated and has given us a new respect for these people. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement on Public Inquiry into the Death of Effie Blake**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I for one would like to know, along with the family of the late Effie Blake, exactly what this government has done in regard to her death. Her death was uncalled for. It was a curable disease and she should be here with us today. Due to the circumstances, she died of a disease, which is curable: tuberculosis.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a public inquiry. There has also been a report by the chief health officer in regard to a pending report. There were some 26 recommendations in that report regarding how to deal with tuberculosis from training to detection and working along with the people and the community affected.

Mr. Speaker, this disease has not only affected the family of Effie Blake, but also the community of Fort McPherson, friends and loved ones who feel like I do, that this cannot be for naught. Something has to come forth through these recommendations and it has to be meaningful. There has to be something done so that this never happens again to an individual in the Northwest Territories -- dying of a communicable disease which is curable by simply taking a tablet.

Myself, along with the family who sat through the whole public inquiry, which took place in Inuvik, in which, if nothing is done to ensure that those recommendations are acted on by this government, it will all be for naught. I do not believe that that is what the family wants to see.

Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories has the highest rate of tuberculosis in Canada. That fact alone should tell this government that we have something very wrong with our system in having such high statistics. We have to do more to ensure that, not only for myself but for the family, what comes out of this will be acted upon. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister questions on this matter later.

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

#### **Member's Statement on NWT Literacy Week**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to raise awareness of a very important non-profit organization that indeed has representation across the entire Northwest Territories. The organization is the NWT Literacy Council which, Mr. Speaker, was founded in 1989.

Each region of the Territories is represented on their board and their goals are to promote and support literacy in all the official languages of the Northwest Territories. Funding by the council is provided by the National Literacy Secretariat, the GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment and also through corporate donations and membership dues, Mr. Speaker.

Every year, the council highlights the importance of literacy by hosting an NWT Literacy Week. This year it was September 29

to October 5, and this was the week in which literacy was highlighted and reading was promoted across the NWT. In advance of this week, Mr. Speaker, the council distributes a kit to all schools, literacy programs, learning centres, early childhood and family support programs, libraries, friendship centres, community health and various other community groups. The purpose of the kit is to get people involved in reading and to raise the awareness of the importance of literacy.

This week, as part of Literacy Week, I was invited to actually read to a class at Ecole St. Joseph in Yellowknife. It was a kindergarten class and I read them a story and then opened up the floor for questions. They had a lot of relevant questions like, for instance, was I allergic to cats? Even though the story was not about cats, it was so interesting that it very much engaged the young men and women.

Other functions of the council include assisting communities to develop local literacy projects, developing and providing necessary resources and programs to literacy and community workers. Mr. Speaker, they also monitor and report on various federal and territorial literacy policies, as well as encouraging reading and writing for people of all ages.

In addition to public awareness events such as the week they sponsor, other public events include writing contests, presentations to the government, businesses, labour and the public on literacy. They also host literacy conferences and provide literacy information throughout the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, they play an instrumental role in our lives in promoting and enhancing the level of literacy in the Territories. I would like to congratulate them on the progress they have made since 1989 and wish them every success in the future. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement on Beaufort-Delta Self-Government Process**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak about the self-government process that has been ongoing in the Beaufort-Delta region.

As one of the updates we were given by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs pointed out recently, the negotiation process in the Beaufort-Delta has come to what we call the agreement-in-principle stage, where initialling was to occur by all the parties involved. I think it is time that, with this process and as it starts to evolve from here, we start to try to inform our constituents a little more -- in my case, the residents of Inuvik and Inuvik Boot Lake.

I know that the negotiators and those staff working in the community for the self-government process, that is a combined public and self-government process, have been very busy and trying to make sure they meet the time lines that they have established. It has been very difficult at times, but I think there is an opportunity where we can raise more awareness so that our own constituents can be aware. Sometimes when things

are so busy in a community, we can often forget and not make the different meetings, public hearings and scheduled meetings that are set up to make ourselves aware of that process.

Later on in question period, I will have questions for the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs to try to bring more of this information to light. Thank you.

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

#### **Member's Statement on Influence of Senior Bureaucrats in the Capital Planning Process**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to let the concerns of my constituents be known to the House. The concerns they have brought to me concern the way capital projects are allocated now. They have brought to me concerns that they hear the government is putting all the capital projects in one pot and prioritizing them by deputy ministers and the Financial Management Board.

These people live in Yellowknife and they do not know what is going on in the rest of the Northwest Territories. They sit at their desks and they try to decide what is best for my communities. I have a problem with that, Mr. Speaker, and later on in the House I will be asking questions about this. For now, I would just like to say that this government is here for everyone in the Northwest Territories. For it to be run by people who are not elected is not the right way to go. I will have questions on this later on, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement on NWT/Alberta Cooperative Recreational Efforts**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to briefly talk about an example of inter-jurisdictional cooperation; cooperation between the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Alberta government, the Town of Fort Smith and some recreational user groups.

Mr. Speaker, Fort Smith is on the banks of the Slave River, very close to the Alberta border. On the Alberta side of the border, we have what I think are some world-class facilities. We have rapids that people from all over the world come to paddle with their kayaks. We have a ski biathlon range that is very near national standards and, of course, our very own nine-hole golf course -- not quite up to St. Andrews, but we are working on it.

Mr. Speaker, a number of months ago, the people of Fort Smith, the user groups, myself and the town, approached Minister Allen and the Alberta government about the possibility of a partnership to further develop the resources that we already have in that part of the country.

The response from Municipal and Community Affairs has been excellent. The Minister from Alberta sent in some senior officials. We have had numerous meetings. We now have a

consultant underway pulling together a discussion paper that will lay out, I think and I hope, the plans for what would be a multi-use facility used by Alberta and the Northwest Territories in the community.

Mr. Speaker, this is a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate how we can work together as a community with other levels of government, with Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

We have, for example, an opportunity with the Arctic Winter Games coming up in Fort McMurray, with a small investment from Alberta, to further develop this key biathlon range so that it can be used as part of the Arctic Winter Games in 2004, Mr. Speaker.

We have seen other jurisdictions like Greenland and Iqaluit, where they are splitting the Arctic Winter Games. This would save the Alberta government a significant amount of money and would leave Alberta with a legacy of a world-class facility.

I would like to thank the people of Fort Smith, the user groups who have put in the hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours over the years, the Minister and his department, Municipal and Community Affairs, and the Alberta government for all the support they have provided to help move this project along. It is going to be one we all benefit from. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement on Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I would like to tell you about an old institution in the town of Inuvik in Inuvik Twin Lakes. Construction of this building began in 1974 and was completed in 1976. For the benefit of those who do not know, approximately 1,020 white spruce logs were rafted down the river from the Mackenzie River Valley area in Fort Simpson. Many Inuvik citizens were involved in the development of this building. This old building continues to bare the name of the Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre.

Mr. Speaker, for 25 years, Ingamo Hall has been providing social, cultural and recreational needs through a variety of programs and services to the elders and to the youth of Inuvik. The prime example of this service is that every second Thursday of the month, Ingamo Hall hosts an elders' luncheon where the youth assist in serving the food to the elders.

Ingamo Hall has organized and hosted elders' social gatherings. The Ingamo Hall Youth Group has been actively involved in providing awareness regarding community issues such as participating in Take Back the Night walks, a candle vigil. They also hosted the AIDS Awareness Walk. The youth group has accumulated many volunteer hours by assisting in a variety of activities held at this wonderful hall.

The Ingamo Hall offers cultural programming activities such as drum dancing, beading, sewing, traditional cooking and Arctic sports to the residents and visitors to Inuvik. Not to leave out perhaps the most favourite activity open to all residents of Inuvik, the regular Tuesday night bingo. This Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, Ingamo Hall is celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and invites everyone to join them.

Mr. Speaker, Ingamo Hall is an old building, an old log building but yet is full of life. Its structure is strong and will last a long time and so will the services to the people of Inuvik.

I wish to applaud the efforts of the staff and volunteers, past and present, of Ingamo Hall. Without the dedication of the board and their staff, these programs and services will not exist. Ingamo Hall has improved the way of life for Inuvik residents and I wish, on behalf of myself and my colleagues, further success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement on Appointment of Cal Mains as Deputy Commissioner**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents, in particular in Tuktoyaktuk, I wish to take this opportunity to welcome Cal Mains as the Deputy Commissioner. He is well remembered in Tuktoyaktuk from the years back when he was serving as a police officer. I am sure many of my people remember him as a person who supplied the very efficient police services at a very critical time. There were not that many police officers there at the time with him.

I know people in my community will remember him for many years to come as a long, tall, skinny fellow walking down the street with a mean-looking look on his face, but nevertheless, he served us very well. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 3, Members' statements. Are there any other Members' statements? Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

#### **ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize, from Trout Lake, Ralph Sanguez. He is a new assistant fire marshal trainee here for the Northwest Territories. I would like to welcome him to the gallery. Beside him is Mel MacPhail, a long-time friend. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Rob Tordiff, president of the South Slave Metis Council. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. I think you stole Mr. Miltenberger's thunder. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, the Executive is picking on Regular Members in one of our few opportunities to recognize our own constituents.

-- Laughter

-- Applause

Mr. Speaker, I as well would like to welcome and have the honour to acknowledge and recognize Mr. Rob Tordiff and his wife, Sylvie. Two fine constituents and members of a very important organization.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, for the second day, I would like to welcome Mr. John Dixon, a constituent of ours. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize someone with many hats, the deputy mayor of Fort McPherson, Mr. James Andre. Welcome, James.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome a constituent, Mr. Malcolm MacPhail.

-- Applause

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

#### ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

##### Question 134-14(4): Volunteer Airport Firefighters

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister responsible for Transportation and it is dealing with volunteer firefighters for the airports in the Northwest Territories.

My understanding is most of the volunteer firefighters for the airports in the Northwest Territories outside of regional centres are the volunteer firefighters for the community, which is a MACA issue. So my first question for the Minister is what is the relationship between the Department of Transportation and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs when addressing the needs of the airports? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

##### Return to Question 134-14(4): Volunteer Airport Firefighters

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the relationship between Municipal and Community Affairs and Transportation in regard to airport fire-fighting services in small communities is through the emergency response plan that is established for the community. It is through that process that

we identify what is needed at the particular airports and who would respond to what.

The development of the plan is the responsibility of a number of groups, including the communities, MACA, the Department of Transportation, as well as the emergency measures officer.

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

##### Supplementary to Question 134-14(4): Volunteer Airport Firefighters

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister for giving me that answer. What is the emergency response plan? What kind of resources do they have? What kind of materials do they use? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. You are getting all of your supplementaries in at one time. There were three questions there. The Minister may choose to answer whichever one he wants. Minister Steen.

##### Further Return to Question 134-14(4): Volunteer Airport Firefighters

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I can roll all the questions into one answer. As to who decides what equipment is needed at these airports, first of all, Transport Canada sets the regulations for all firefighting. In this particular small community airport, the emergency response plan would identify what is needed. Transportation only comes into play and takes responsibility if the accident actually happens within the airport property. If it is outside the airport boundaries, then it falls under Transport Canada.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for allowing me to ask my supplementary question. I kind of cheated a little bit last time. Mr. Speaker, that is the area of concern that I have. If a community relies 100 percent on an airport for transportation in and out of the community, essentially it is a lifeline for a community.

If an accident, God forbid, happened on said airport, what measures are taken and what equipment do they have to address that incident? An example I like to use is if a plane goes down on the airport, if you do not have the loaders, the fire retardants, foam, for example -- there is no foam in Lutselk'e -- if there are survivors and you have to get them out, how can you clear the airport quickly enough to allow a plane to come in for emergency evacuation of the victims? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Nitah, I will just ask you to clarify your question because you did not quite ask a question. Could you just ask a specific supplementary question?

##### Supplementary to Question 134-14(4): Volunteer Airport Firefighters

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What are the plans if a plane goes down at an airport to allow the clearing of the

airport for a plane to come in? I stress again, the airport is the only lifeline here. Thank you.

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

#### **Further Return to Question 134-14(4): Volunteer Airport Firefighters**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I understand the Member's question. If Transportation does not have the equipment themselves on the particular airport, we then have a contract with private companies or the communities that supply that equipment. I think what the Member is getting at is if Transportation does not have the equipment, then who does? Well, part of the emergency response plan would identify who would do what if an accident happened. That is the whole part of this planning process. The emergency response plan of the community would identify which equipment would be available and what action would be taken by which department.

Transportation, if we have our equipment available or if we are using contractor equipment, we would do whatever is necessary to remove the aircraft that is damaged to allow the airport to operate again. Thank you.

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

#### **Supplementary to Question 134-14(4): Volunteer Airport Firefighters**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It will be nice to have information on what kind of equipment is available in the communities. I would argue there are no foams necessary to fight fuel fires, for example. If there is a fuel fire and you cannot get heavy equipment in to clear the airport, then we have a problem. Can I get a commitment from the Minister that he will make available to me and the Members of this House the resources available in all isolated communities that rely 100 percent on airports? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Further Return to Question 134-14(4): Volunteer Airport Firefighters**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will attempt to do that for the Member. Thank you.

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

#### **Question 135-14(4): Qualifications of Housing Inspectors**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, over the last couple of years, I have been raising the issue of housing in this House a number of times and today I want to come from a slightly different angle. I want to talk about housing and inspections and how those contracts are handled.

I want to ask the Minister of Housing, with the people who do inspect the houses and homes for quality and following the

code, I want to know what qualifications they need to have to become inspectors. Are they certified inspectors? Do they have to have a set of qualifications to become inspectors?

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

#### **Return to Question 135-14(4): Qualifications of Housing Inspectors**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a highly technical question. I am prepared to give a brief answer. Yes, under our hiring practice, we look for people who have the necessary expertise and certification. I could perhaps provide a more substantial answer to that later on. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Allen. Do you have a supplementary, Mr. McLeod? He did not take it as notice, so you can ask a question.

#### **Supplementary to Question 135-14(4): Qualifications of Housing Inspectors**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, it is not clear by his answer whether the inspectors need to be certified. However, I would like to ask if there is a policy in place that holds the contractors accountable and responsible for substandard workmanship or construction that falls behind schedule. What is the policy in place for that?

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

#### **Further Return to Question 135-14(4): Qualifications of Housing Inspectors**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I am aware that there is a policy in place. This policy again is consistent with the government-wide policy. If workmanship is not complete, there is no payment. There is also, I think, a policy where there are certain levels of holdbacks. I believe that is in place at the moment. Thank you.

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

#### **Supplementary to Question 135-14(4): Qualifications of Housing Inspectors**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you. I would like to ask the Minister if there is a process in place to ensure the contractors are qualified to undertake the construction of new homes or repairs. Thank you.

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

#### **Further Return to Question 135-14(4): Qualifications of Housing Inspectors**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, there is a government-wide policy that requires all contractors to meet certain conditions. We have been working on trying to improve the policy to ensure that those contractors are fulfilling their

obligations. We will continue to work to improve that policy and continue to enforce it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Allen. Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 135-14(4): Qualifications of Housing Inspectors**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if he could tell us if there is a problem in this area of inspections and quality of workmanship and if that is an area that is on an increase or decrease.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen. It is a difficult question to answer, but you can if you wish.

**Further Return to Question 135-14(4): Qualifications of Housing Inspectors**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to speak perhaps on a technical side of things. Yes, indeed we do intermittent or periodic inspections conducted by our senior staff in the field. They are the ones who submit approvals for payment. We will ensure that there is follow-up to this question and reply back to the Member. Thank you.

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

**Question 136-14(4): Tuberculosis Treatment Standards**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health in regard to my Member's statement on the activity that has taken place over the last year or so with the public inquiry and the finding of a committee, which was established through this department in response to the Fanning report.

In the report, they make some 26 recommendations on how this government can take action, immediate action, in trying to find ways of avoiding situations such as the incident with Ms. Blake.

I would like to ask the Minister what this department has done regarding these 26 recommendations and when are they going to be acted upon through a policy, decision or some sort of amendment to the Health Act?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The question will be directed to the Acting Minister of Health, Mr. Antoine.

**Return to Question 136-14(4): Tuberculosis Treatment Standards**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, health is important to all of us, depending on whether you hold a portfolio or not, it is very important in all our communities. There are certain diseases that are out there that we are aware of. We live with it. However, we should be in a position as government, through our health programs and services, to identify and treat certain diseases that are out there.

I understand what the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta is concerned about, since I have been in the House when he

questioned the former Minister of Health and Social Services on this particular issue.

My understanding of this whole initiative is that there are a number of studies done, the Fanning report as well as the chief coroner's investigation surrounding the TB-related death in the Northwest Territories. The department has an action plan called, "To Strengthen the NWT TB Program." It focuses on all the different recommendations that have been put forward. There are different time lines because each recommendation is specific, but I have known to date, the short time I have been in this portfolio, looking at the correspondence and getting the briefing, that the department is acting upon these recommendations. I cannot say exactly which ones or at what stages they are at. Maybe as I get deeper into this portfolio, I will relay that message, but at this present time, the department sees this as a priority and that we need to make sure that what happened to Ms. Blake will not happen to anybody else in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary to Question 136-14(4): Tuberculosis Treatment Standards**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me, has the department done anything in regard to the public inquiry itself through those recommendations? You touched on the Fanning report recommendations, which are the 26 recommendations that were made. Those ones have time lines, but there were also recommendations made through the public inquiry that was held in Inuvik. I would like to ask the Minister, has the department followed up on those recommendations?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The acting Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 136-14(4): Tuberculosis Treatment Standards**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at this point in time, I have to get further briefing and more information on that. I am sure as I look at the correspondence that the Fanning report and the chief coroner's report, and I am sure the public inquiry, will all probably have similar information. I know that the department is acting and trying to follow up on all the recommendations from these other two instances. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary to Question 136-14(4): Tuberculosis Treatment Standards**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the issue of the Minister, knowing he is new to the job. I think it is important that we move on this issue, so with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister to ensure that he is able to respond back, hopefully prior to the adjournment of this House, not only to myself but to the family affected, so we can see that there has been something done in the way of

movement on these issues and that the recommendations are being acted upon.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The acting Minister, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 136-14(4): Tuberculosis Treatment Standards**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, maybe I could just say specifically that the department's action plan, "To Strengthen the NWT TB Program," focuses on enhancing training and awareness for the primary health care providers in all the communities. We also have to be working towards increasing public awareness and ensuring that the public health resources are available to support the TB program.

The goal of the Department of Health and Social Services is to reduce the rate of TB in the Northwest Territories. Early case identification is very important, trying to find out who has it as early as possible and start the treatment of these people as soon as they are detected. I think this is achieving the goal specifically. I will reply to the honourable Member as soon as I get the information he is asking for. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary to Question 136-14(4): Tuberculosis Treatment Standards**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe the Minister mentioned several areas: monitoring, training, ensuring there are case files in place to follow the different members and also awareness. I believe, Mr. Speaker, a slogan without action is just a slogan. I think we need action on this one. I would like to ensure from the Minister that action is being taken and that we do more than just mention what they are looking at but see exactly what they are doing to ensure that these things are being carried out.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 136-14(4): Tuberculosis Treatment Standards**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see in the correspondence that there are a number of specific action items, work plan and time line that the department is working on. I could make that available to the honourable Member so he knows what the departments are doing. Thank you.

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

**Question 137-14(4): Beaufort-Delta Self-Government Status**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question at this time is directed to the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I talked about the Beaufort-Delta self-government process and the fact that they are at the agreement-in-principle stage and the initialling, I believe. I would like to get an update from the

Minister at this time as to what has transpired since the last update from Aboriginal Affairs. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

**Return to Question 137-14(4): Beaufort-Delta Self-Government Status**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Beaufort-Delta Agreement-in-Principle is approved formally for the signing of the agreement-in-principle. I was going to make a statement on it later on, either tomorrow or on Monday. However, the agreement-in-principle stage has been reached. This document has been initialled by the negotiators and has been taken to their principals. The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs' negotiators have initialled the agreement-in-principle and it has come to Cabinet and it has been approved by Cabinet. I was going to make that announcement tomorrow or the next day.

However, this document has also gone to the other principals, being DIAND, the federal government, as well as the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit. So we are at that stage. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary to Question 137-14(4): Beaufort-Delta Self-Government Status**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for that information. Is he aware that the other parties have also initialled it off? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 137-14(4): Beaufort-Delta Self-Government Status**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I understand that the Beaufort-Delta leadership have initialled it and that the federal negotiators have also initialled it and it has gone to their principals. I do not know whether the formal approval for signing it has been done by the Beaufort-Delta or the federal government. We will find that out in time. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary to Question 137-14(4): Beaufort-Delta Self-Government Status**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister inform us to what process will be put in place from this point forward and who would have responsibility in the sense of informing the residents of the Beaufort-Delta region as to what is going to take place from this point forward? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 137-14(4): Beaufort-Delta Self-Government Status**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you. Once the agreement-in-principle has been formally signed by the three parties, then it becomes a public document. That is when we will distribute it and only then. It is a tri-partite arrangement and that is what the arrangement says for us to do. At that point in time, we will have to begin a public consultation process of sharing with the public and letting everybody know what is in it. We will then get the feedback and will proceed from there. Thank you.

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

**Question 138-14(4): Capital Allocation Process**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Joe Handley.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to have a meeting in Rae with the Minister of MACA and the Minister of Health a week ago. During the meeting, the community was concerned about the infrastructure that was going to be put in place that was not what they needed. At the time, the department took the attitude you take it or you take the chance of losing it, because of this new way of funding that we are putting in place as a government. That was a great concern. However, after a long period of talking back and forth, it was decided that the project will be looked at again.

I have a question to the Minister. Are they going to continue with this new way of funding projects? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Return to Question 138-14(4): Capital Allocation Process**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question is actually in my role as Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat. Mr. Speaker, it is a new way of assessing our capital. It takes into consideration all capital projects based on a criteria of their importance on, first of all, the protection of people, assets and so on. It also breaks projects into sub-categories for review from over \$250,000 to less than \$250,000 and so on. It is a way of assessing our capital needs and spending the money in those areas that are most critical to us and to the people we represent.

At this point, I intend to continue with this way of allocated capital expenditures but I am open to input from the Members. I indicated I would be willing to do another briefing on how this process works, and again, I look forward to advice from the Members before I say that definitely that is the only way of doing it for the coming year. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. For the record, that was for the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 138-14(4): Capital Allocation Process**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for that answer and just for information, this was regarding a water treatment plant. This is a health and safety concern and it was a need for the community. For the department to come and tell them take it or take the chance of losing it, what other higher priority is there? I do not see any. I am glad that the Minister gave me that answer and I would just like to ask him one more question. Can he reassure communities by maybe writing them a letter and telling them that they are looking at these projects and that it will be done in the future? Thank you.

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

**Further Return to Question 138-14(4): Capital Allocation Process**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not familiar with the specific project that Mr. Lafferty is referring to, but I will certainly discuss this with my colleague, the Minister responsible for MACA, and one of us will write a letter to the community to assure them of how the system is working and what the priorities are. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary to Question 138-14(4): Capital Allocation Process**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** I would also like to add that in the past, Ministers and the department did deal with communities on capital projects and they did notify them ahead of time. Maybe that practice could continue until they have finalized their plans? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return to Question 138-14(4): Capital Allocation Process**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The same process should be used by each department. Each department each year should consult with the communities on what their capital needs are. The departments would bring all of that information back and sit down as a capital review committee that is headed by the deputy ministers of the departments with capital. They would start looking at all of the requests from all the communities and try to categorize them.

We always have more capital demands than we have money. As you know, we are limited to about \$50 million a year in capital, so our deputy ministers try to categorize it, prioritize it and then they provide it to us. We in the Financial Management Board provide what we call a political filter. We will look at it from our political needs. We then put it into the business plans and that is the opportunity for the Members to also comment on the capital needs, if they think some are not prioritized properly. I certainly look forward to any input from Mr. Lafferty or any

other Members with regard to the allocation of capital in their areas of responsibility. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. No further supplementaries? Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 139-14(4): GNWT Policies on Deh Cho Process**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Mr. Speaker, as of late, there has been a lot of discussion regarding Deh Cho First Nations and Deh Cho negotiations and there have been comments made in public that could be perceived as interference with negotiations by Members of Cabinet.

I would like to ask the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs if there is any policy in place which would prevent any comments made by Ministers that could be perceived as interference from taking place? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The question is directed to the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

**Return to Question 139-14(4): GNWT Policies on Deh Cho Process**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is a difficult one because I think we are dealing with a difference of opinion here on this issue. There could be a difference of opinion on how you perceive things and just because you do not agree with one person does not mean you are right or wrong. It just means that you have a difference of opinion.

I do not know what the Member is referring to specifically. Perhaps it is based on the media, on the newspaper articles that are out there, that perhaps the chief negotiator for the Deh Cho is making statements about government so there are different government Ministers that may be replying in the media. This sort of thing could be handled quite easily in private. However, because the Deh Cho negotiations are in the public, the things that normally are dealt with at private meetings seem to be out in the media. You cannot really outlaw the media unless these negotiation sessions are held in camera.

It is hard to answer that type of question so I am just trying to understand where the honourable Member is coming from. That is the only knowledge I have. What is going on in the public are the different statements made either from the Deh Cho First Nations and the response from government.

We do not have any policy at all on what you call interference, so if somebody is making the accusation about government in the media, then the government officials that are named have to reply in the media. So I do not know. Either the two parties agree not to have it out in the media. Perhaps that is one way of doing it. Right now, there is no policy that the government has. If they are named in the media, then they should have an opportunity to explain in the same media as to why certain things are happening the way they are. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. The question was a little bit -- that is why I hesitated. Perhaps through

supplementaries, Mr. McLeod can clarify. Mr. McLeod, supplementary.

**Supplementary to Question 139-14(4): GNWT Policies on Deh Cho Process**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think at the tail end, he admitted that there is no policy for Cabinet to curb their comments in the media and you could say whatever you want, regardless of how it interferes with what is on the table. I want to ask the Minister if his department or this government has any mechanism in place to accept liability for any comments that may jeopardize opportunities in negotiations that are ongoing. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 139-14(4): GNWT Policies on Deh Cho Process**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Deh Cho process is at the negotiating table now. They have recently had two sessions, one in Fort Providence and one in Trout Lake. This was agreed upon by all parties and this is a formal negotiating session that happens in front of everybody, in front of the media.

The GNWT is a party to these negotiation sessions. Up to this point, we have been playing a very minor role and we are not interfering with these negotiation sessions, so perhaps the honourable Member is saying the Deh Cho process -- the chief negotiator is negotiating to the media and the newspaper. I do not think that is a formal negotiation process. Whatever is said in the media is subject to reply by the other side if they are named. I do not see what the problem is here. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 139-14(4): GNWT Policies on Deh Cho Process**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister totally ignored my question, however I will ask my final supplementary. Because the Minister of Finance said yesterday that agreements in negotiation, interim agreements are applied government wide, I want to know if the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs would agree that the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs should take the lead role and ensure that they are implemented? I do not see any one department taking the lead on it. I want to know if the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs would agree that his department should be taking the lead and ensuring that these agreements are implemented.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 139-14(4): GNWT Policies on Deh Cho Process**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a framework agreement that was signed by the Deh Cho First Nations with the federal government and the GNWT, as well as an interim measures agreement. It is a process that

was agreed upon that has to be negotiated. Work is happening now at these two negotiation sessions that I mentioned, of the preliminary beginning of talking about how and what scope it is going to be.

The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs coordinates the GNWT approach at the table. We talk with the officials of the other departments that are affected by the different subject matters that are at the table. We coordinate that. At this point in time, because this interim measures agreement is one of the first of its kind, we are making our way through it to see how it is going to work internally in the government.

Yes, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs will take a lead role in coordinating the approach of government. We take the advice and directions of other departments, so we still are in the beginning of coming to internal agreements of exactly how it is going to work at the end. This is a very beginning stage of approaches that we have agreed to be a part of and it includes the federal government as well as the Deh Cho First Nation government. So it is at a very preliminary stage, yes.

The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs is taking the lead role in coordinating GNWT's participation at this table. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

#### **Question 140-14(4): Appeals Tribunal and Client Services**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, my question this afternoon is for the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board. It concerns the roles and responsibilities of the appeals tribunal and the client services division.

Mr. Speaker, from time to time, I think we have all had constituents who seem to have fallen through the cracks in the WCB system. It is becoming more apparent that a systemic problem exists between the tribunal, which has a certain decision and final capacity, and then the client service's branch, which I understand has a role in implementing or carrying out these decisions.

My question, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister confirm the decisions of the appeals tribunal are to be acted on fully and in a timely manner? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Return to Question 140-14(4): Appeals Tribunal and Client Services**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, they will be. When the appeals tribunal makes a decision, it will be followed up on. In terms of a timely basis, I have taken action to increase the number of appeals tribunal members so that you could have two tribunals, if necessary, in order to speed up the process. It will be done as quickly and as timely as possible. Thank you.

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

#### **Supplementary to Question 140-14(4): Appeals Tribunal and Client Services**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and yes, the creation of an additional panel was welcome news to help clear up the backlog, though I still perceive a difficulty within the process of decisions being made and then implemented.

I would like to ask the Minister, does client services, as the implementation branch, have any discretion in interpreting decisions or in the timing of their implementation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Further Return to Question 140-14(4): Appeals Tribunal and Client Services**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, their responsibility is primarily administrative, so unless they had questions that needed clarity or administratively created an impossibility or some ambiguity, then they should proceed with implementing the decisions as expediently as possible. They cannot overrule or vary from a decision that is made by an appeals tribunal. Thank you.

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

#### **Supplementary to Question 140-14(4): Appeals Tribunal and Client Services**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, in the implementation of decisions, again, the sense that I am getting is that between client services and the appeals tribunal, there is perhaps a tendency there to take cases and move them back and forth, back and forth as one group or the other has a difficulty or reluctance in carrying out their job.

I wanted to ask the Minister, is he aware of perhaps an unusual number of cases that just are not being resolved in a timely and an efficient manner? Is the system performing as efficiently as it should? Thank you.

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

#### **Further Return to Question 140-14(4): Appeals Tribunal and Client Services**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, no, I am not aware of any large numbers or any numbers, really, of decisions that are being delayed unduly. There is always some that may be taken back for reconsideration after a decision is made and questions are raised.

Generally, I think the appeals tribunal is made up of representatives on the tribunal who want to do best for the worker and are trying to expedite the process. I know we have cut down the time from last year being 236 days to 134 days for filing decisions, so we have cleaned that up a bit. I think the membership is well-meaning. I know the cases are complicated. Sometimes people do not get the decision they want or submit further information later and that complicates it,

but I am confident that the people on the tribunal are trying to do the best they can.

In spite of that, I will check into this further and let the Member know if there are any delays. If he has a specific case in mind, I would like to know more about it. Thank you.

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

#### **Supplementary to Question 140-14(4): Appeals Tribunal and Client Services**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's patient explanation there. There is a review underway of the WCB legislation. I would like to ask the Minister if this is an area that will be addressed within the jurisdiction of that review panel. Thank you.

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

#### **Further Return to Question 140-14(4): Appeals Tribunal and Client Services**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, yes, the role of the appeals tribunal and the action between the appeals tribunal and the Workers' Compensation Board and its departments is certainly a part of this.

The objective of the review, as we all know, is to have a system that works smoothly, particularly for injured workers, but I think for all parties. Thank you.

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

#### **Question 141-14(4): NWT Literacy Standards**

**MR. BELL:** My question this afternoon is for the Minister of [Education, Culture and Employment](#). It relates to the standardized testing that a couple of the boards in the Northwest Territories have just been through. Mr. Delorey did in fact ask questions on this the other day.

As mentioned, Yellowknife No. 1 did take part in the testing and marks were not quite what we had hoped they would be, but this is the first time we have done these types of tests, Mr. Speaker.

One of the key problems we had was in the area of mathematics. I understand the new curriculum involves word problems and specifically problem solving, which I think may have a literacy component to it that is causing us some problems.

I am wondering if the Minister can tell us what his department is doing to work with the boards to address literacy in this area. Thank you.

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

#### **Return to Question 141-14(4): NWT Literacy Standards**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the results indicated that students in both the Yellowknife School District No. 1 and the South Slave were not adequate in the math tests. In discussions with some of the officials with the school boards, there were a number of areas that cropped up as possibilities that should be looked at.

Like all tests, they need to be interpreted and properly analyzed. One of the issues, of course, that Mr. Bell has referred to is the fact that the process being used in the questions require a literacy application as well. It was brought to our attention during a meeting with the school board to that end.

What I have done on my part is discussed with my officials at the department what we can do as a department to assist boards that get results and how to interpret the results.

In the early part of the new year, we will be having some training sessions, Mr. Speaker, to assist school boards on how to interpret tests so that maximum use can be made of these particular tests and to ensure that all circumstances of how the tests were taken are taken into account. As Mr. Bell has pointed out, literacy is one area. Thank you.

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

#### **Supplementary to Question 141-14(4): NWT Literacy Standards**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do have a newly minted Northwest Territories Literacy Strategy that the Minister has obviously been very involved in rolling out. I am wondering if that would have some affect on how we do in the standardized tests going forward over the next few years. I wonder if in fact we are going to measure this strategy that we have against these test results. Thank you.

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

#### **Further Return to Question 141-14(4): NWT Literacy Standards**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, the Literacy Strategy was directed into certain areas and did not deal with the whole area of providing direct assistance for interpretation of results in the schools. I believe, if I interpreted that correctly, what the Member was asking was will the Literacy Strategy provide some sort of measures of education results in tests? That was not the intent of the Literacy Strategy, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Supplementary to Question 141-14(4): NWT Literacy Standards**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that from talking to educators, one of the problems we have in the Northwest Territories is that parents may not be fully literate or may not have a higher level of education, some of the older generations. Kids do come home with homework and

oftentimes we know that results in school are a direct result of their ability to get help at home. I would hope that the Northwest Territories Literacy Strategy will address adult basic education so that parents can certainly help their children in those areas. I am wondering if the Minister could speak to that. Thank you.

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

#### **Further Return to Question 141-14(4): NWT Literacy Standards**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Literacy Strategy is quite expansive and it deals with a number of areas. I believe we put substantially more money into adult basic education and literacy. We have combined the area where we had Community Skills for Work, some funding there and the Literacy Strategy delivery through the college system and through the NGOs.

Of course, the intent is to provide more literacy education on the local level so that parents and others -- it is not just directed at parents -- but that all the population has the opportunity to improve their literacy skills. That in turn, no doubt, will assist such people as the honourable Member has mentioned in assisting their children in addressing issues at school, be it math or in other subjects. Thank you.

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

#### **Supplementary to Question 141-14(4): NWT Literacy Standards**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I can recognize that the results of the Northwest Territories Literacy Strategy may be very hard, in fact, to quantify. I think that is understandable. I wonder if the Minister has any suggestions as to how we are going to measure the effectiveness of this new money that he has put into the system. Thank you.

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

#### **Further Return to Question 141-14(4): NWT Literacy Standards**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** If I recall correctly, I cannot remember the details of the measures we have put into place but we did put into place, with the Literacy Strategy, areas that we wanted to measure results, Mr. Speaker. The Literacy Strategy itself has an accountability framework with it that measures results and has targets with it.

Speaking back to the tests, I think that is of importance to us as well. School boards, more and more -- some have the Canadian Achievement Test and some use the Alberta test. I think that is an area that we want to ensure we coordinate as well. Thank you.

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

#### **Question 142-14(4): Implications of Capital Allocation Process**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have some grave concerns with the new process that has been implemented to consider capital and doing away with the old capital planning process and establishing a new process made up of deputy ministers. For me, that is a total lack of consideration for the elected representatives of this House and elected individuals in our communities to have a say on how the capital is going to be arrived at and how those issues will be prioritized.

Mr. Speaker, the biggest concern I have is the way with this formula has been put together and the question of needs. My concern, Mr. Speaker, is that the small communities that may not have the population base or the demand by numbers will always lose out. If you use determination on need, you will always be outnumbered by the larger communities because their needs will be higher than the needs in smaller communities, where they will not even have an opportunity to be considered in many of these projects because of the size of the project and the question of need.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that this government rethinks this. My concern, Mr. Speaker, is that we have to do more to ensure there is a process that will involve communities and community representatives. Even in the grey times of the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly when we had a deficit situation, the community still had input. There was a call letter sent out by the Premier to allow communities to have a say in what projects they wanted through this process. I see they have been totally eliminated from having a say in any capital projects where in some cases, capital has been totally eliminated by the five-year capital planning process.

My question is to the Minister of FMBS is exactly why has your department not considered the implications of this new change to small communities?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I just want to remind Members that I still have a list of names, so be speedy with your questions. The question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Handley.

#### **Return to Question 142-14(4): Implications of Capital Allocation Process**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department has, along with all the other departments in the government, looked at the whole issue of how do we meet our capital needs with our very limited capital budget? They put forward a proposal which basically said, "Let us rank all our capital projects according to priority, starting with people's lives and working our way through a set of priorities." They have done that. Each department has their own consultation process for all their projects. They bring it to the table and then all the projects are prioritized.

As well, I might mention, Mr. Speaker, when looking at small communities and their needs, and also the need for small projects in larger communities, the departments did agree to set aside an amount of money and \$8 million is proposed this year for the projects. That is meant to give the communities and the departments flexibility on how to deal with the smaller projects.

However, as we prepare plans for next year, the 2002-03 fiscal year, then I am very happy to have another presentation to Members, explain how it works and if there are concerns, there is still time to make changes. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary to Question 142-14(4): Implications of Capital Allocation Process**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my concern is that I do not think we have taken into consideration the differences on needs. The needs are different in larger municipalities than they are in small settlement councils, or even in hamlets. There has always been that discretion between large and small communities. I think what this does is it even pushes them farther apart by not realizing that circumstances are different in those types of structural make up of our communities. Our services are different. Our services are mostly water delivery, sewer, and somebody picks up your garbage with a pickup truck. In a community...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Krutko, please go to the question.

**MR. KRUTKO:** What was the question?

-- Laughter

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell me, have you seriously done an evaluation on the differences of need based on communities, large and small?

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

**Further Return to Question 142-14(4): Implications of Capital Allocation Process**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to be cooperative in answering Member's questions certainly, but we are treading awful close to talking about our business planning for the 2002-03 year. I find myself getting drawn a little bit further and further into it all the time. However, in this proposed way of allocating capital, we went over it with the committees. We did look at allocations by community. We did look at the small projects versus large projects. We have categorized them by community size and so on.

I hope we have enhanced the way of dealing with our capital and have not taken away some of the flexibility that was there before. We still leave a lot of the latitude, especially for smaller projects, with the communities. As I said, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to try and answer questions here. I am also prepared to meet with the committees or the Members individually further to our business plan discussions. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary to Question 142-14(4): Implications of Capital Allocation Process**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think anything we do in this House, we should at least have by communities, by Members of this House, and not try to impose

something on us by coming forward and say, "This is what we are doing." I would like to ask the Minister, where do the elected representatives in our communities fit into this planning process?

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

**Further Return to Question 142-14(4): Implications of Capital Allocation Process**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, as has been the case for a long time, each department prepares its capital plans. They do a 20 year capital needs assessment. That is done in consultation with communities and regions. They then go into a shorter five-year plan and prioritize again. That is done with communities.

The departments each then bring forward what they are hearing from the regions and communities, what they feel are their departmental priorities. That comes to the capital needs committee of deputy ministers, who then determine how our limited resources are going to be allocated.

Even after the community input at that level, there is still an opportunity after the departments and the committee make their recommendations to us through the business planning process for what is referred to in one of the charts in one of the presentations as a political filter, where we are able to look at the political considerations that must be taken into account. That is the opportunity following business plan reviews where everyone of us as representatives of constituents can have that input. That is the stage we are at right now, Mr. Speaker.

Then, of course, you have a chance again to represent your constituents' needs when we get into main estimates and so on. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary to Question 142-14(4): Implications of Capital Allocation Process**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I cannot bear the thought of deputy ministers making the final decision, knowing that there might be circumstances where communities may feel strongly enough on a particular project, which for them may be their priority but it may be no one else's priority.

In that case, what is the process for those communities that may have something as their priority, which may be unique to themselves? Are they able to override this committee of deputy ministers if they feel strongly enough of prioritizing a particular project that may not meet the requirements of your deputy ministers committee?

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

**Further Return to Question 142-14(4): Implications of Capital Allocation Process**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I want to clarify that the deputy ministers do not make any final decisions with regard to

capital. Those are made here in this House. The deputy ministers make recommendations to their Minister. That comes to the Financial Management Board. That comes through the business planning process. We each have an opportunity for input there. It also comes in the main estimates. There are many opportunities for the community to have input into it.

If there are particular items that communities in anyone's constituency feel strongly about that are not included in the business plans that you have seen, then I would be happy to hear what those are and have them taken back for consideration.

However, we have to keep in mind that we are working with a limited amount of money and if something else is added in, we either have to over spend beyond what we had planned in our fiscal strategy, our framework, or else we have to cut something else out. There is an opportunity here, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. The time allocated for question period is over. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 6, please.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 6, oral questions. Are there any nays?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Nay.

**MR. SPEAKER:** We have a nay. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to go back to item 6.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 6, oral questions. Are there any nays?

**AN HON MEMBER:** Nay.

**MR. SPEAKER:** We have a nay. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to the opening address. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

#### ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

##### Reply 2-14(4)

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise on replies to opening address because I need to take this opportunity to alert the public about the very serious and grave situation that is happening in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the people out there that what is happening in this House is nothing short of a palace coup. The words I use are palace coup.

Mr. Speaker, the instrument of this palace coup is the committee report filed on Tuesday and the committee report that was discussed yesterday. I think the people who need to answer to these actions are the authors of this report.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is very clear who has written the report and in the interest of the public -- the members of the committee: a committee chaired by Brendan Bell, MLA for Yellowknife South; Mr. Roland, deputy chairman, MLA for Inuvik Boot Lake; Mr. Leon Lafferty, MLA for North Slave; Honourable Joseph Handley, MLA for Weledeh; and Mr. J. Michael Miltenberger, MLA for Thebacha.

Mr. Speaker, I say this because I believe the people out there need to know what is going on and this is only my account of what I see. It is up to the individuals in this House to answer the questions that I pose here or as a result of what I am saying in this House.

Mr. Speaker, this morning we had a Caucus meeting in the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, there was a suggestion this morning by a member of this committee that while we were discussing the process on how to select a new Minister, there was a suggestion that in the ballot to select a new Minister...

**MR. SPEAKER:** We have a point of order. Your point of order, Mr. Krutko.

##### Point of Order

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, my point of order is that anything discussed in Caucus is the property of Caucus and it was in confidence of the Members in Caucus, behind closed doors. Whatever happens in Caucus stays in Caucus and should not be brought to the floor of this House unless it is dealt with through due process.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Krutko, I guess I am puzzled as to what rule we are discussing here. Could you assist the Chair in demonstrating which rule that we are dealing with here? We have certain conventions and certain understandings, but as far as a point of order, it has to be based on a particular rule, so assist the Chair.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, I believe it is the manner of how we conduct ourselves in the question of confidence and matters which are discussed behind closed doors, in Caucus, which is open to all Members to have the ability to speak our minds freely and talk about issues, knowing that will stay within the room of Caucus and in issues that we feel, in order to have the ability to speak freely, knowing that is in confidence.

I think we have to realize that it is a question of allowing for us to be able to feel comfortable that we can discuss issues in confidence and that those issues are held in confidence in Caucus. For myself as a Member, I feel it is my right to feel that I have the security of raising issues in Caucus. That is being infringed on by what was said or who said what by bringing it out in this public forum. It disallows the respect of other Members of Caucus to be able to do that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I am having a bit of difficulty on your point of order because there is no rule that is being breached. We may have certain conventions that Members may follow but this is information that is not known to the House, what you are describing. There is no rule being breached by the honourable Member in her statements so far. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, I believe there is a convention that we all follow as Members and I think this is one of them,

that we have to ensure that we feel confidence that what we say behind closed doors or in the confidence of Members and that we do not misuse that trust by doing that. I think in this case, there is a convention that we all follow and I think that convention has been violated.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. It may be that we have certain conventions that have been followed in the past. There definitely is no rule being broken here yet so you have no point of order. I will allow the honourable Member to continue her reply to the opening address, bearing in mind the concerns that have been expressed. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the spirit of showing the respect for the convention of this House, I will try to be discreet about what I say but I think that what I have to say here is of the level of importance that I must push the envelope to reveal as much as possible without disrespecting the process, Mr. Speaker. I take your advice as noted and I will make my best effort.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that it is really important that I stand here and speak because I want to prevent the approach in this House that serious allegations or expressions are made as to the confidence that Members have of the Premier or of the government, without having a forum for the Members to make their statements about why it is that they are questioning the confidence of the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, I was not thinking about doing this statement until I heard the Premier's emergency statement. It is obvious to me that the Premier is talking to the people and asking the people to respond about whether or not this Premier has the support of the people and therefore, this Assembly. I do not think that it is fair to ask the people to provide input without giving them information so I am doing this in the hopes that other Members might feel compelled to make their position known about where they stand on this government and what they think of the Premier so that we can move on and govern.

Mr. Speaker, I said yesterday when we were discussing the special committee report, I acknowledged that this House and the Members have a lot of power under what is known as power of privilege. However, I also firmly believe that for every ounce of power that we have here as Members under parliamentary privilege, we have to have as much, if not more, responsibility in how we use that.

All the power that we have comes from the people and people need to know. I respect the sense of fairness and sense of integrity and sense of rationality that people out there have to make a final judgment about whether or not what is being conducted here and what is being done here behind the scenes is something that should be condoned. I do not think that we could expect the people to make that decision unless all of us, and of course it is up to the Members, but I am taking the action to stand up and say this is what I know. I am prepared to be judged by the people out there and the people here and in the end by my electorate.

Mr. Speaker, if I am not out of line, I would just like to say that what is happening here is that there are Members here -- and the Members I have mentioned -- who feel that even though yesterday we went through the motions posed in the special committee report and had very detailed discussions about it. The last item in that report had to do with confidence in the Premier and the Premier's office.

It is a very innocently stated motion, Mr. Speaker, and every Member who voted on it explained where they stood on it and why. However, it seems like there was an ulterior motive to that motion and that is that a suggestion made for a certain action has to be taken by the Premier and if not, it is a vote of confidence on him.

All of these discussions were held in private. I am told that I cannot speak about it. I do not really understand why I cannot speak about it because if I do not speak about it and no one else speaks about it, how would the people out there know that there is a palace coup going on here with paper, in secret discussions behind the scene?

This is not just about the removal of the Premier. This is not just about the removal of Mr. Stephen Kakfwi out of the office of the Premier. This is about overthrowing the government. This is about putting a halt to the discussions we are having with Ottawa on devolution, resource revenue sharing, Aboriginal Pipeline Working Group working with the government and the producers -- we are so close to arriving at a serious decision there. This is about stopping all of the work that we have done in the last two years and making this government a lame duck government no matter who sits on the Premier's seat.

One of the motives I have in doing this today, Mr. Speaker, is that I am simply sick and tired of this Legislature looking like it is a banana republic.

-- Interjection

**MR. SPEAKER:** A point of privilege has been raised by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell. What is your point of privilege?

#### Point of Privilege

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to raise a point of privilege. I believe the Member imputed motive on the committee when she suggested that we had ulterior motives in our recommendations. I do not think that is proper or acceptable. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Okay. We have a point of privilege here. I cannot rule on that immediately. I just have to find out what is his point of privilege. Thank you, Mr. Bell. From the Chair's point of view, it does not appear that you have a point of privilege by what you described. You are not being impeded. Your business can still continue. You may have a point of order but at this point, it does not appear to be a point of privilege. Your rights are not being trampled on. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** A point of order.

**MR. SPEAKER:** What is your point of order?

#### Point of Order

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My point of order is, as I have just suggested in attempting to make a point of privilege, I believe the Member has imputed motive toward myself and the committee with her suggestion that one of the recommendations had ulterior motives. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. At this point, I cannot make a ruling on it because I would like to review the

transcripts to see what was said. However, we can entertain debate on that point of order to see whether or not other Members have any comments on whether there is a point of order and what this alleged point of order is. Does anyone else wish to remark on that? The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It may be essential to wait for a final transcript, but I believe that I too heard a suggestion that there was a motive, a hidden motive for the resolution that was adopted by this House. I would further argue that it may be improper for a Member to make that kind of comment about a resolution that has been adopted by this Assembly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. To the point of order. There being no further debate on that, I shall reserve judgment on that point of order until the Chair has had a chance to review. Perhaps I can just caution the honourable Member, who will continue to speak, to remember the conventions and remember the rules that apply to the House as far as references to things of the nature that -- she has come fairly close, as the Chair heard, about hidden motive, the word, but continue on, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my apologies. It was not appropriate for me to use the words ulterior motive, so I will retract that and refrain from saying that again.

Mr. Speaker, I apologize for having a very disoriented statement here because I really was not planning on doing this. What forced me to do this is in reflecting on what transpired in these hallways this morning. Understanding the seriousness of what is going on here, I feel compelled to get up and speak. Please accept my apologies if I do not sound as organized as I should.

What I would like to say to the people is that yesterday in this House, until the wee hours of the night, we discussed the report of the Special Committee on Conflict Process. This committee is a committee that was set up by this House to review two things. One is the allegation of bias made by former Minister Groenewegen with respect to the way she was being treated by the Conflict Commissioner.

The second issue the committee was tasked to deal with was to find out what had gone on and find out the details of the circumstances surrounding the taping by Minister Groenewegen of the private conversation between the Conflict Commissioner and the principal secretary, John Bayly.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated yesterday, this was a very unusual process in that it was without a lot of precedence. The committee had to figure out the rules as they went along.

It was apparent from the process that the committee decided to adopt a process known as a quasijudicial process, which cannot really be defined but it is something that mixes legal process and parliamentary process. All of this power comes from what is known as parliamentary privilege.

I feel very strongly, Mr. Speaker, that yesterday, the report itself was so heavy-handed that we have resulted in destroying the reputations and careers of not only the Minister but the Conflict Commissioner as well. We did serious damage to a CBC reporter, Lee Selleck, and we have damaged the reputations of many other civil servants.

Now, I understand that with the parliamentary privilege, apparently we have the power to do that. However, like I said before, we have to be responsible in how we react to this. I hope I am not out of line in saying that in listening to what went on yesterday and listening to the Premier's answer, there are people here who feel that he has lost the confidence of the House. I respect that we always have the option to question the confidence of the Premier or any of Ministers. However, I do not accept that any of that process should go on by secret ballot or that all those discussions should take place behind the scenes.

Mr. Speaker, just to give an idea about how unfair and what an abuse of power this process was that was conducted in this House by honourable Members here -- I respect the right of the Members here to speak. It is important to me that I have the right to speak and I have to give that right to everyone else.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday by a motion in this House, the House ruled that the Conflict Commissioner should be removed from office. This is a person who has had 20 years of legal experience, who is very new on the job and at the stroke of a pen, without any due process, we have voted her out of this House.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Ms. Lee, I am going to stop you here. I am looking at rules and it is becoming evidently clear that the Speaker has a duty to intervene under Rule 23: "In debate, a Member will be called to order by the Speaker if the Member, under section (c), is persistent in needless repetition or raises matters which have been decided during the current session."

I refer further to section (f): "Reflects upon previous vote of the Assembly except for the purpose of moving that it be rescinded."

I am not sure whether or not you are making the best use, in the Chair's opinion, of replying to the opening address. Although it does allow for very wide berth, a very broad spectrum of things that the honourable Members may speak on, I continually hear certain phrases that are difficult for the Chair to accept as part of what is normally a reply to an opening address. Certainly raising the matters which have been decided upon during the current session, these matters were discussed at length yesterday and we continue to hear them now. I would ask you to perhaps focus on something other than that, if it is possible, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, unless I could speak to ask you for clarification. Am I to understand that I am not able to speak at all about the decisions that have been made by this House? Is that what I am in breach of? Could you please clarify that?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Chair has been listening to your return to the opening address and it appears to be focused persistently upon on a matter that has been dealt with already by this House. Certainly a vote has taken place yesterday and the Chair is wondering if this is a good use of that time. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My apologies, I am not in any way trying to abuse the process or trying to question the authority of the Chair, Mr. Speaker. I just feel that it is very important for those outside of this House who are not aware of what is going on in this House.

In light of what Premier Kakfwi has stated today, in which he is seriously considering his future as a Premier of this jurisdiction, I feel it is my duty as a Member of this House to explain, in the best way possible, what I feel the people need to know in order to respond to this situation. I do not mean to repeat what went on yesterday but I believe because people were not really listening and there is a lack of information out there about what is going on. So if I may, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to recount...

**MR. SPEAKER:** I will interrupt you again. The Chair continues to hear references to palace coup and to innuendoes that may suggest that there are hidden motives by the honourable Members of this House towards other honourable Members. The Chair is having difficulty trying to relate that to your reply to the opening address which was delivered by the Finance Minister, the honourable Premier, at some point some time ago, of matters of relevance to your constituency. The Chair is not aware of what the public out there may or may not have heard yesterday during the lengthy debate on this matter but the Chair is satisfied that the matter had been dealt with yesterday at great length, as you well put it.

However, we keep referring back to certain -- you are bordering on allegations of Members surreptitiously doing things. I am asking you to perhaps focus on matters that may deal with the opening address. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My apologies, Mr. Speaker. We came into this House and we all agreed to a document and basic principal that we would work together for the benefit of the people of the Northwest Territories. I believe that it is our job to make sure that the conduct of this House -- not conduct, I am sorry, but the business that goes on this House is in the interest in meeting the needs of the people in that we look after the economic development and resource development and economic future of this Territory. I do believe that is what the constituents of Range Lake expect me to do.

What I need to tell them is that I am compelled to take the opportunity of replying to the opening address to tell them that there are issues happening in this House that are affecting the campaign promise I made to work towards good government and responsible government.

Everyone knows that we operate under what is known as consensus government. I really do believe that as long as there is a serious question here all the time about who should be governing us or who should be the leader or who should be the Minister, without cause or having a public debate about it, then we will fester and we are not meeting the needs of the people.

I know that I am not going to be meeting the needs of my constituents in Range Lake if I am having to spend my time here as an MLA constantly having to defend myself and defend the interests of the people, rather than taking care of the issues of the day.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it really goes to the heart of our political and economic future that if the affairs of this House are so distracted that we are not able to look at the important issues, such as the social agenda or how to revitalize our health system, or any other agenda items that the Premier has stated in his sessional statements way back in March and two days ago, if we are not able to consider any other obligations that were laid out in the Minister's statement because we are

constantly in the back room talking about whether or not we have confidence in the job that is being done by the Ministers.

Mr. Speaker, I think we are well aware that consensus government works in a way that sometimes this government looks like it is a minority government. I would actually say that it is worse than a minority government because at any given time, the government can never know whether it has the support of enough Members to do its job.

For those who are watching us from afar, whether they be multi-national corporations that are coming here to invest, whether it is oil and gas companies or diamond companies, whether it be federal Ministers or the Prime Minister, they cannot figure out from one day to the next who is governing this Territory as long as there is this question every month, every six months, every year as to the legitimacy of this government.

I do not believe that I could do my job as the MLA for Range Lake and I cannot do my job to help the government meet the agenda as stated in the sessional statement unless we put this to bed. That people, that Members here, should be compelled to get up and speak about where they stand on these issues and be judged about it.

Mr. Speaker, I just find it really imperative that we understand that there are 19 of us here who have access to this Hall. We have to be very careful about what we do in this House. I feel very terrible that we have, in the process of doing what we were doing in terms of looking at the allegation of bias against the Conflict Commissioner and discussing things around this House, managed to destroy careers. I do not think it is responsible.

I do not think that the people of Range Lake or anywhere in this Territory should accept that the 19 Members they have elected to come to this House to serve them and serve their social and economic needs, to look after their educational budget, to look after their health budget, that we are using this forum to destroy people's reputations. I have to ask myself to be a good legislator, how do they get a chance to answer for themselves?

**MR. SPEAKER:** We have a point of privilege being raised by the honourable Member for Thebacha. Mr. Miltenberger, your point of privilege.

#### Point of Privilege

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have been listening since the beginning to the use of terms like palace coup, which in themselves imply violence, bypassing and overthrowing the legitimate elected officials by force, by other means. Now we are being accused of wilfully and deliberately destroying lives.

I do not mind a free exercise of parliamentary debate, but it should not impute motive and it should not imply that the Members of this House or the Members on a committee wilfully and with malice and whatever other kind of adjective I could use to indicate the degree that we have done something to be hurtful, to wilfully attack and destroy people. I think to me is an affront to myself as a legislator, to my colleagues, to this House, that it would be implied that we would do that.

We were tasked with a job. I do not mind the give-and-take of debate, but I think there has to be some civility and there has to

be some basic common terminology that does not take us down to that level. It detracts from the House and it detracts from the debate and it only makes us all look bad. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger, on your point of privilege. I am not sure whether you do have a point of privilege from where the Chair sits. I would want to say, however, that the honourable Member is pushing the Chair's envelope, so to speak, with the latitude that the Chair has allowed already by continually making subtle references here, and some not so subtle, to the motives of Members of the House towards other Members.

I would rule at this point that, Mr. Miltenberger, you do not have a point of privilege. I would again caution the honourable Member for Range Lake to not continually make references to the perceived, by herself, intentions of other Members towards the House or towards the government. You are making it difficult here to allow you to continue making your reply to the opening address if the Chair continues to hear this. I do not want to continually interrupt you so I will allow the honourable Member to continue on, asking her to be cautious as to her use of certain language. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again I apologize for pushing the envelope on the topic of my discussion here. If I am saying anything that offends the sense of fairness and integrity of the Members, I apologize. That is not my intention. My intention simply is to let the public know, as much as possible, the seriousness of what is going on.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have in my binder the sessional statement that I am supposed to reply to, but I do have the one dated June 5, 2001. I want to be able to respond to the people of Range Lake what it is that I am trying to say here that applies to the Minister's sessional statement.

Mr. Speaker, we often talk in this House about an agenda that is based on a document called Towards A Better Tomorrow. In that document, that we agreed to in the first day, we talked about the need to do everything we can to help people be self-reliant and to do everything we can for their social well-being.

I believe that any attempt here -- not any attempt, but the constant questioning of the legitimacy of the government that was chosen at the beginning of this Assembly with a mandate from the people, is working against that.

Our goal also, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier has stated this, is better governance through partnerships. I feel very, very strongly that what is going on in this House works directly against the better governance through partnership.

Mr. Speaker, I apologize. I am not trying to paint a wide brush but I am not able to mention any names so I am simply stating that every Member here is free to let their views be known about what they think about this leadership and government and Cabinet. I am simply stating my statements for the benefit of the people of Range Lake.

Mr. Speaker, in Towards a Better Tomorrow, one of the four key priorities is a northern-controlled economy that is balanced, diversified, stable and vibrant. I say once again that as long as we are not able to demonstrate that we can act responsibly with the power that we have, we will never have a northern-controlled economy. We have to work together inside of this

House and outside. We have to work with our partners in Ottawa. We have to work with our partners in aboriginal governments. As long as we cannot keep our House in order, we will not have a diversified, stable and vibrant economy.

Mr. Speaker, one of the four principles, the last principles that we agreed on, is to work very hard on behalf of the people to make sure that there are adequate resources in order to help all levels of government to become more self-reliant in meeting the needs of the people we serve.

Mr. Speaker, I could tell you that in my two years of being here, keeping track of what is going on in the back hallways, it is really hard to focus on making sure that we deal with the issues that will make sure that the levels of government out there have adequate resources.

Mr. Speaker, the hallmark of this government and this Assembly is the fact that we were able to create a forum, called the Intergovernmental Forum, where we were able to place on the agenda the most important issues of the day, that being resource revenue sharing agreements with the federal government and the devolution of programs so that we could have the resources to address some of the funding shortfalls.

For example, because we do not have enough money to build the roads in the North -- Mr. Speaker, we have 2,200 kilometres of road in the North and because of the resource development that is happening, some of these roads are being deteriorated to the extent that it is becoming a safety question.

For example, on Highway No. 3, the last 60 kilometres, we know that you can hardly drive that road at the speed limit, which is 80 to 90 kilometres. It is almost dangerous. As the winter is coming, we really have no means other than to pay for this road that is in dire need. The only thing we could suggest is to try to tax the money out of the people.

I have been part of the committee that has been travelling and this is not what the people want. This is not what they can afford. So more than ever before, we have the need to work on resource revenue sharing and devolution.

However, as long as we spend our time in this House questioning the legitimacy of the government, we are not going to be able to do that.

Mr. Speaker, the next statement Mr. Premier talked to us about is capacity building. This morning, Mr. Speaker, I can advise you that I was asked to be a guest speaker at a community development and governance course at Aurora College. I had a very interesting time telling them about what went on in this House, but one of the things that people said was that we really need capacity building in regions. We have to get ready for the people to be trained, know how to manage the community programs that they might possibly inherit as a result of self-government negotiations or land claim negotiations, or just by devolution from this government of various programs. They need capacity. They need resources. They need money to build that, but as long as the government that we have has to spend the majority of its time and its workload answering questions about the legitimacy of its government, then we are not able to do this. This goes to the very heart of the duty and mandate that the people of the North have placed upon us.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the fact that I have been a part of the Assembly that has made great progress in the settlement of aboriginal rights and negotiations, and self-government and land claims agreements. Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, Beaufort-Delta has succeeded in signing an agreement-in-principle just a short while ago, which has been worked on over a very, very long time. My colleague here, Mr. Krutko, lets us know about that repeatedly. I know that one of the students I was talking to today, James Andre, is one of the people who was involved in that process.

Mr. Speaker, the Deh Cho region is working very hard to successfully conclude and make fast progress on their process and to work on their framework agreement and their self-government negotiations, but should they always be questioning who is the person who speaks for this government?

Is it not time for us to say that we support consensus government, that we are not ready for party politics -- and I do not believe that the party system is what is required, but I do believe as long as we have consensus government, it is incumbent on us to make sure that it works.

If we constantly challenge and question the consensus reached at the beginning of the mandate and weaken the strength and power of the Ministers of this House or the Premier, then we are not able to fulfill the mandate of the people to work at these various negotiating tables.

It is not just the Beaufort-Delta. We have history-making negotiations happening in the North Slave region with the Dogribs. We have equally important talks being held with the Akaitcho leaders and the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada. We have made great progress with the aboriginal peoples south of the lake. I believe that this government has done a great job in getting a very strong linkage with various partners, not only in aboriginal governments but in municipal governments. I know for a fact that there is a great linkage between this government and the mayor of Yellowknife.

This Territory, Mr. Speaker, is going through a great deal of change. We are outpacing the rest of Canada, maybe around the world, in our economic development. There are people coming here to invest multi-millions, possibly billions, because we have so much to offer. We have oil and gas. We have diamonds. We have all sorts of basic minerals that were sitting dormant until now.

When these industries speak to us and speak to this government, it is in the interest of the people that everyone out there knows that they are talking to a legitimate government, that this government has the support and consent of the Members of the House.

Mr. Speaker, in the recent statement by the Premier about two days ago and in the statement by the Minister of Finance, it was very obvious that things have changed a lot in just the last month.

I believe that the economy of southern Canada was going through difficulties at any rate. The U.S. economy was heading downward and the September 11<sup>th</sup> disaster has created all sorts of uncertainties, not only in the U.S., but it will have a rippling effect northward for all of us.

This is a more important time than any other time before for us to hunker down and figure out what we need to do. This government has worked on investment strategies, even though we never have enough money to pay for what we need to do. We as a group have agreed that we will get into a reasonable level of deficit in order that we make key investments in places that are needed, such as training our people so that they will be prepared to take up the opportunities and jobs that may become available.

This government has done what is known as Maximizing Northern Employment for the first time that I can remember. As a university graduate coming up, I never had the certainty that I would have a job opportunity or training opportunity that would allow me to further the education that I had gained so that I could make a positive contribution to this economy.

I am proud to say this government was able to that. We have what is called Maximizing Northern Employment. University graduates are guaranteed a job when they come here after they finish their schooling.

We have also guaranteed employment for those professions that we are much in need of, such as teachers, nurses and some of the science graduates. These are key initiatives, Mr. Speaker.

None of these programs can be secure if there is a constant question hanging in the air that we are not a government to be trusted, that we do not know from one day to the next who the Minister of Education may be. That is the danger of our consensus government because it is unlike party politics, where a party in the government is secure until the election is called.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier mentioned the need for us to set a social agenda. There was a great fanfare in this House and a conference was held in Hay River in June, I believe. There is a lot of work to be done there, but as long as we do not know who the government is and the government has to spend all this time defending itself because of the conflicts within this House, then we are not able to help the people outside.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier indicated in his June statement that he spoke for the benefit and the importance of recognizing our public service. I do believe that the Premier has gone a long way in making sure that he lets the public service know that they are part of a team. He made sure that none of the senior public servants, when the new government came in, that they should be in danger of losing their jobs. He made sure that everyone knew that they were part of the team, that we had an agenda to meet and that we had to move forward.

However, a constant question about the legitimacy of this government or the Premier or our system of government could only do damage to the morale of the public service and the sense of security that the public service needs in order to carry out its mandate.

I have been a resident of the Northwest Territories for over 23 years and I have been involved very closely with the public service. I have watched from afar the kind of instability and kind of assault that is placed on the public service each time there is a power struggle going on at the top of the government.

I have always wished that the leaders who are elected in this House would be mindful and be measured about what they do,

because whether they recognize it or not, every word they say and every action they make sends the public servants to action. Everything we do and say here is carried out by public servants. I guess some people do not think that is happening, but I do know for sure that we are being placed here with a lot of power and privilege and we should not waste the resources and be light-hearted about questioning the legitimacy of the government and its agenda.

Mr. Speaker, just this week, this Assembly witnessed the first Assembly on Official Languages. Mr. Speaker, that is partly because of the fact that the official languages statute has come up for review. It has been ten years since the Officials Languages Act was instituted and it is going through a review. Our House saw the importance of this work and we approved the mandate and budget of that committee as one of the first items on the agenda. A lot of people came together, Mr. Speaker, from all over the North, from all cultural groups and all language groups. They had a lot to say about what needs to be done to better promote and protect the languages of the North, all official languages. That is good work being done.

As long as there are constant questions about whether or not this government has the legitimacy to conduct such a policy and such an approach to the issue, then we are not serving the people of the North, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I have now been provided with a copy of the new sessional statement, which I believe speaks quite the same as what I have spoken about so far.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to mention that this government has gone a long way in terms of various legislative changes. For example, in the books, there is National Aboriginal Day being proclaimed, if we pass the bill. That is the kind of thing that this government should be encouraged to go forward with and not waste its time defending its existence and legitimacy.

Mr. Speaker, when I ran for MLA, I ran, like everyone else here, on a number of issues on its platform. Of course, on every platform of every candidate in any election, there is those sort of staple of items: we are going to work for economic development and creation of jobs; we will work to diversify our economy; we will promote our tourism; we will work on a number of social agenda items.

I do believe that one of the most important things that I ran on is to work towards a responsible government and to work towards open and transparent government. I know, Mr. Speaker, that it has been two years since I have been here. I must say that I really and absolutely have enjoyed the days here. I do believe that it is the kind of privilege and honour that not a lot of people have a chance to experience.

I have done my best to communicate with the people of Range Lake and people of the North so that I live up to the promise that I made, which is to keep this government accountable, open and transparent. However, I have always said in this House, Mr. Speaker, I was not elected here to be an opposition Member. I never said to my voters if you elect me, I am going to be an opposition and I am going to criticize everything that is going on about the government, or that I will do everything I can to destabilize the government. I do not think anybody here ran on a platform to say that I am going to go in there and I am going to oppose.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we all came here on the platform that we are going to be accountable and under the system of government that we have, which is consensus government, I believe very strongly that being open and accountable applies to all 19 of us. It is not just seven Members we choose as a Cabinet. All 19 Members have to be open and accountable to what agenda we pursue and how we pursue them. Why do we think that we are being accountable to the people, because I think accountability is to the people, not to -- we have to be accountable to each other, but the overriding concern is that we are accountable to the people.

In following with that mandate, I believe that I have to live by those words every day in every action. I do believe that it is not only what goes on in this House, but being open and accountable and being a responsible legislator to my constituents has to be that I do everything I can to make sure that all of the proceedings inside of these walls are open and transparent.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is long overdue that the people of the North have a responsible, stable government. We have seen so many times -- I know that I have watched the Legislative Assembly for at least 11 years. I first worked here in 1989. I have routinely seen Ministers being removed and portfolios being changed and legitimacy of the government being challenged and I do not believe that makes for good, responsible government. This is what I ran on. I am compelled to work on that no matter what it takes.

Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that we have to keep everything status quo in the interest of stability and quietness. That is not what I am saying at all. I fully appreciate and respect the fact that under the consensus government, we choose our Premier and our Cabinet Ministers and we have to keep them accountable. That is how this system of government works.

I also believe that I have to be accountable to the people out there because without being accountable to the people, then whatever I do and say is absolutely and completely irrelevant.

So I do believe that what I am trying to say here today is very much in line with how I see myself being able to fulfill the mandate of the people of Range Lake.

Mr. Speaker, we started this session three days ago -- not even three days ago. We started this session two days ago. Just last week I spent, along with my colleagues, most of the week talking about the highway toll idea. We also spent time talking about the proposed amendment to the Wildlife Act, people wanting to know what is happening with the Cuff report, what is the government's response, what is going to happen to Stanton Yellowknife Health Board. I went to an open house in Range Lake School where, in a class that was really built for 24 little kids, it was full of 31 big kids.

There are so many issues out there that people are expecting us to deal with, that my constituents are expecting me to deal with. What are we going to do about the highway toll? Are you going to tax me? Yet for two days, we have not been able to address that.

What people see in the public is only half of what is going on, not even. That is not meeting up to my promise to my constituents that I will work for a responsible government.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the second sessional statement the Premier made on October 23<sup>rd</sup> states very clearly that we have very serious decisions to make here. All of the assumptions we made about our financial future and the optimistic pictures that we came to this House with are being changed as we speak.

Two days into the House session, we have not addressed any of those issues because at every juncture of this session, Ministers and the Premier have to spend a lot of time defending their legitimacy.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the people of the North out there that this is a very, very crucial time in the history of our political system and this Assembly. It is really important for the people up and down the valley, in every community to spend the time to read what Premier Kakfwi has said on October 23<sup>rd</sup> because he outlines very clearly the serious challenges ahead of us. He tells us about the economic downturn that we will experience and what the consequence will be in not coming up with the kind of decisions that we need to make.

I want to let the people know and Range Lake constituents know that I have every confidence in this Premier. If any of them feel that the agenda we are heading or some of the priorities that the Premier has stated on October 23<sup>rd</sup> is not acceptable to them, I encourage everybody to call either the Premier or the MLAs. Mr. Speaker, we are not able to do our job in this House unless we hear from the people out there.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, before I became an MLA, I think that all of us kind of looked at their MLAs and thought that they always claimed to be very busy, and sometimes they make decisions that are not in line with what you thought they should be doing. I sometimes thought that they were not listening to the people. I must say that having been here for two years, it is hard to divide the time to make sure that you are out there as much as possible, listening to the people and partaking in community discussions. I think it is really important for people to know that it helps us a lot if they would make sure that we are aware of what we need to know.

I know that with today's technology, Mr. Speaker, communication has become much easier. Through my website, I get e-mail and questions from the constituents of Range Lake. I know that most Members here communicate by newsletter. I think it is really important in order to maintain communications that people pay attention to what is being done and said here so that we do our part. That the people out there do their part to create or help foster a mature and responsible democracy that I believe I deserve as a resident of the NWT and the people of the NWT deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I just need to tell the people of Range Lake that I support this Premier. I do not question the legitimacy of the government because I believe that he brings to the House a sense of fairness and the experience of being in a leadership role for 15 years.

I think that it is only fair. I do believe that the people are inherently fair out there. I do believe that people like to see things that are commonsensical and make sense, things that are rational, so if anybody's conduct or their professionalism is being questioned, I think the most commonsensical approach to that is that people want to hear that if you do not think someone is doing a good job, then tell us about it.

Especially in the public life that we lead, I think it is very important that we act and conduct ourselves in a way that we claim we are and that we all adhere to the values of openness and transparency and accountability. Those are the buzz words. We talk about them all the time, Mr. Speaker, and I think it is incumbent on all of us that what we hand out we are prepared to live up to as well.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is time for me to close this statement. I would like to tell the interested people out there that I will be posting a number of documents on my website about the things that I could not speak about today but I think they are things the people should know. I would like to encourage the people to look at my website, which is [www.sandyleemla.com](http://www.sandyleemla.com).

Mr. Speaker, as I stated in the beginning, I have had time to think about what has been happening in and out of this House for the last couple of days and I just felt the need to take the opportunity of replying to the opening address to raise and to alert the public that it is time, that this is the time for everyone out there to take the time to read, hear and ask questions of their Members about what is going on.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for letting me have this opportunity.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. 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 Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

#### ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

##### **Tabled Document 51-14(4): Investing in Roads for People and the Economy: A Highway Strategy for the Northwest Territories**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, thank you. I would like to table the Department of Transportation's report entitled Investing in Roads for People and the Economy: A Highway Strategy for the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

##### **Motion 10-14(4): To Move TD 51-14(4) into Committee of the Whole**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, October 29, 2001, I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Tabled Document 51-14(4) entitled Investing in Roads for People and the Economy: A Highway Strategy for the Northwest Territories, be moved into committee of the whole for consideration.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Ministerial Statements 1-14(4),

3-14(4), 4-14(4), 30-14(4) and 31-14(4); Bills 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 13, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** I would like to call the committee to order. We have a number of items on the agenda: Ministerial Statements 1, 3, 4, 30 and 31; Bills 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 13. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** There is a motion on the floor to report progress and it is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those against? The motion is carried. I will rise and report progress.

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

**ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, your committee 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. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty, seconds the motion. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

**ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Speaker, meeting of Caucus at 5:00 p.m. this evening; at 9:00 a.m. of the Cabinet House Strategy tomorrow morning, and also at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight.

Orders of the day for Friday, October 26, 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 Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 14, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2001-2002
  - Bill 15, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2000-2001
18. Second Reading of Bills
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
  - Minister's Statement 30-14(4): Sessional Statement
  - Minister's Statement 31-14(4): Fiscal Update
  - Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Education Act
  - Bill 6, National Aboriginal Day Act
  - Bill 7, Powers of Attorney Act
  - Bill 9, Commercial Vehicle Trip Permit Act
  - Bill 10, Public Highway Improvement Fund Act
  - Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2

20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until Friday, October 26, 2001, at 10:00 a.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:50 p.m.