



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

5th Session

Day 34

14th Assembly

HANSARD

Monday, October 28, 2002

Pages 1197 – 1230

The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, October 28, 2002****Members Present**

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Please be seated. Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 81-14(5): Voices of Our Youth, A Collection of Stories for Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, in Honour of the Golden Jubilee**

HON. JAKE OOTES: Mr. Speaker, I had the great pleasure three weeks ago at the Legislative Assembly to meet a wonderful young lady, Miss Kendra Qilluniq. Kendra is the winner of the Queen's Jubilee Book Award. She was chosen by random draw of all entries to present the book "Voices of Our Youth" to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, two weeks ago in Ottawa.

This book was a compilation of stories created by the young people of the Northwest Territories to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee Year. The children were encouraged, as a literacy project, to write a story that they would like to tell Her Royal Majesty. My honourable colleague, Mr. Steen, has already shared several of these stories with Members of this House.

Each principal of the participating schools was asked to nominate a contributing student who would be an excellent ambassador to present Queen Elizabeth with her copy of the book. Our winner was Kendra Qilluniq, a grade 5 student from Weledeh Catholic School in Yellowknife.

According to her principal, Ms. Merril Dean, Kendra is a self-confident mature student who has shown leadership skills throughout her six years at Weledeh. She is always one of the first to volunteer to do extra tasks and activities that contribute to the well-being of the class. Kendra, according to her principal, has a strong sense of presentation, excellent speaking skills and works hard at playing fair.

All these qualities were demonstrated during Kendra's stay in Ottawa. She waited patiently outdoors during an incredible rainstorm in order to present Queen Elizabeth with her copy of "Voices of Our Youth". I would like to take this opportunity to thank Kendra, on behalf of all students and residents of the Northwest Territories, for being such an excellent ambassador. She represented us well.

I would recommend that if you have not yet been able to read a copy of this very entertaining book, go to your local library or school library and take an opportunity to do so. Not only is it a

great window into the minds of our youth of today, but it is also a very good read.

Mr. Speaker, I would like today to thank not only Kendra for her part in this project but each and every student who took the time and energy to present a story for Queen Elizabeth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Minister's Statement 82-14(5): Minister Absent From The House

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Jim Antoine will be absent from the House today and tomorrow to attend the Joint Energy and Environment Ministers meeting in Halifax. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Any further Ministers' statements? Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**Member's Statement on Professional Recognition of Addictions Services Counsellors**

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to address the issue of the recognition of addictions counselling profession by this government. Recently, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health and Social Services unveiled a report entitled A State of Emergency; A Report on the Delivery of the Addictions Services in the NWT. This report chronicled the challenges currently being faced by alcohol and drug counsellors attempting to address the complex issues associated with substance abuse and addictions in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, the concerns associated with the qualification of counsellors and the ability of current programs to meet the needs of the communities that they serve must be addressed immediately.

Mr. Speaker, we must as a group of concerned stakeholders work to break the cycle of chronic relapses. The impacts of chronic relapses cost to this government each year millions of dollars in increased health care and socio and economic costs.

Mr. Speaker, alcohol and drug counsellors throughout the North have worked very hard over the years, providing a wide range of services to those who suffer from alcohol and drug addictions.

The time has come, Mr. Speaker, for this government to recognize alcohol and drug counsellors as allied health professionals, and to have alcohol and drug programming deemed a poor service.

Mr. Speaker, the recognition of addictions counselling as a profession, and the credentials earned through a certification process, represents the first step in building our current programs.

Mr. Speaker, with the formal recognition of addictions professions, measures can be taken to ensure that quality ethical and professional services are delivered to our communities.

Mr. Speaker, we must strive to be accountable to our communities. We can demonstrate our commitment to that ideal by recognizing the profession of addictions counselling.

Mr. Speaker, this government has formed partnerships with Aurora College and the Canadian Addictions Counselling Certification Board and other interested stakeholders to achieve higher standards of personal and professional growth for addictions counsellors.

Mr. Speaker, National Addictions Awareness Week will be held from November 17th to the 23rd. I would encourage the Minister that during this week, an announcement be made outlining this government's support for the formal recognition of this profession.

Mr. Speaker, many other professions are recognized and have designations and/or certifications associated with...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Delorey, the time for your Member's statement is up. Mr. Delorey, you have the floor.

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

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

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, other professions are recognized and have designations and/or certifications associated with them. Alcohol and drug counsellors should be no different. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Sporting Achievements of the Wittlinger Siblings

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and congratulate a major talent, and major league talented athletes in my constituency. They are Andy Wittlinger and Amy Wittlinger.

Mr. Speaker, the Wittlinger siblings had a very successful 2002 North American Indigenous Games experience, competing for

Team NWT in swimming. The games were held back in July to August in Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, Yellowknife's Francis Ablitt was also on the team, along with Robyn McLeod, Deh Cho MLA Michael McLeod's daughter, Collin Stipdonk of Fort Simpson; Robin Gordon, Kristielyn Jones, and Curt McLellan of Fort Smith. The three YK swimmers brought home 25 medals in all from Winnipeg, and Andy and Amy took home a big portion of these medals. Andy won nine individual medals and two medals as a member of relay teams. Amy won seven individual medals and two as a member of relay teams. At the games, Andy and Amy combined to break five NWT swimming records.

The Wittlinger sibling accomplishments do not end at the Indigenous Games. Andy and Amy have attended the Alberta Senior Championships the past three years, and have had numerous top ten finishes. Last April, Amy competed at the Edmonton Keyano International Age Group meet in Edmonton, Alberta, against swimmers from 33 clubs across Canada, the United States and several other countries.

Amy and Andy both give time back to their Yellowknife Polar Bear Swim Club. They are qualified coaches and are currently helping the younger age group swimmers with the club. They have been swimming with the club for seven years and I could tell you that their parents have taken the time to tell me that there is a lack of support and funding for these elite athletes, but that does not seem to stop these exemplary and very talented young swimmers. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize them and congratulate them. I ask that the Members of this House join me in recognizing them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee -- quite an accomplishment. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement on Support for Family of Child with Heart Condition

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring attention to this House in regard to a matter of a young child, six months old, who has a very serious disease, a heart disease -- a disease that affects the blood system by forming blood clots, and it has serious implications to the security and the life of the child. One of the recommendations to the family was that they had to move from the community of Aklavik to either Yellowknife or Edmonton.

Mr. Speaker, the family has been away in Edmonton receiving treatment for their child. They were gone for ten weeks. Mr. Speaker, the family also has three additional children who had to stay back home in Aklavik. Mr. Speaker, I think it is critical that this government helps this family to deal with this medical emergency by assisting the family to move to Yellowknife and find the appropriate accommodations.

Mr. Speaker, to date, the social workers in Yellowknife have been trying to make an attempt to find some accommodation, but all they were able to find is a one-bedroom unit. Mr. Speaker, there are six members in this family.

Mr. Speaker, I find it crucial and critical that this government, and the Minister of Health and Social Services, do whatever he can in his powers to ensure that the health and well-being of the family and the child be taken into consideration.

Mr. Speaker, it is sad to see that we spend a lot of time in this House talking about programs and services, but yet, Mr. Speaker, a simple thing such as providing accommodation for families from outside of Yellowknife to receive medical attention is unwarranted in regard to not having the accommodations available to families to deal with medical emergencies, such as this young Donovan Bailey Junior is having to deal with today.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister of Health and Social Services questions on this matter to assist this family with this medical emergency. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Peace Circle Model Safe School Initiative

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Among our youth today, there has been a disturbing trend, Mr. Speaker, of more violence, more bullying and intimidation, especially in our school yards and in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker. This is the kind of behaviour that later manifests itself in family violence and spousal assaults and other kind of violent behaviour in society.

I am happy to acknowledge the work of a committed group of people in the NWT who are challenging that kind of behaviour, Mr. Speaker, and really are making a difference.

Over the past three years, the Restitution Peace Project has successfully established the peace circle model. It is a restorative justice approach to behaviour and discipline at J.H. Sissons School here in Yellowknife.

Teachers, children, parents and community members have all played a part in developing this program. It offers an early intervention method and educational approach for children from kindergarten to grade 12 to address this growing concern, Mr. Speaker, for safe schools and student achievement across the North.

Over the past three years at Sissons School, suspensions have dropped from 49 to five. Students are learning self-discipline and non-violent problem solving. Long-term results include improved self-esteem, stronger relationships, reduced incidents of bullying and increased achievement. I think we can all learn from this approach, Mr. Speaker.

There is a video called "The Circle for All" that has been produced by Paul Gordon of Yellowknife. It chronicles the progress of this project. The support for this film was extended, Mr. Speaker, by both our government and the federal Justice department, along with community support and parental support for the whole project.

This video and the models and the examples and the success that is shown is now being circulated across schools in the North and I want to acknowledge especially, Mr. Speaker, the

contribution and the belief and the commitment of Lynn Taylor, a key player in this project. I commend her for her efforts and for her colleagues and all the students at J.H. Sissons for setting such a great example. Thanks.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Acting in the Best Interests of the Dogrib Region

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about land claims, an issue that is of great importance in the Dogrib region. As all Members know, the Dogrib land claim and self-government negotiations have been going on for around ten years. In September, an agreement-in-principle was initialed between the Dogrib leadership, the territorial government and the federal government.

The initialing of this long-awaited agreement was an important step in concluding the negotiations. There are still a lot of details to be worked out, and maybe even years of negotiations ahead before this land claim and self-government agreement becomes a reality.

From an elected official's viewpoint, land claims have been part of the government's agenda longer than many of us have been in this office. When we became Members of the 14th Assembly we inherited land claims issues. We knew that some territorial land claims had been settled, and some were in the works.

To address the issue of land claims and to create a framework for what to work on during our term, we created a document called, Towards a Better Tomorrow. This document sets our goals for the life of the Assembly. One of these goals is to foster mutually respectful and cooperative partnerships with aboriginal governments.

As a government, we decided that one of the ways to meet this goal would be to support the negotiation and implementation of claims and self-government agreements. This is part of our agreed upon mandate for the life of this Assembly. As such, I would like to assure my constituents, some of whom are here, that the land claims process will be honoured for the life of this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, last week I met with the Dogrib chiefs. In our discussion, they asked me not to do anything that would hurt the Dogrib people or the Dogrib claim. I would like to assure the chiefs and my constituents that as the MLA for the North Slave region, I support the Dogrib negotiations. When issues arise, I do my best to ensure that I am acting in the best interests of my region.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you and I will have questions for the Premier on this issue.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Appreciation to Constituents for Comments and Support Regarding Recent House Activities

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for my constituents back home in Inuvik, I would like to inform them, I would like to thank them for all the calls and the e-mails that they have sent me over the weekend in regard to the activities here in the House, last Friday especially.

I would like to encourage them if they do have the opportunity to view the whole discussion that does not appear over the TV and things, we only get the first hour and a half of discussion from this Assembly back home, so I would encourage them, if they can go to a computer and log on to the government website and go to Hansard to get the full discussion and details as to what was said and some of the discussion that went around this table.

I would like to thank them for their calls and e-mails and their prayers. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Grand Opening of the Conoco Phillips Hay River Office

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to take time to extend a warm northern welcome to a company that has opened its doors to a new office in Hay River. This company is Conoco Phillips and they hosted their grand opening and open house just over a month ago in Hay River.

Instead of a ribbon-cutting ceremony, our mayor, Duncan McNeill had the opportunity to demonstrate yet another unknown talent with a pipe cutter. So it was a pipe cutting ceremony.

The Hay River office is coordinated by Mr. Ross Papirnick who is the operations supervisor of Frontier. Mr. Papirnick and his wife Alphonsine are returning Northerners. Alphonsine originally hails from Fort Providence. The Papirnicks have returned to the Northwest Territories from Alberta and are pleased to be back home.

Mr. Papirnick will be working towards building relationships with First Nations and aboriginal people, local businesses and community groups in the Hay River area. The Hay River office will serve as a regional base for existing operations as well as new venture exploration that is taking place in northwestern Alberta, northeastern British Columbia and now in the southern part of the Northwest Territories. The office will complement Imperial Oil's offices in Inuvik, Norman Wells and Fort Simpson.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome Ross and Alphonsine Papirnick and Conoco Phillips to Hay River and I look forward to working together with them in building a strong economy and future for Hay River and for the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

Member's Statement on Snowmobile Accident in Colville Lake

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the Minister for Health and Social Services and the staff in the Inuvik Hospital and here at Stanton for attention paid to a constituent of mine who had an accident by himself on a skidoo north of Colville Lake on Saturday morning.

The constituent, travelling alone about three hours north of Colville Lake had an accident and was left there most of the day by himself in extreme pain and finally, in the afternoon some of his brothers came and found him because he was late to arrive at his destination. They found him in extreme pain, unable to provide for him but gathered around him and found that he apparently had quite a few broken ribs, the internal injuries were not well-known.

They spent a long night by themselves because they could not get medical help right away because of darkness and an inability to get the landing set up. However, they rallied around him and they brought him out on Sunday. He was medivaced and given medical attention and I understand now he is here to make sure there are no other internal injuries that have not been discovered to day.

I just hope that he recovers so that he can continue to serve his community as the first and the best band manager that Colville Lake ever had. That is my constituent Joseph Kochon so I wish him well. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my years of failing eye sight I wish to recognize three constituents who are apparently in the gallery. Ms. Gina Dolphus, the present of the Native Women's Association of the Northwest Territories from Deline; Marie Speakman from Deline and Agnes Grandjambe originally from Colville Lake and Fort Good Hope. Thank you for coming.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize from my riding Chief Joseph Judas, Jonas Lafferty, Eddie Erasmus, Sam Mantla, Cecilia Rabesca, Violet Blondin. There might be more behind me, but I cannot see them, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms I would like to recognize two of my constituents from Tuktoyaktuk: Mr. and Mrs. Calvin and Lucille Pokiak. Calvin works in the Inuvialuit land administration office, and Lucille works in the Tuktoyaktuk Housing Association office. Welcome to the gallery.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize four people in the gallery that I see. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the newly elected president of the UNW, Todd Parsons, and public relations and research with the UNW, Barb Wyness. I would also like to recognize long-term Yellowknife residents and very thinking people, Dave and Ann Wind, in the gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to be able to recognize a band councillor from the Salt River First Nations and a very well known northern carver, Mr. Sonny MacDonald.

-- Applause

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Lee has already stolen my thunder by recognizing three of my constituents that I was planning to recognize. I too wanted to recognize hospital trustee, David Wind, and his wife Ann. I see the Winds quite often these days because their grandson plays on my son's hockey team. Welcome to the House. And Barb Wyness, who is also a constituent. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize several people. First of all, Sonny MacDonald simply because he is also the chair of the Arts Council of the NWT but also the co-chair of the arts strategy panel in the Northwest Territories. Next I would like to recognize Violet Blondin-Camsell, chair of the Dogrib Community Services Board, who is also in the gallery, and Roy Desjarlais who is a member and just recently joined the Yellowknife School District No. 1. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Colleagues, I would just like to recognize in the gallery Mr. Leon Andrew, spouse of our esteemed

Member of Parliament, and a very long long time friend and colleague that I worked with, Melody McLeod, many many years ago. Melody is chair of the, I think it is the water board.

-- Applause

And to all the visitors that are here today, thank you very much for coming to see your Legislative Assembly and welcome.

Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko..

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 412-14(5): Support for Patients' Families

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services and it is with regard to two constituents of mine, Donovan Arey and Angela Greenland, with respect to their six month old son who has a rare blood disease. After going to Edmonton for some 10 weeks of treatment and whatnot, they were directed by doctors in Edmonton that the family relocate here to Yellowknife. The doctors strongly support the family's choice to relocate to Yellowknife and he would also realize that he needs to be followed up with regard to cardiac treatments and also to ensure that he is close a clinic and the hospital.

Mr. Speaker, the problem the family is running into is that there is a lack of accommodation here in Yellowknife. They managed to find a one-bedroom apartment but, Mr. Speaker, there are six people in this family. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services what his department can do to assist families in need with regards to situations where they find themselves in with respect to diseases such as the one I mentioned. Will the Minister let me know where he stands on this.

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

Return to Question 412-14(5): Support for Patients' Families

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the MLA raised this issue in the House last week and sent information from Chief Furlong of Aklavik, and Mr. Krutko has as well raised it. We have received the information and it has been passed on to the department. I have talked to the deputy and we are going to sit down with the Housing Corporation and ECE to see what is possible in terms of assistance. This is not a unique situation where we have had families and individuals having to relocate to another centre, so we are going to be on this one quickly and see what we can do to assist. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 412-14(5): Support for Patients' Families

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell m exactly how fast he can move on this? Mr. Speaker, the direction from the doctor was that they were supposed to be only in Aklavik for a week. We are going on two

weeks now. I would like to ask the Minister how soon can he respond to this emergency?

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

Further Return to Question 412-14(5): Support for Patients' Families

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the wheels are in motion. The issue has been raised in the House. As I indicated, information was provided as well from Chief Furlong and it was sent over to the department. I have had my executive assistant tracking this and it is on my list for our daily and weekly meetings this coming week. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 412-14(5): Support for Patients' Families

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me exactly what he is doing to ensure that there is communication open to the family and his department to ensure that we continue this dialogue to give them some comfort knowing that we are moving on this and that we are trying to find a solution to the problem. Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 412-14(5): Support for Patients' Families

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this issue has been brought up. The Inuvik authority is involved and they are aware of the circumstances. They also know that the issue is coming before this House and that it has got the attention of the political leadership from Aklavik. We are taking all the steps we can to assist in this issue. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 412-14(5): Support for Patients' Families

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if he can keep me informed on exactly where we are at with regard to this issue, and also if he can keep the family informed. I believe we have to move on this quickly. It is an emergency. I believe that as the Minister responsible he should be able to react a lot faster than he is at presently doing.

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

Further Return to Question 412-14(5): Support for Patients' Families

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes I will keep the Member informed. Thank you.

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

Question 413-14(5): Interdepartmental Committee on Homelessness

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following up quite directly on my colleague Mr. Krutko's issue of the difficulty of finding accommodation here in Yellowknife, I would like to put a question to the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. I am relating it back to some answers that Mr. Ootes gave me last week to questions in a similar area. Through his portfolio he has responsibility for provision of homes and accommodation.

Mr. Ootes advised us that the interdepartmental committee on homelessness was dealing with this most serious issue in Yellowknife. People that I know who are directly involved with assistance to the homeless tell me, Mr. Speaker, that Yellowknife is not part of this committee's agenda. I am told that the interdepartmental committee is only looking outside of Yellowknife and at longer term strategies than our need in this city today.

Could the Minister, Mr. Speaker, advise if Yellowknife and the Yellowknife Homeless Coalition will receive any direct and immediate support from the government in dealing with this issue? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 413-14(5): Interdepartmental Committee on Homelessness

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As far as I am aware, we, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, as part of the committee working group, help to develop a comprehensive homeless strategy across the North. I am sure that we will not forget the Yellowknife Coalition in the overall strategy, so we will continue to support them at the level we are and if there is need to give more support I would like to have a chance to review that further. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 413-14(5): Interdepartmental Committee on Homelessness

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize that there is an immediate crisis in homelessness in Yellowknife. This is a magnet community. People are coming into this city from communities for education, for employment, for health care, and perhaps even the bright lights and certainly the opportunities that we are blessed with here right now, Mr. Speaker.

Sixty-one families, we are told, are seeking urgent assistance. Can the Minister offer nothing more than the statement that

that committee is looking across the Northwest Territories? Yellowknife needs help now. What can you do? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 413-14(5): Interdepartmental Committee on Homelessness

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had taken a number of steps to find resolution to the crisis that is not only confronting Yellowknife but as well other magnet communities across the Northwest Territories. We have opened up EDAP for instance, here in Yellowknife and that was not provided previously. We are looking at a number of other initiatives such as more rent supps that may improve the availability of homes or rental units.

Hopefully with the amount of development that is occurring here in the city, more units have become available as projects are completed.

In terms of transitional homes, again with the limited funding we have we are trying to maximize those dollars to accommodate those who are in the most need. So those are continuing to be our objective here to improve the quality and availability of accommodations for those who are in need. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 413-14(5): Interdepartmental Committee on Homelessness

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess what I am hearing is the government does not accept or is denying that there is a homelessness crisis in Yellowknife. My arguments in the short time that I have here I do not think are going to make much of an impression, but I am wondering if the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation and perhaps his colleague for Education, Culture and Employment would accept the invitation that I know is always there for them to visit the Salvation Army or the YWCA or the Women's Centre to see first hand and hear first hand from the people who are facing this. Will they accept that invitation and talk to them? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 413-14(5): Interdepartmental Committee on Homelessness

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have always had adhered to the principle that we will work with the communities across the Northwest Territories. Yellowknife is no exception. We have met with the officials of those organizations to help assist and communicate some of the problems we have and certainly be sensitive there, so I am more than willing to meet on an ongoing basis to address homelessness and transitional homes and any other kind of home ownership problems that currently occurs in the city of Yellowknife. Thank you.

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

Question 414-14(5): Former Chief of Staff Position

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question will be directed to the Premier. It is resulting from some discussion that took place on Friday. I would like to seek clarification from the Premier from Hansard of October 31, 2001, page 635. The Premier, I quote, stated:

"We also created a chief of staff position. The chief of staff position is in fact an executive assistant position that has additional responsibilities."

Mr. Speaker, in unedited Hansard page 2694, we have the Premier stating:

"On years of service, for instance, that is the understanding that every deputy minister in this government has, that they will get one month for every year of service, not the number of years they were a deputy minister."

Referring to the contract. I would like to know from the Premier, was that position indeed a deputy minister position? Has this position now changed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: That is fair game. Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return to Question 414-14(5): Former Chief of Staff Position

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, those were comments that were made by myself being advised by the staff. The members of the committee will know that we asked to make available our staff last week so that they could answer these types of questions. It has been some time since then.

My understanding of the discussions were that the chief of staff was considered to be a senior management staff. The contract that was used to sign was a DM contract with the changes made. It was considered a senior management position. It was allowed to have some of the flexibilities of an executive assistant position in it.

The point of it is, Mr. Speaker, it is the staff that should properly discuss these with the Members because it is a technical question and I know they have had trouble understanding me when I was in committee. We discussed it here in the committee, we have asked questions about it. The chief of staff position was a position created by Cabinet and the rationale for it was done that way.

This is the best I can do, again, is provide the documentation that was provided back then. There is no lack of clarity in the staff's view about the position, how it was created and where it fit into the organizational charts. The lack of clarity was on my part and I apologize for it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Before I go to supplementary, Mr. Roland, I just want to caution Members that this matter is before the committee of the whole and perhaps the questions and responses would be better asked in that

committee. However, Mr. Roland, you can go for a supplementary. I will monitor it very carefully.

Supplementary to Question 414-14(5): Former Chief of Staff Position

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, just trying to, for the record, the Premier stated in this House and this Assembly two different definitions it seems now for one position. I am trying to seek from him, is that in fact an executive position - he signed the contract initially two years ago. So is it an executive assistant position or is it now a deputy minister position? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 414-14(5): Former Chief of Staff Position

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I have to take the question as notice, because it is important to get the technical terms right. I do not want the Members to think I am changing my story or trying to mislead them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The question has been taken as notice, and when a question has been taken as notice it ends the dialogue on it. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 415-14(5): Clarification of the Latest Census Statistics (

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today goes to the Minister of Finance and it is in regard to the statistics we had on the census of the NWT population. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the census number is very, very important in terms of the amount of money that we get in transfer payments from the federal government and I understand that, I know and we are aware that the Minister has been working on this issue to clarify it. I wonder if the Minister could update this House on what sort of action the government has taken to recount the census. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 415-14(5): Clarification of the Latest Census Statistics

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, when we got the first census numbers, we realized there were some problems with them and our statistics bureau has been in contact with Census Canada since. We have, over the summer, done an assessment of the number of dwellings that were missed across the Northwest Territories. That first part of research has shown us that about 500 houses, occupied houses, were missed by Census Canada. Of course, that has a big impact on the total numbers that we will end up with eventually. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 415-14(5): Clarification of the Latest Census Statistics

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could advise us as to when he expects the study to be done and what the changed status might be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 415-14(5): Clarification of the Latest Census Statistics

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, we are now going into phase two of our research, and that is to look right across the North at the number of individuals who would have been missed. That research started in the middle of October. I expect it will have pretty good numbers late this winter.

The Finance Canada people will use the final numbers probably in September 2003, and then do calculations back to whatever those numbers were at that time. We have a bit of time before the final numbers will be determined, and to the best of my knowledge, that will be September. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 415-14(5): Clarification of the Latest Census Statistics

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to hear the positive note on this, but I wonder if the Minister could confirm as to what is his understanding with Finance Canada. Does he have a clear understanding, an agreement with them that they will actually take this into consideration? Is that clear, Mr. Speaker?

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

Further Return to Question 415-14(5): Clarification of the Latest Census Statistics

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, clearly, under our financing formula, Finance Canada will use the adjusted numbers, and I believe those are available in September, 2003. So they will take the numbers, those adjusted numbers, and will then work backwards on our financing formula back to, I believe, the date when the census was done, so that would be in June, 2001, or roughly then. The agreement is they will work back and make those adjustments with the final numbers, which I think are September, 2003.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 415-14(5): Clarification of the Latest Census Statistics

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could give us any indication as to he has already mentioned five extra houses. He foresees more. It seems that he may be able to get some more back, so some money back. Could he give an idea as to what dollar amount we are talking about? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 415-14(5): Clarification of the Latest Census Statistics

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I really cannot give a dollar figure right now, but we are looking at least a 10.8 percent adjustment to our population. Exactly what that translates into dollars, I really cannot tell you right now. The number, in fact, might be higher than that once we finish all of our research. Thank you.

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

Question 416-14(5): Support for the Dogrib Land Claim Process

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Premier, the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, one of the goals we established as Members of the 14th Assembly was to support the negotiation and implementation of claims and self-government agreements. We also agreed that we would ensure that there was enough funding available to all governments to implement self-government agreements.

I would like to ask the Premier if he supports the Dogrib land claims and self-government agreement over all other claims? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 416-14(5): Support for the Dogrib Land Claim Process

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government is a party to the negotiations between aboriginal groups and the federal government to resolve outstanding claims and to seek clarification on the aboriginal rights of these respective groups. We have made a commitment to support the recognition and the settlement of these rights wherever we are party, and part of a process. This government stands behind the commitments it makes.

Specifically in address to this Member, it is my understanding that the Akaitcho, the Deh Cho and the Dogribs have outstanding issues to resolve. They are looking to this government to provide some leadership, some support, some assurance that they will be able to assist where called upon to resolve those issues. We are committed to doing that. We support the settlement and the conclusion of the T'licho agreement, self-government agreement. We also support the Akaitcho people and the recognition and the respect that should be paid to their claims and their rights through self-government, as well as the Deh Cho process. We stand behind these groups and we hope that they all come to a resolution of their issues together, working together to get that job done. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 416-14(5): Support for the Dogrib Land Claim Process

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier if he has given any direction to his Cabinet to support one claim over the other. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 416-14(5): Support for the Dogrib Land Claim Process

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, I have had meetings with the T'licho negotiators, discussions with the elders. I have also had meetings with the leaders of the Akaitcho, and have given my assurance, individually, and that of Cabinet, that we expect parties to work together to resolve these very, very difficult issues, to come together through some process, so that the rights of the Dogrib people, the T'licho people, and the Akaitcho people can come to be mutually supported by both groups, all outstanding issues resolved. The ancestors have done that. Their forefathers have done it. Every other group in the Territory in recent history have been able to do it. We believe, as difficult as it is, as difficult as the issues are, it is possible and we expect, in the next few months, for these negotiators and these leaders to come together and come to a resolution that we can all feel comfortable with and enjoy.

Let me just say that the pressure is intense. It is incredible, and everybody wants a guarantee, some assurance. It is not for anybody to give. It is for everybody to come together to deliver. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 416-14(5): Support for the Dogrib Land Claim Process

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this Legislature, we, the Members, sometimes have recorded votes on issues of all kinds. An issue will come in the future for land claims, a vote. Can the Premier tell me, how many votes does he have in the situation where there is a recorded vote? How many votes will he have? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Lafferty, I am going to rule your question out of order. It borders on a speculative question. I will, however, allow you to re-phrase it, if you wish, without putting the Premier in the position of having to speculate on what is going to happen here down the road. Mr. Lafferty, you can rephrase that question if you wish.

Supplementary to Question 416-14(5): Support for the Dogrib Land Claim Process

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will rephrase my question. The issue of the Dogrib land claim was just an example that I used. I would just like to ask the Premier when it comes to a recorded vote does he have more than one vote, or does he have just one vote like the rest of the Members? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 416-14(5): Support for the Dogrib Land Claim Process

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the aboriginal leadership is not looking to secure my vote as the Premier or Member of this Legislature. The aboriginal leadership are looking to me for my leadership and for my ability to be fair, and also to be forceful and able to stand in front of very difficult issues and to help resolve them. That is what they want. They want the comfort of knowing that I am going to serve the rest of my term prepared to help them, prepared to move along issues and they have the comfort of knowing that I will be there to help them. That is what they want. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Your final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 416-14(5): Support for the Dogrib Land Claim Process

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not know why it is so hard for him to tell us how many votes he has as an individual. Can he answer that yes or no? Does he have one?

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

Further Return to Question 416-14(5): Support for the Dogrib Land Claim Process

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, the Member if fully aware of the answer to that question. I am merely the Premier and I have one vote on issues wherever I am allowed to vote, and very rarely in Cabinet. Thank you.

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

Question 417-14(5): Recognition of the Addictions Counselling Profession

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, submissions have been made to both the Department of Health and the Standing Committee on Social Programs regarding the necessity of recognizing the alcohol and drug counselling profession and the credentials obtained by alcohol and drug counsellors. In addition, addictions, mental health and family violence programming must be recognized as a core service of this government.

Is the Minister willing to formally recognize the profession of alcohol and drug counsellors and their certifications obtained through their certification board? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 417-14(5): Recognition of the Addictions Counselling Profession

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we currently spend about \$5 million a year on alcohol and drug services and we have alcohol and drug

counsellors, both in some facilities and at the community level. We recognize that there is a need to better formalize the training qualifications that they have and the training that they need, and we intend to do that. We have a draft in with the Standing Committee on Social Programs that starts to address some of the issues raised by my colleague, Mr. Delorey, and that have also been identified in the Chalmers report. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 417-14(5): Recognition of the Addictions Counselling Profession

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister mentions that there are recommendations before the committee and a plan in place. Could the Minister give us some times lines as to when he sees some of these recommendations and actions being taken, and when will we see some action in this area? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 417-14(5): Recognition of the Addictions Counselling Profession

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have a fairly ambitious plan that stretches out over a number of years, but we would like to start pending final feedback from the committee and then going to Cabinet for approval. We would like to be able to start addressing some of those issues this year. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 417-14(5): Recognition of the Addictions Counselling Profession

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister inform this House if he'll take measures to identify addiction services and programs as core services for this government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 417-14(5): Recognition of the Addictions Counselling Profession

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the action items in the action plan is to, in fact, come up with a core services list. Very clearly we will look at all the services we currently we provide. It has been acknowledged across the land that alcohol is one of the significant problems we have, both with health and social implications and impact. I would fully expect that that will remain as one of the services we are going to be committed to. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 417-14(5): Recognition of the Addictions Counselling Profession

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister tell us if he is willing to instruct his officials to formulate a policy, rather than legislation, in order that sufficient time can be given to allow those working in the field to obtain their education and develop their skills in order to meet the established standards and practices for addictions counselling? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 417-14(5): Recognition of the Addictions Counselling Profession

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is our intention to proceed through policy, regulation and development of training curriculum rather than through legislation at this time, so yes I will commit to that. Thank you.

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

Question 418-14(5): Plan for Recruitment and Retention of Nurses

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services and it relates to the shortage of health care personnel, particularly the critical shortage at Stanton. Mr. Speaker, last week I received a letter telling me about Stanton workers who have had to work two 12-hour shifts back to back. This can clearly lead to fatigue and increase the chances of errors. The Minister shared the draft recruitment and retention plan with the Standing Committee on Social Programs. When will the detailed plan be rolled out to the public?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 418-14(5): Plan for Recruitment and Retention of Nurses

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of developing the public document but first we are doing the decision paper to go to Cabinet. I am hoping to have that done within the next number of days. It had been my hope to have it done before this session concluded, but it looks like it will be done very early in November. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 418-14(5): Plan for Recruitment and Retention of Nurses

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister commit to a date certain that he will make sure that this plan is no longer a draft plan but is presented to the public and laid out how we are going to deal with the critical shortage of personnel?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 418-14(5): Plan for Recruitment and Retention of Nurses

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I commit to roll this out to the public and to come back to the Standing Committee on Social Programs with a final document as soon as I have a chance and my Cabinet colleagues have had a chance to look at the paper. I anticipate it would be very early in November. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 418-14(5): Plan for Recruitment and Retention of Nurses

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, obviously in order to deal with this critical shortage the Minister is going to have to find some money. What is the Minister doing to identify new sources of money to pay for the recruitment and retention strategy?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 418-14(5): Plan for Recruitment and Retention of Nurses

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are doing two things. We are looking at the existing money and how it is spent and can we be more effective and efficient. I will be going back to Cabinet as well with some plans for approval possibly that will require extra funding. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 418-14(5): Plan for Recruitment and Retention of Nurses

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am certain that health care workers at Stanton are getting tired of hearing that we can do more with less. I am sure that we cannot, but we could do something about dealing with the conditions of employment perhaps. What is the Minister's position about a separate bargaining unit for health care workers?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 418-14(5): Plan for Recruitment and Retention of Nurses

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a number of weeks ago we met with some of the executive from Local 11 and what we did commit to is to look at the possibility of a separate table when it comes to bargaining unit issues and bargaining issues under the Collective Agreement. At this point the position is that we are not prepared to move on a separate bargaining unit but we are

looking at the possibility of the table as suggested by the president of Local 11. Thank you.

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

Question 419-14(5): Clarification of Projected Deficit

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister of Finance. A few weeks ago now in the local media, he was reported as saying or at least discussing our current year deficit in the neighbourhood of \$60 million. The other day in the House, Mr. Speaker, my colleague Mr. Nitah referred to a figure that was substantially higher. In fact, added another zero. I am wondering if the Finance Minister can in fact shed some light on the situation and let us know exactly where we stand. Thank you.

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

Return to Question 419-14(5): Clarification of Projected Deficit

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, yes, a few weeks ago I did mention a number that we were aiming at in the \$60 million range. We have since gotten more information back from Finance Canada. I have offered to do a briefing to AOC and to do a fiscal statement later on. At this point, I can certainly say that the challenges we face are greater than what we had anticipated. We were looking at a deficit of roughly \$60 million. We are now looking at something probably in the neighbourhood of \$100 million, based on current information. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 419-14(5): Clarification of Projected Deficit

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So when the Minister of Health talks about going to Cabinet for extra funding for health care initiatives, or extra funding for something like the social agenda, is that in fact realistic if we have something the size of \$100 million deficit? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 419-14(5): Clarification of Projected Deficit

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, looking at a deficit as we anticipate having this year and for the next few years, certainly puts limits on the spending and it means that we have to look at any major initiative very carefully, but it does not preclude any new spending at all. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 419-14(5): Clarification of Projected Deficit

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the close of the 12th Assembly, I believe the deficit was in the neighbourhood of \$100 million. The 13th had to come in and make some serious decisions and slash programs and services in order to get that \$100 million down. It seems like we are in the same situation now. I am wondering if the Finance Minister is in fact planning to come with this tough love and talk about slashing programs and services. Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 419-14(5): Clarification of Projected Deficit

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, when this government took office three years ago, we were facing a serious fiscal situation, and probably within some months of our reaching our borrowing limit. We did very well on a strategy of investment and generating revenue from any source we could.

Mr. Speaker, that has served us well in terms of being able to meet the needs that we have had in the Territories. At this point, I have no intention to begin any slashing and cutting and so on of our priority needs. We are going to continue to meet the needs of the northern people as best we can. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 419-14(5): Clarification of Projected Deficit

MR. BELL: Thank you. About a week ago, my colleague, Ms. Lee, referred in the House to the spending habits of this government. She suggested that this government had been spending like drunken sailors. I am wondering if the Finance Minister can tell us if we had a strategy of spending as much money as possible so that the federal government did not think that we had too much.

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

Further Return to Question 419-14(5): Clarification of Projected Deficit

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, a lot of people who make suggestions that we are spending too much sometimes say we are spending too little. I can go back in the Hansards over the last three years and find, for probably almost every Member here, that we have a long list of areas where they told us that we should be spending more money in, and long lists where they told us we should be spending less money in.

Mr. Speaker, in my role as Finance Minister, I do the best I can to balance those needs against the priorities that are brought to our government's attention. Thank you.

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

Question 420-14(5): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment in regard to a question I asked last week about the seniors fossil fuel subsidy program.

I would like to thank the Minister for taking the time to consider the issues I raised. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to ask the Minister, has he also looked at the idea that winter is now before us in regard to how soon can the Minister get back in regard to the information I requested in regard to the review of the income assessment method that is presently being used to compile the information that is required in the application?

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

Return to Question 420-14(5): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to refresh everybody's memory on this, the issue was the fact that if children or other relatives move in with seniors and then the household is assessed on the amount of income in order to qualify for fuel subsidy. The assessment is done on the basis of looking at the tax returns for the individuals who are in that household. Of course, because they are tax returns, they may be way out of date. I committed that we would look at this, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we look at ways and means of updating the information to make assessments on individuals, and that we have current information. It is of concern. The winter is upon us already. I want to move forward with this very quickly, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 420-14(5): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regard to the assessment method that is presently being used, it is outdated, where the information requested is based on Revenue Canada reports, which are usually a year or two old. I would like to ask the Minister, what is he doing to inform the regional and local staff that they should assess the current income of the seniors for the fiscal year that we are in?

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

Further Return to Question 420-14(5): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our officials have been informed of this issue, and I have asked them to immediately look into this, to come to a resolution so that we can ensure that we have action on this. As the Member has mentioned, with winter time upon us, it creates a lot of difficulty for people if they do not have the fuel subsidy, which in many cases, perhaps they should be entitled to. The process that we are using is a time lag because of the issue of looking at the tax returns.

My officials are working on that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 420-14(5): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, anytime government changes program eligibility or criteria, that there is a need to educate the public on these changes. I would like to ask the Minister, can the Minister inform the House, exactly what is the department doing to let seniors know that there is a possible change in regard to the application for the income assistance under the senior fossil fuel subsidy program?

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

Further Return to Question 420-14(5): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do believe that most seniors are familiar with the seniors fuel subsidy program. What has come forward as a problem is the issue of outdated time frames on the checking of the amount of earnings that individuals have. That is an issue.

With regard to advising individuals, we have not advised them yet because, as I said, our officials are working on this whole issue. They will be in touch, if they have not already been in touch, with the regional officials who will help to institute any change in policy. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 420-14(5): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, there are many seniors out there that are not really aware of the seniors' fuel subsidy, which are eligible for people 60 years and over.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell whether the staff in the field target seniors and basically consult them individually, or do they simply wait for an application to be filed and someone comes into their office?

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

Further Return to Question 420-14(5): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Program

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe there have been some advertisements in publications. Recently, I saw some myself. With regard to the question of the contact, is it done by seniors to officials or officials to seniors, I would have to get back to the Member on that. I do not have the exact answer on that. Thank you.

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

Question 421-14(5): Restitution Program in Northwest Territories Schools

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to address a question to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment and it refers to the statement that I made earlier today about the restitution peace project.

I would like to ask Mr. Ootes, given the obvious success that this program has had at Sissons School, what plans are there in place to deliver this program elsewhere in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 421-14(5): Restitution Program in Northwest Territories Schools

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This was a four-year project, Mr. Speaker, with community justice funding. It is proving to be very successful and very helpful for the school. My understanding is that over the four year program the program will be extended to other communities and I understand that this fall three additional communities were incorporated; Inuvik, Rae Edzo and Fort McPherson/Tsiigehtchic were also believed to have this program introduced. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 421-14(5): Restitution Program in Northwest Territories Schools

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are there any other initiatives that the GNWT has that can come in and reinforce or enhance the good start this program seems to be giving us? Thank you.

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

Further Return to Question 421-14(5): Restitution Program in Northwest Territories Schools

HON. JAKE OOTES: Mr. Speaker, several years ago we identified bullying behavioural issues as a concern within the school system. In British Columbia a program was started called effective behaviour support. We sent down several of our educators to be trained in that system and we continued that program over the last several years and now we have it available in at least one school, if not more, in six other education districts. Effective behaviour support reinforces proper behaviour and teaches social skills. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 421-14(5): Restitution Program in Northwest Territories Schools

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I just need one more question on this issue today. I would like to know, what is the level of interest or demand for this program? Are we in any way limited or hampered by dollars or human resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return to Question 421-14(5): Restitution Program in Northwest Territories Schools

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The restitution approach is funded through the community justice system so there is a limitation to the amount of funding available for that. Ten schools were to be targeted over a period of four years for the introduction of this.

With our own territorial government program, the affected behaviour support program is really a case where we, on an annual basis, increase the training of the number of educators who can teach and deliver effective behaviour support programs.

We have a coordinator in place now who can help schools introduce these programs and so we see it as an expanding program being done within the current financing available. Thank you.

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

Question 422-14(5): Future of the Social Agenda

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are very efficient today. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger, and it is about the social agenda. At our last constituency meeting there were concerns raised from the public about the social agenda and the lack of funding, the lack of response by this government, the lack of a concrete response, Mr. Speaker.

I am wondering if the Minister can tell us where the social agenda and social agenda funding sits, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Health and Social Services. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 422-14(5): Future of the Social Agenda

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the government will be bringing forward on Wednesday its response to the social agenda and the plan of how they would like to put some resources to bear to address some of the recommendations made. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 422-14(5): Future of the Social Agenda

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the Minister refers to the resources that will be brought to bear for the social agenda, can he give us some indication of what kind of money we are talking about? New money, not existing things the departments were doing that they can now call a social agenda. How much new money and new initiatives are we talking about under the social agenda? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 422-14(5): Future of the Social Agenda

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are looking at low seven figures for new resources. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 422-14(5): Future of the Social Agenda

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very low seven figures, we are talking about slightly over a million dollars, is that correct?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 422-14(5): Future of the Social Agenda

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 422-14(5): Future of the Social Agenda

MR. BELL: Mr. Speaker, that is barely double the termination package that this government put forward for two individuals. Is that really going to do anything to make a dent with our social situation?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 422-14(5): Future of the Social Agenda

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it will help in addition to the hundreds of millions of dollars that we spend as a government dealing with the social envelope right now. It will allow us to focus on some pilot projects to look at things like the impact of major resource development in certain affected regions.

So yes, it is nothing to be sneezed at. It is money in a time when times are tight. We are going to try to combine it with all

the other money that we are putting towards these areas. Thank you.

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

Question 423-14(5): Increase in Children's Health Spending

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services in regard to the major increase in the number of children receiving services from the Inuvik Regional Health Board.

Mr. Speaker, it is pretty appalling to see the increase of some \$360,000 in that area. Mr. Speaker, in 1991, for 2001-2002 there was \$1 million allocated. Right now there is almost \$1.5 million spent in that area.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, in regard to this forced growth which went from almost \$360,000 this year, I would like to know, what are we doing in preventative care to ensure that we bring down these numbers so families and their children are reunited and that we do whatever we can to assist the families in this matter?

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

Return to Question 423-14(5): Increase in Children's Health Spending

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a host of different ways that we are trying to work with communities and individuals. We are starting right at conception. We are trying to encourage mothers who are pregnant not to drink. We are trying to deal with the alcohol and drug issue so that in fact alcohol, which tends to be at the centre of many of our social problems and many of our health problems, becomes less of a factor.

We have put as a government 20 new social workers, child protection positions into the field to assist and work with communities and families. We are trying to better integrate our services at the community level so that public health social workers, alcohol and drug workers work together more effectively at the early stages with families and children.

The approach we are taking with alcohol and drugs and family violence and mental health is going to be one which continues to try to focus on community development and working with families with children as opposed to focusing on the other end, in facilities.

So we are taking in a number of initiatives across the board. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 423-14(5): Increase in Children's Health Spending

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regard to the number of children presently in custody, there are

some 867 children, Mr. Speaker. That is a large percentage of our population, but from the Minister's comments that he is going to do all these grand things of alcohol and drug treatment programs, I would like to ask the Minister, how soon are we going to see dollars being increased in that area? Right now we have one alcohol and drug facility in the Northwest Territories. What is the Minister going to do to ensure we are able to implement this so-called strategy?

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

Further Return to Question 423-14(5): Increase in Children's Health Spending

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated in this House during this session there is a document, the integrated service delivery model, that we put forward that looks at alcohol and drug, family violence, mental health as well as the issue of continuing care with its three streams of facility living, supported living and home care that we have put together based on all the extensive work that has been done over the last few years. That document is currently sitting with the Standing Committee on Social Programs. We are refining it as we speak and waiting for feedback as well, and we want to proceed, along with the recruitment and retention issue, to Cabinet with the recommendations that we are making in that area. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 423-14(5): Increase in Children's Health Spending

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, right now we are spending in excess of \$5,525,000 in this one area. Mr. Speaker, as we all know with regard to the problems we see in our communities, yes they are alcohol and drug related, but they are also dealing with the social fabric of our communities. What is the Minister going to do to improve the social conditions in our communities?

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

Further Return to Question 423-14(5): Increase in Children's Health Spending

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a government we are investing hundreds of millions of dollars in social and health programs across the North. The social agenda, which will be brought to this House on Wednesday, will speak to the issue of how we work to assist communities to deal with the major impact of resource development. We continue to put more and more resources into communities; \$58 million have been put into the authorities from 1997-1998 to the present. As I indicated we have added social workers. We are trying to improve and strengthen home care. We are working along with the work done by Education and Housing across the board to try to improve the social conditions in all the communities. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 423-14(5): Increase in Children's Health Spending

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I heard that the Minister state that he is looking at increasing the funding with regard to social workers and whatnot but, Mr. Speaker, my view is that the biggest challenge we have in our communities is bringing the standard of salaries for mental health workers or alcohol and drug workers to a similar power as those service professionals. I would like to ask the Minister what he is doing to increase the wages of our front line workers such as our mental health and drug and alcohol workers in our communities to assist the people in our communities who have these problems?

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

Further Return to Question 423-14(5): Increase in Children's Health Spending

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is one of the key issues that we address in the document that I have been referencing, the integrated service delivery model. It speaks to the alcohol and drug, family violence and mental health response. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. The chair recognized the honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

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

REVERT TO ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to take this opportunity to recognize two leaders of many aboriginal people from Weledeh and, in fact, beyond those boundaries. First Chief Darrel Beaulieu of the Yellowknives Dene, and Clem Paul, president of the North Slave Metis Alliance. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given that I have another chance here I would like to recognize Ruth and Bob Spence, long-time residents and avid observers and opinionators about politics in the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I believe the honourable Member had used her recognition already, however we will recognize them anyway. Any other persons that have not used this opportunity? The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is not too often that we have a full slate of people in the gallery, so I would like to welcome everybody to the Legislative Assembly and it is real great to see everybody out today. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: I thought that was my role. Thank you.

-- Laughter

That was my job. I notice that there are a few of the chiefs from the aboriginal groups here and I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Members to welcome them to the Assembly and to thank the many people that have come here since we opened the session today. Welcome everyone to your Legislative Assembly.

-- Applause

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to the opening address. Item 10, petitions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta.

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

Petition 4-14(5): Hunting Restrictions on Northwest Territories Highway Corridors

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition dealing with the matter of hunting restrictions on NWT highway corridors. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition containing 46 signatures from Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson residents. Mr. Speaker, the petition requests that until the NWT Wildlife Act is enacted all hunting restrictions, including those affecting NWT highway corridors, remain unchanged and no new hunting regulations be introduced.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Bill 23: Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2002

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight has reviewed Bill 23, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2002, and Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, and wishes to report that Bill 23 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole, as amended and reprinted, and Bill 24 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 12, reports of committee on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents.

Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 16-14(5): Dissolution of the 14th Legislative Assembly

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, October 30, 2002, I will move the following motion. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that the 14th Legislative Assembly request the Governor in Council to dissolve the 14th Legislative Assembly by January 31, 2003, to permit the issuance of writs for a general election for the 15th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories;

And further that the Speaker transmit this resolution to the Governor in Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 14, notices of motion. Notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 29: An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, October 30, 2002, I will move that Bill 29, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Motion 15-14(5), Request for Special Audit by the Auditor General of Canada on the North Slave Correctional Centre. No response. This motion will remain on the order paper for one more day. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Minister Handley.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 28, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, No. 2

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Bill 28, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, No. 2, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please respond. Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 28 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to proceed with the second reading of Bill 28, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, No. 2. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking consent to proceed with the second reading of Bill 28.

Are there any nays? There are no nays. Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 28: An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, No. 2

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Bill 28, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, No. 2, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will allow the Workers' Compensation Board to purchase, lease and dispose of real property and to construct or alter buildings. The approval of the Commissioner and Executive Council is required where the value of the property or construction exceeds \$100,000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Bill 28 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee.

Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters; Tabled Document 35-14(5), Bill 1, Bill 22, Bill 26, Committee Report 10-14(5) and Committee Report 11-14(5), 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 committee of the whole to order. There are several items to deal with; Tabled Document 35-14(5), Bill 1, Bill 22, Bill 26, Committee Report 10-14(5) and Committee Report 11-14(5). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend that committee continue consideration of Committee Report 11-14(5), and if we should conclude that, to then move to Bill 26, followed by concurrent consideration of Bill 1 and Committee Report 10-14(5).

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We will begin with Committee Report 11-14(5). General comments? Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are two issues that I need to speak to as we conclude this debate. The first is the Auditor General's report. I would like to make it clear, I accept the Auditor General's conclusion that the termination agreements with Mr. Bayly and Ms. Sorensen did not conform with our written policies and procedures. I also accept the Auditor General's recommendation that in the future, we adhere to the letter of our agreements and policies or substantiate on record the reasons for deviating from them. This is what she has directed.

I also accept responsibility for the termination packages that were negotiated with Ms. Sorensen and Mr. Bayly.

I also wish to reiterate that line Members of my Cabinet will work with Members of this Legislature to change the policies and procedures and improve upon them where needed.

The second issue I need to speak to is my desire to continue to serve the people of the Northwest Territories as Premier. I believe we have immense priorities and challenges facing us, and we can only face them if we face them together.

Finally, I wish to assure every Member of this House that I want to work with every one of you, in spite of our differences. Leave our differences behind so we can get on with the business of governing this Territory.

-- Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Could we have some order in here, please? Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there has been a lot of discussion over the last few days among all Members with regard to the Auditor General's report and the implication it has for the leadership of this government. On Friday, my colleague Jane Groenewegen stated in the House that the Auditor General's report is not defensible.

Mr. Chairman, the findings of this report clearly state that the Premier knowingly contravened the policies and practices of this government. He gave public funds to personal friends without any justification.

I do not think there is one person in this House that would say that this is not wrong. What I do see as questions are raised which distract us from the legal, moral and ethical issue at hand. Questions are coming to me from my leaders saying that the land claim and self-government would be jeopardized if Premier Kakfwi is not in this office. Premier Kakfwi stood up earlier and said when he answered the question he is the man to lead us through the self-government. Is he saying that there is no one else in this House who can lead us into self-government? This government has a mandate to support all land claims and all self-government. Somebody gave the people in my riding, my leaders, the thinking that it is going to affect the land claims, which it is not.

This is an issue of breaching policies and procedures. It has nothing to do with land claims. Because of that, I received a letter from the Grand Chief telling me to resign if I do not support Premier Kakfwi. I will not support Premier Kakfwi. Mr. Joe Rabesca...(inaudible)...you will hear me.

Also, some Members feel that if there is a change in the Premier's position, this government will fall apart. This government is already apart. We are trying to put it back together.

Others are concerned about who would replace the current Premier. People think there is nobody else in this House who can replace him, which is not true.

Still others fear that initiatives that are started will not be completed. There are Members in here who are afraid that if they do not vote for him, things that were supposed to be put in their communities will not happen. This is not true.

I would like to ask each Member to look within themselves and look at the situation here. I would ask each Member to stay focused on the issue that we have at hand. I would ask each Member to consider the findings of the Auditor General's report and to consider the situation which led up to the Members calling for this report.

Mr. Chairman, as Members of the 14th Assembly we have created a living document, Towards a Better Tomorrow. This document maps out the direction that we have been following for the past three years and the route that we will follow for the remaining year of our term.

This framework is in place and will not change. Mr. Chairman, as Members we are forced into making a choice. This choice is forced on us because the high road of a willing resignation has not been taken.

As my colleague Mr. Roland said on Friday, personal agendas aside, we have an oath. We have to follow the laws that we set for ourselves. I will repeat the oath of office that each one of us took at the opening of this Assembly, as I did so almost one year ago today when the same question arose: do we have confidence in the Premier?

The oath says:

I will not act nor condone others in acting in ways which exploit, slander or discriminate against each other;

I will not act nor condone others in acting in ways which are dishonest or which exploit positions of privilege for personal gain.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Members to consider this oath when they make their decision on the future of this government.

For myself, I know that if I am to honour this guideline I cannot condone this kind of action that the Premier has shown with regard to the compensation given to his friends. Mr. Chairman, I say I have no confidence in the Premier and it is time for a change. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments with regard to Committee Report 11-14(5)? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, over the past few days I have heard from many of my constituents in Hay River. I have to say that the message has been mixed. There have been some expressions of support for the Premier and some of non-support. I have carefully considered these opinions that have come to me.

Sometimes in these circumstances, we as elected Members have to weigh the balance of all the issues that are before us. Much of the information out there for our constituents portrays a picture of what is happening here and it is portrayed in black and white and it would be nice if it was that clear cut and that simple, but I am afraid it is not.

I feel very similarly to the sentiment expressed by Mr. Braden in his minority report which was attached to the committee report. I also believe that the departure of the Premier at this time would not be in the best interest of the people of the Northwest Territories.

This government has made substantial progress on the issues of devolution, diamond development, a gas pipeline, provincial and external relations and self-government. These issues are huge to the economic stability of all regions of the Northwest Territories including Hay River.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the Premier for his comments today and I think as most know in this House, we feel he has a responsibility as the head of this government to have overseen these matters in a better fashion. So as Mr. Braden stated in his report, this is a difficult compromise for me to make and I believe for anyone who is continuing to support him, it does call on us to weigh this out and to make somewhat of a compromise.

But with all due respect to my colleagues in this House and to my constituents in Hay River who may disagree with my position I can still say in good conscience I do believe that Stephen Kakfwi is the best chance we have to advance our agenda for the benefit of all Northerners.

I want to state that I am prepared to work closely with him and the other Members of this Assembly to get past this very difficult series of events and get the most out of this last year of this mandate as we possibly can.

I will also contribute to the discussions and the review of policies to prevent any reoccurrence of this nature in this government in the future. Mr. Chairman, I will be supporting the motion to accept the Auditor General's report and the findings contained in it, but I will not be supporting the motion requesting Premier Kakfwi to resign. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments in regard to Committee Report 11-14(5). Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in looking back in Hansard from Friday, Unedited Hansard I see that there was a break in the recording and much of my comments that I made on Friday were not recorded. So I want to state again some of the things that I brought out on Friday.

I know that I probably won't remember all of them because I did not have a written text, however I want to restate how I arrived at my decisions and what I am looking at in this whole issue.

Mr. Chairman, when I ran for election to this government I went to the people of Hay River North and I set my principles, my standards and I told the people what I would do if elected, and they elected me to represent them in this Legislature. I do not take the trust that they have put in me lightly. I do not take decisions that I make in this House lightly, nor do I think any other Member in this House should take them lightly.

When I was approached to support who we were going to put in as Premier and who we were going to have sitting on the opposite side of the House as Ministers, I gave that some serious consideration and I also put a lot of thought into the Members sitting across, if they were honest, accountable, and were going to carry out the business of the Northwest Territories and control the public purse that best interests the people of the Northwest Territories.

In this House on Friday, Mr. Chairman, I was all prepared to vote on the recommendations that were put forward by the committee. It was mentioned by one Member across that maybe we should cool our heels, take a couple of days, listen

to our constituents and maybe come back and see how we feel at that time.

I want to tell you, Mr. Chairman, that I did not sleep very good Friday night. I made it a point to go home to Hay River when I had not planned to go home this weekend, but I made it a point to go home because I thought it was extremely important that I went home and talked to as many of my constituents that I could and listened to their views and their concerns.

So Saturday and Sunday to me were spent in my constituency talking with people and every spare moment that I had on the phone this morning. I have to tell you, Mr. Chairman, not one person that I talked to encouraged me to change my position that I took on Friday. Not one. If there was one, I would accept the phone call now to correct me, but I know it will not come, because I never heard one, and I talked to a lot of people.

I slept a lot better last night because I am very comfortable with the position I have now and I am comfortable that the constituents that I represent are comfortable with the position I am taking. I have talked to constituents that are in government, I have talked to constituents in the private sector, I have talked to business people, I have talked to seniors, I have talked to retired individuals, I have talked to students, and I had one retired school teacher tell me, "I have just retired from teaching and I received a certificate for 30 years of excellence in teaching." She said, "My pension..." and I will not repeat how she compared her pension with the pension that Lynda Sorensen is getting, because it would not be acceptable in this House, but she made it very clear to me that her tax dollars are being expended in this House in this manner. She was not happy about it. I feel it incumbent upon me to relay that message here, because she is one person that helped elect me to this House.

I said on Friday that we are here to represent the people and that we are in charge of protecting the public purse; public money. Tax dollars that this government gets to expend on other people and on programs and services.

You would like me, or certain Members would like me to stand up and say, "Well, we threw a quarter of a million dollars away at one person, but that is okay. We are going to put guidelines in place so it does not happen again." It does not fly, Mr. Chairman. The guidelines were there. This leader did not follow those guidelines. Do I think he will do it next time? No, I do not. I have heard him say nothing that would change my mind.

I am prepared to go back to the electorate, to my constituents and face another election on my convictions, my standards, my honesty, and my accountability. I hope that every Member of this House, this side and that side, are prepared to do the same thing, because I can guarantee you we no longer have consensus government here. We no longer have a consensus on anything. We can face a vote of confidence in the Premier and go on from here. We can go for a year, but we will not have a consensus government for the rest of this term.

It is going to be an impossible situation. The public out there is speaking, and I hope that every Member here is well aware of the situation in front of us. It is how we expend public money, how we expend the public purse. People out there who are deeply in need of help, who are paying tax dollars and trusting us to do it right.

I look at the Members across and I respect the Members across. I respected them when I voted for them. I assumed at that time that they would do the right thing. I assume now that they will do the right thing, but the public is watching us. I for one am going to state right now, I am prepared to go to the polls on my decision, and my decision is to support the committee recommendation to its fullest. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think one thing is certainly interesting to start this discussion off. The Premier, and I am glad to see it, that the Premier has said that he is willing to accept the conclusions and the findings of the Auditor General.

Mr. Chairman, I am not sure that the public will recognize and comprehend how fundamental a shift this position is from where we were a week ago. The Premier obviously was privy to the Auditor General's report in draft before the rest of the House saw it, and I believe the first interview I saw on it a couple of days before the Auditor General's findings were public was something to the effect that he felt that it was not that big a deal. She was going to have her opinions and we would have ours.

Mr. Chairman, I think the public can see just how ridiculous a statement like that is. Someone of her authority, someone of her credibility, someone of her respect, this is not something that anybody should take lightly. Mrs. Groenewegen has indicated that this report cannot be defended. It cannot be justified. It was absolutely damning. It was brutal. It was black and white and it was honest.

Mr. Kakfwi has indicated that the Auditor General was not privy to the politics of the day. She did not understand the political pressure he was under. Mr. Speaker, I would say exactly because that is not what we want. We wanted a look at the situation and look at the termination packages to determine whether or not things had been done according to policy, not whether or not there were political excuses that could be made for sidestepping policy, and there were mitigating circumstances and other things, because I will tell you, the public does not care. They only know that somebody got a whack of money that nobody else can get.

Mr. Delorey talked about the 30-year teacher who will not get the kind of benefits that one individual got. I think that is really what is eating at people. I should say, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Bayly and Ms. Sorensen did what any of us would do; go into a negotiation for benefits and bargain hard and start high, and I absolutely would not fault them for that for a minute. Mr. Bayly got almost exactly what he was entitled to in his contract. We signed these people to lucrative contracts because they are at pleasure, and we can get rid of them at almost a moment's notice, as the Premier indicated. That is why we agreed to pay them significant money should they leave under unfavourable circumstances.

However, we cannot crumple up those contracts because we want to make it just a little more money, or a lot more money, Mr. Chairman. I think this situation amounts to essentially, and I do not want to get into rehashing the findings of the Auditor General, but in my mind, it is a significant breach of trust. We have a lot of trust and a lot of faith that he or she who holds the

office of Premier in this government will do so honourably and will adhere to our policies and our laws because we simply cannot sit in that individual's office every day and look over their shoulder to ensure that they are in fact doing the right kinds of things.

I would like the Members of the House, with that in mind, to reflect on one thing. Can you imagine what would have happened if we were not able to pass the motion to get an Auditor General investigation? All of us would be none the wiser. We would carry on merrily. The money would have been expended. There would have been absolutely no accountability because the government was not prepared to talk about it. The situation would continue to repeat itself, I believe, in future.

In light of our fiscal situation, Mr. Chairman, I think we all, as an Assembly and the public, can see exactly the failings of a government that cannot handle these simple matters and follow policies and laws to the letter.

Mr. Chairman, in the next year, we have a \$100 million deficit that we are facing. And make no mistake, Ministers will be talking to Members and we will be passing the message to the public that times are tough. We are going to have to cinch up our belts. There is no free lunch. The picture is not rosy anymore and we are all going to have to make sure that we economize and can get by on a little less. There will not be the kind of money that we need to make a significant dent in alcohol and drug treatment. The Minister of Health has already indicated that for our social agenda, we are looking at slightly over a million dollars. Mr. Chairman, paltry dollars when you really look at some of the money that we expend in other areas. I find that absolutely embarrassing.

I cannot condone the activity that has gone on here, Mr. Chairman. I would also say to my Cabinet colleagues across the floor who approved this money that I expect more. I understand that you were not involved in the negotiations, but you sat in that Cabinet room and you either decided to hear no evil and see no evil and just sign the piece of paper that allowed the funds to be expended, or you did not care. I would like to think you did not ask the questions. I guess I am a little more comfortable thinking that you were negligent in your duty in asking the proper questions, rather than imagine that you asked those questions, got these answers which so sicken me, and carried right on. But I will never know, I suppose, Mr. Chairman.

When I reflect on my career, after it has come and gone, one of my biggest regrets, I imagine, is going to be that I could not make this money come back. I am going to have to look at my constituents and the people who come to me for help, and in the back of my mind, when we are talking about significant money and programs to them, will be that \$250,000 extra dollars we did not need to spend could have gone in some way towards alleviating some of the hardship and some of the pain.

Mr. Chairman, I guess when my career is done, I want to be able to look back and say that I was on the side of those who needed help. I do not want to be on the side of those who needed or got or somehow managed to finagle an extra \$250,000 into the hands of a former aid.

Mr. Chairman, I believe, like some of my colleagues on this side, that this government is bigger than any one man, any one woman who might hold that leadership position. It is a collective and we have set a mandate for this government

collectively and I believe there are other individuals who are capable of holding the office of Premier.

Mr. Kakfwi has done some very good things for this government. He has put us on the national stage, I will acknowledge that and I respect a lot of the work he has done, but I think we have come to a point where we don't have trust and we don't believe that we can carry on a credible government and I don't believe that we can go to Ottawa and sit down to negotiate devolution and other very critical issues... Mr. Chairman, devolution. Our attempt to get more control at this level. Have we done the kinds of things that would suggest to you that we can handle more control? Does our conduct warrant more control? I cannot imagine it does, Mr. Chairman.

We know that one of our biggest problems in dealing with Ottawa has been the bureaucracy. They are so firmly entrenched in their ideas of what we are actually doing up here that that is an uphill battle, Mr. Chairman. It is one thing to hear nice things from politicians, but we know the bureaucrats in Ottawa think one thing. They think that we have no idea what is going on and that essentially we are, and other colleagues have referred to us in this House in the past, they think we are a Banana Republic, Mr. Chairman.

They think that this is sort of run under third world conditions and patronage and these other kinds of things run wild. And who can blame them with the number of scandals that we have had in the last ten years, this is their impression. I think we have done nothing to deal with that impression.

Mr. Chairman, I am fairly certain at this point that Cabinet will vote as a block on this issue and that we will not have the numbers to force the Premier to resign. I accept that, but I think that because of that I am more than prepared and it is why I seconded the motion, to go to the polls and let the public decide if our conduct has been acceptable. I certainly think an election is the only thing now, Mr. Chairman, that we can do to restore public confidence and faith in this government. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have heard the discussion on this so far, every day as the dynamics change on this, we hear new things, we are subject to new influences, our perspectives can also change. I appreciated our decision on Friday to take the weekend and give this really serious consideration, but even more than that, Mr. Chairman, it gave me the chance to talk to constituents, talk to other leaders here in Yellowknife and also in other parts of the Territories and even in other parts of Canada who are deeply concerned and paying attention to the issue that is before us.

I have reflected in my report, in my remarks on Friday, that this indeed was a difficult compromise for me to make. That of course is the position that I will not endorse the committee's recommendation asking for the Premier to resign. I do not feel that that is the right thing for the Northwest Territories at this time.

On the merits of the issue itself, it would certainly seem to be the only logical conclusion, but it goes far beyond simply removing a serving Premier. It is an indictment against the ability that this Assembly has to take an issue on and settle it in a reasonable fashion and get on with our work. That is why I

am urging that Members will continue to want to live out the term of this 14th Assembly and live out the contract that I think we all made with our supporters, with the voters in our constituencies when they said, get in there, go to work for four years and do the very best you can.

A question that I posed, Mr. Chairman, to people over the weekend was whether not only on this particular issue but on a number of other points that have been difficult and contentious in this Assembly over our three years, has our effectiveness, our integrity, been that badly damaged, tainted, stained that there is indeed nothing really left for us to do and cash this one in and go to the polls a year ahead of our commitment?

I did not get a lot more clarity on that, Mr. Chairman. It seems that a number of people are on as thin an edge as I am in making my choice. They are really seeming to appreciate the fine dilemma that we are in. How serious the nature of the Premier's involvement in these contracts and yet the consequences of taking him out. I cannot say that I got a lot of new support or a lot of new criticism from where I was originally, but I think I can stay on fairly safe ground by saying there is certainly some appetite out there to see Mr. Kakfwi removed. There is not enough to make that a really definite choice for me. There is even less appetite or interest, Mr. Chairman, in closing out this whole government.

As I say, you know, when I got elected, when I accepted the support of the people of Great Slave I felt it was a contract to go in there and do the work. I found out just as recently as this afternoon that we are facing potentially \$100 million deficit and I think I would really be breaking faith with my constituents if I said, "Oh well, yeah, we screwed up big time in a couple of areas and gee, I am going to have to walk away from this one." I was here for three years and I think enjoyed some of the benefit and the spin-off of this economic windfall that we have had, but now there is some bad news in front of us and I am not ready to run away from that. I want this coming year, Mr. Chairman, to do my best and make a difference and turn that around.

I have tried to, I guess, take some measure of what it is that is causing this Assembly to have so much difficulty. In some part, Mr. Chairman, I think we need to look at the processes and the relationships and the methodologies that we have at work between the various parts of our Assembly, between Cabinet, between our standing and our special committees, in Caucus, the various tools that we have at our disposal.

Mr. Delorey, in I think, one of the better addresses, if not the best one that I have heard him give this Assembly this afternoon, challenged the notion of, do we even have consensus? It is something where I am on his side. I do not really know what we have in this Assembly.

The best way that I have been able to explain it to people who say, well how does your government work up there; is to say that well, the best example that I can give that you might understand is that we are a perpetual minority government. How can we really expect that to be sustainable, where every issue that comes up, every vote, is in effect a confidence situation and may see the fall or the serious injury done to a government depending on any given issue? How can that be sustained? What we have done, I think, perhaps we and some of our predecessors in other Assemblies, we have engineered out of our communication and our ability to work with each

other. We have taken out the collaborative things that we need and the process to be able to resolve issues.

I have been told by Members who served in previous Assemblies, for instance, that a lot of things used to be hammered out in Caucus whereas now we are trying to do it in other ways. In effect, what we have here, Mr. Chairman, is a bi-partisan system that is adversarial and does not promote getting together and exchanging views on what the issues are. We essentially have only a reactive system here, not much different than any you would see in other provinces or in the federal government. It is certainly not consensus.

One of the reasons I ran to see if I could get elected was because I felt that the consensus system was failing us. I have learned since then that we have a duty and a responsibility to be proactive and to change and to reform the ways we manage and the way we handle consensus. That is how we are going to change this, to fix this, to make a difference. The Premier has said today more clearly than before that he and Cabinet want to do that. Can we or will we on this side take it up? Well we are going to have at least one more chance to take that debate up when Mr. Roland's motion comes forward.

I look forward to that debate. I think we are going to be able to steer around it, Mr. Chairman, and I am looking forward to the next year to really make a difference because I think now we can. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next on the list I have Mr. Roland, Ms. Lee, Mr. Dent. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really cannot say much beyond what I did on Friday, only refer to some of the other discussion that has gone on in some of the responses that were made by the Premier.

Mr. Chairman, one of the reasons that Members on Friday wanted to delay the decision I guess on the recommendations of committee was to try to review what had happened and piece together why we ended up back in this situation. Mr. Chairman, I for one did not feel it was necessary and I still do not feel it was necessary because this is not a new issue. Mr. Chairman, I think that was taken into serious consideration by the committee when we brought this report forward with its recommendations.

If this was the first instance that this has occurred of this nature, then the committee would probably say, well maybe a motion of censure would be satisfactory, a slap on the hands, let us change the rules and let us get on with business. Mr. Chairman, I have copies of Hansard dating back to October 31, 2000, when this issue started to create problems for this Assembly. It revolved around the creation of the position of chief of staff, how it fit into this government, what was required of that position and was it executive assistant and was it deputy minister. I have in Hansard the Premier on October 31, 2000, page 635; November 1, 2000, page 666; November 16, 2000, page 952; February 21, 2001, page 1138; and October 29, 2001, page 448, where the Premier refers to this as a personal assistant/executive assistant position.

I argued that then the salary should be equivalent to that of an executive position, but we were told, well there are appendices and financially it mirrors that of a deputy minister position. Well if we go by that, Mr. Chairman, the fact and the argument that,

as Cabinet put forward of the day, as the Premier stated in this House on public record, that chief of staff position was an executive assistant position, then the findings of the Auditor General's report are absolutely accurate of overpayment to the letter.

As I stated, we became aware during our meeting with the Auditor General, a public meeting held with the Auditor General, that there was involvement in that there was a dispute that came up that, in fact, it is not an executive assistant position. This government forwarded a letter to the Auditor General stating they misread the employment contract and stated that they missed a clause that, in fact, there was reference to a deputy minister contract. Now that seems to follow up and confirm with the Premier's responses on Friday in unedited Hansard where the Premier says on page 2694 there was a response to this whole issue: "On the years of service, for instance, that is the understanding that every deputy minister in this government has that they will get one month for every year of service, not the number of years that they were deputy ministers."

Looking at that comment, Mr. Chairman, as well as page 2696 where he further goes on: "As I understand it, we gave her one month for every year of service, as we have done with every other deputy minister." So which is it?

Mr. Chairman, again I say if this was an isolated incident I think it could be accepted by members of the committee who brought forward this recommendation that this is an isolated incident and that there might have been an oversight, but since October of 2000 this has been a political hot potato as one can say. I can quote what Minister Miltenberger said back in those days about what this job entailed and what it meant. Now I get a different opinion or reason from what is occurring.

We get in Hansard the Premier stating he had no involvement. He actually states on page 2695 of unedited Hansard: "The Auditor General says I was not involved." He stated that on the record here but interestingly enough, Mr. Chairman, of our report to which we had attached the transcripts of our meeting with the Auditor General, Mr. Papineau (page 14): "The Premier provided the direction to Liz Snider to pay maximum performance pay." So again which is it?

There is no misunderstanding. There is a theme here. For many years, for three years from October 2000 when this issue started to cause concern to this Assembly, that is why I come forward, Mr. Chairman, and support the recommendation as they are laid out. This is not an isolated incident. In fact, as other Members of this House said, well maybe you know if we had party politics, as I heard Mr. Braden seem to bring into the House here, that something like this might not occur. Well, for sure it would not occur, because the government would have a majority and they could deflect everything that we as Members would try to bring forward in questioning the government of bringing credibility and accountability to this House.

It is because we have this system that we as Regular Members could question and get some responses. This proves that the system works. When the government goes outside its existing policies and regulations, we can call them to task, as much as they dislike it.

It is laid out quite clearly, Mr. Chairman, that we have a significant problem here. I heard on Friday Members discuss "Well, we are too late in our mandate. We have too many

things going on" as we heard from Mr. Lafferty who spoke very well earlier, that this government does not hinge on any one of us. It takes a team. We have not had a team for quite some time because of the approaches that have occurred. In fact, we have been running in separate directions, even in Cabinet. We can point out many examples where Cabinet was running on their own. There was no team. The team comes together when the orders are told you do it this way. You vote this way. Forget your constituents. You have to do it this way. Cabinet solidarity.

Well, we all will take into account, and I, like Mr. Delorey, will say that I have no fear of going back to my constituents and saying I took the right stance, that I have done my job, that I have tried to work with this government and hold it to a measure of accountability that I would consider to be held to as a Regular Member or a Member, in the previous government, as Minister as well.

We are not perfect, and I accept that. Mistakes will happen. I accept that. However, there is such a trail here, Mr. Chairman, that I would have great difficulty in believing, and that is why I made the motion that if we are not willing to act and follow our own laws, that it is time to go to a new election to get the people to give a new government a new mandate. I still stand behind that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, like many of my colleagues, and I am sure a lot of people in the Territories, I spent the weekend talking on the phone. There is no question, Mr. Chairman, that people are very upset about what they are hearing. This is a very serious issue and it is very confusing at times, too.

Mr. Chairman, as I had already indicated in my minority report to the committee report, there is no question steps should and must be taken to incorporate the recommendations and observations and conclusions of the Auditor General's report. There is also no question that there was an error in judgment on the part of the Premier. The Premier has accepted that. He has admitted that he could have done things differently. Having reviewed the Auditor General's report, the transcript of our meeting with her and her staff, and some other materials, I am comfortable in saying that there was no direct link. The Auditor General did not find a direct link in the contract negotiations. She did, however, find a lot of areas that the government has to fix.

More importantly, Mr. Chairman, I think that the history will judge us in this House on this issue and say that very few of us in this House have clean hands.

Mr. Chairman, I heard with great interest what Mr. Delorey from Hay River North said about this 30-year pensioner. What caught me is he indicated that it would be wrong for him to give details of her pension information. I believe Mr. Bell indicated that as well.

The question that came to my mind is what is the difference between this 30-year pensioner, whose pension information we must protect and we agree that we have to protect that, what is the difference between that pensioner and Ms. Sorensen and Mr. Bayly? Is that because they did such a horrible thing, that they are the lowest of the beings, that their rights are not to be protected?

Mr. Chairman, I think someone better than I has stated in this regard, and the latest decision by Justice Vertes, I just want to read these things. I do not want to...I think it is relevant to what we are saying here. Mr. Vertes ruled in his decision on Wednesday last week, on page 27:

We are, however, dealing with a public body, the Legislative Assembly.

He goes on to say:

It is well-recognized that judicial review is available to supervise the decision-making of public bodies that have the power to decide any matter affecting the rights, interests, property, privileges or liberty of any person.

He also goes on to say, on page 28:

A general duty of fairness resting on all public decision-makers is greater.

Mr. Chairman, he also says...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Excuse me, Ms. Lee. You are totally off the subject. We are dealing with Committee Report 11-14(5). We are not dealing with a ruling, so if you can focus on the committee report that is in front of us, because that is the item that we are discussing. I will rule you out of order if you sway from those discussions. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will take your advice. The most important question before us is where do we go from here? What is the proper thing to do, that speaks most clearly to and in the best interest of the people of the Northwest Territories, whom we are here to serve?

As I continued to deliberate this question this morning, trying to think of the answers, a letter came across my desk that says, in my view, what many whom I talked over the weekend have been telling me. It is a letter from Chief Charlie Furlong of Aklavik.

Mr. Chairman, it says:

As a taxpayer, an observer and an aboriginal leader, I like many other citizens across the Northwest Territories, have heard and are listening to the debate that is crippling the image of the current government. As a taxpayer, yes, I am deeply concerned as to how our resources are being managed. But because you are a consensus government, you are all responsible -- from the Premier's office, Cabinet Ministers, MLAs and the committees that are structured to plan and recommend efficient and effective government.

Mr. Chairman, I am also reading this because I find that in my job, when I am really embroiled in what is going on here, it helps me the most when I hear the observations and opinion of the people outside. Mr. Chairman, the letter goes on to say:

I have noticed, and I am sure many others have also noticed, that certain Members on certain committees have used, or in some cases, abused their appointments to steer the purpose of these committees into an adversarial...

...and I am not going to say that word. Mr. Chairman, he goes on to say that:

A change in Premier will certainly have a negative impact...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Excuse me, Ms. Lee. You are discussing a document that is not privy to other Members of this House. For you to be reading a document into the record, when we are dealing with this matter...again, I will rule you to stick to the subject at hand. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not mean to be...I am sorry. Simply, the point that I am trying to make is that the message I have been hearing from the people is that they understand that this is a serious issue. At the same time, they want us to move on. They understand that the stopping and discontinuing the leadership of this Premier and this government is not something that would serve us.

My purpose for reading that letter is I think that I and other Members in this House have received a lot of communication from the people out there who are challenging us to think about what is in the best interest of the public. I am not saying that the Premier has not erred. He has made serious errors in judgment. The next question we have to consider is does that constitute enough to remove him and discontinue this government at this juncture?

Another question that I had to really seriously address, and I did not want to do that, it is just that the discussion in this House made me think about questions that had been on my mind.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to apologize if I offended anybody. I just think that as much as I want to make my statement and what I think and how I am right about certain things and about how I cannot tolerate or cannot accept other people, I think it is better, rather than me talking about what I believe and what I think and trying...you know, I am really honestly very bothered about some of the statements that are being made here that seems to think there are clear answers and purity in some of us that is not in others.

I think it is an important point to make, that we as a whole Territory have suffered too much. It has cost us too much money, too much time, and it is really, really time for us to move on. I thought it was very interesting that the communication that I had been receiving over the weekend from outside of Yellowknife, such as leaders like Charlie Furlong and many, many others who had been writing us, they have the same thing in mind as those who have been talking to me in Yellowknife. And that is that we, as the 14th Assembly, have a real chance to do something really positive and grab the issues of the day and make something out of it, and they really want us to get on with that work.

I want to say again that I am not saying that the Auditor General's report did not give us a lot to think about. Obviously, there are a lot of things that government has to do to make sure that this sort of thing does not happen again.

I will just end it there. Sorry, Mr. Chairman, I did not mean to...

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, earlier today we heard from the Premier a clear and repentant statement of regret and acceptance of responsibility. Why did it take so long to get it out?

I am afraid that with his response on Friday, he did not win me over and he certainly did not win any friends or most of my constituents. In fact, his comments on Friday probably led to more phone calls from constituents than I otherwise would have gotten. People were incensed by his comments on Friday. I know I heard from a lot of people, by e-mail, by phone, at the hockey rink -- even while waiting for a flu shot on Saturday. I called a number of people, too. Overwhelmingly, I was encouraged to support both committee motions.

Mr. Chairman, I am also concerned that something the Premier said in his comments on Friday may have set a standard for interpreting contract language among deputy ministers with this government. I am concerned about what is on the public record now.

On page 2694 of unedited Hansard, the Premier is quoted as saying:

On the years of service, for instance, that is the understanding that every deputy minister in this government has, that they will get one month for every year of service. Not the number of years they were a deputy minister, but the total number of years they served this government.

Mr. Chairman, one of the considerations and reasons that we have been given for the additional payment to Ms. Sorensen is we were trying to avoid any legal liability, should she decide to sue the government regarding her dismissal. Yet the Auditor General says in her report that both Ms. Sorensen and Mr. Bayly were employed under written contracts that stated that they were at pleasure employees, that they could be terminated for any reason and without cause, and that on termination, certain severance was to be paid.

I had thought, Mr. Chairman, that contracts were in place, employment contracts were in place to protect both the employee and the employer. So why put this kind of clause in if it does not have any effect?

We were told by the Premier that in spite of this language, I am assuming that all employment contracts have this kind of language, that we have had to give these large settlements. I would like to ask a question, Mr. Chairman, of our Law Clerk. If this is the kind of language that is in all other contracts for deputy ministers, is there a substantial risk to the government if this is the same language? I mean, is the language the same as what is found in, apparently, Ms. Sorensen's and Mr. Bayly's as reported by the Auditor General? If that is similar language to what is found in our deputy minister contracts right now, is there substantial risk to the government of having to pay more to our employees than what is stipulated in their contracts? Does the Law Clerk agree that the interpretation of the Auditor General is correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent is asking a question of the Law Clerk, Ms. Peterson.

LAW CLERK (MS. PETERSON): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The situation of being vulnerable to a lawsuit by an employee who has been terminated most often arises, almost always

arises, in certain situations. One, where there has been termination without cause, and secondly, where there has been termination without sufficient notice or severance in lieu of notice.

The provisions of these contracts that were indicated in the Auditor General's report indicates that the employees were employees at pleasure, who could be dismissed at any time, whose employment contracts could be terminated at any time, with or without cause, and that on termination of their contract, no matter what the reason for that termination, there would be certain severance payable to them, and that severance was specified in the contract.

So we are not dealing with a situation of an employee being terminated earlier than what their contract anticipated, or someone who is on an indefinite term being terminated without appropriate notice.

And I would be of the view that the government is entitled to rely on the provisions of that type of employment contract and the termination payment requirements contained in it in the same manner that the employees in this case are entitled to rely on the termination agreements which followed, which set out the severance payments that they are entitled to receive. There is a very important and well-known principle of contract law, which is the freedom of contract, where you can enter into a bargain and the bargain may be a good one or a poor one, but if it is entered into in contract law, it will be binding on both parties.

There has been some case law around this area. At pleasure contracts are often litigated in the courts and the authorities that I have had a chance to look at indicate that where there are specific terms in the contract that deal with termination with or without cause and with or without notice, which contain severance requirements, all parties are going to be bound and held to that. There would be some consideration question about why you would have those provisions if you are not entitled to rely on them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to make sure that I understood whether or not the interpretation had provided to the termination benefits in employment contracts would hold in the future. I am comforted that we can probably rely on the contracts themselves rather than an interpretation. Mr. Chairman, as I say I heard from an awful lot of people. I talked to an awful lot of people over the weekend and most of them felt that this issue and the way it was handled was the straw that broke the camel's back. About half of the people I talked to encouraged me to take up Mr. Handley's suggestion that we go early to the polls and at this point I am inclined to support that motion when it comes forward.

It has unfortunately taken the Premier too long to take responsibility. I have to say that one of the issues that I found really decisive in this for me was the merit pay. When the Premier on Friday provide the defence of they worked hard to explain why they were awarded maximum performance pay, it was just the wrong thing to say. When people are on the way out because of an unacceptable activity -- taping a phone call in a government office -- to say that they worked hard and deserved merit pay is wrong.

Mr. Chairman, based on that and my consultation I will maintain my position and support the committee motions. I too can do the numbers and it appears that the motion will fail if Cabinet is voting as a bloc, but I still think it is important to show the level of my dissatisfaction in this instance. I am glad though, and I have to say this, that the Premier is now taking responsibility, but why did he need the weekend to do the right thing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not know what we are accomplishing here today by repeating -- I think every Member has basically said the same thing as they said on Friday so I guess I will repeat my comments. My position has not changed. I think that a decision was made by the Premier that was a bad decision and was an error in judgment. However, it was based on advice that was received.

A concern for us as Members -- in March I believe it was Mr. Dent that had posed the question to our staff and their response was that we had an excellent core of advisors. We have experienced lawyers who are well versed in labour laws. These are the people that we have entrusted to guide us through. It proves that some of their advice was either not followed or it was not good advice. We are asking for the Premier's resignation, but maybe we should be looking at the staff to resign also, and our lawyers that provided this type of advice.

We are also hearing our MLAs. Many of them are at odds with their communities now. There are a lot of letters and phone calls going back and forth, so they are not taking their constituents' advice. Maybe they should resign also. Our conflict of interest committee has just found out that there is a ruling that provided they were wrong too. Should they resign? We are now in a process where we are probably going to have to pay out some money there.

Mr. Chairman, I, like just about everybody here, over the weekend was contacted and today, and maybe it is because of the positions we took on Friday. The majority of the people that contacted me -- I am not going to say all of them -- but the majority were in favour of keeping the Premier on. I was contacted by many of the community leaders from the different communities across the North, and many youth. I talked with several of the grand chiefs. A lot of them voiced concerns similar to what I had on Friday. A change in leadership now will affect many things, and we have to realize that not only the Legislative Assembly is affected when we remove a position such as the Premier.

Mr. Chairman, I said it before. A bad decision was made. A mistake was made. We cannot get the money back. What is it going to cost us if we remove the Premier, and does it end there? Who else has to resign? We have a motion that is going to be put on the floor that shows that it does not stop at only the Premier. We may be all facing an election, not that it is a bad thing. However, we have a lot of business on hand. Does that go by the wayside? The conflict of interest process has cost us over \$2 million. I was corrected the other day. My numbers added up to around \$2 million, but apparently it is more than that.

We have a number of reports that have yet to be tabled. If we are going to go to the polls, what happens to the Special

Committee on Languages? Where does their report go? Where is the Non-Tax-Based Committee that I chaired? Where does their report go? The sunset clause? We spent well over \$1.8 million on that. Are we going to put that by the wayside, just forget it and walk away? I worked hard for schools in my riding, for roads and different issues and initiatives. I have been working with the bridge project, the bridge committee. All that goes on hold if we go to the polls right now.

I am not afraid to go to the polls as many of you have said that is where we are going to end up, but I think we have to put some thought into it. If we are worried about wasting \$250,000 then we had better worry what it is going to cost us. It is going to cost us well over \$250,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. General comments. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I too had a lot of time to think over the weekend and also received a ton of calls. I think that at the end of the day I feel that in order to do the right thing and to do justice to not only this Legislature but to the people that we serve in the Northwest Territories, the only thing you really have besides your name is your credibility. Can he be trusted? Also what do you stand for as a person or an individual?

For myself I have been involved in politics in one way or another with regard to regional, community, territorial and now the Legislative Assembly for almost 18 years. One thing that you find in people is what do you stand for, what do you believe in and can you be trusted.

For myself I have been pressured to basically a point of being told to resign because of my stance on this issue. I will not resign because of something that I feel strongly about. Without the credibility of government, the top office in the land can do things over and above the rules, regulations, policies and processes and making the final unilateral decision by knowingly signing a contract that was not going to be signed by the principal secretary because she did not feel comfortable tells me that there was something wrong.

With regard to the justification for what I see happening is that I have gone through this in the 13th Assembly and it is not much different than having to go through an Auditor General's report or filing something with the Conflict Commissioner. At the end of the day my view is that what happened in the 13th Assembly does not even come close to what we are dealing with here today. Yes there were some irregularities with regard to things that happened, but with respect to Mr. Morin he made the right choice, did the right thing and he did resign, step aside. As a government we were able to move on. The Deputy Premier of the day filled in until we had a leadership review. The sky did not fall in. The government did not stop operating. Programs and services continued to be delivered.

Yet the threats are out there of how this government and the Territory as we know it is going to collapse around us. That is a myth. Everyone knows that the government is not run by the people in this room. The government is run by the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy of deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers, people with regard to the policy area, the administration area, the finance area. That is the real government. It is not the people sitting in this room. Yet the threats that are out there of how this is going to stall

negotiations, stall the relationship with communities, stall the relationship with the First Nation governments is outrageous.

When a Member of this Legislature is being threatened to resign if you do not support the Premier, to me it is no less than what you see in some third world countries. For him to go out of the way and make that suggestion to get support from communities is pathetic.

All I have in regard to life is who I am and what I believe in and what comes from my heart. I was totally offended when I got that information from my community leaders. When I spoke to the people who really count, our elders, the young people, people in our communities that all they want is a job. All they want is to have a roof over their heads. All they want is to have the ability to be able to get some programs out of this government without being told, 'Sorry, there is no money, can't help you, you don't meet our criteria, we have rules in place, you have to follow the rules.' But as a government we can break the rules anytime we feel like it.

For myself, on Friday I was basically totally sick to my stomach to see what was happening in this House. Sick to see some people opposite in regard to so-called Ministers making statements that they can live with what happened here. Yet the same Ministers are responsible to run our bureaucracy, to run our government. Everyone of us took an oath of office when we came in here, that we are not above the law.

What we do is under a microscope day in, day out. You leave here, every move you make is being followed or watched or spoken to by someone. I find it awfully hard to basically think that we can go ahead knowing that there has been some major problems in regard to how we deal with things.

We had an inquiry in regard to what happened in the 13th Assembly. There were tons of recommendations and reports and changes to rules and regulations of how deputy ministers will handle themselves, how deputy ministers deal with contracts, how the government as we know it will deal with individual contracts of staff and whatnot. They were put there for a reason, so that it would not happen again. That was the 13th Assembly. That was like yesterday.

Yet, what did we do? We break the same rules that were in place so that this would not happen again. Here we are, it has happened again.

I think that as a government and as a Legislative Assembly I think we have to look within ourselves to really see who we represent and exactly what do we stand for as individuals. I for one supported the Premier the last time around. Yes I was pressured by my leaders to support him, because I was under the understanding that the information that was being provided at the time was true, above board and was something that we had an obligation to do through a contract.

Now we find out through the Auditor General's report that the individual was supposed to be compensated for \$133,000 but instead we rip up that contract, write a new contract and give her a contract for \$404,000. On top of that, we put a binding wording in the agreement where we cannot take her to court or we cannot get that money back.

I think as a government to protect the so-called public purse and ensuring that we have the resources to run the

government and making sure it is being accounted for, I do not see it.

I for one did not expect to be going through this process once again, but I believe we have other avenues open to us. I do not think anyone has moved under the possibility of filing a complaint with the Conflict Commissioner, but the option is there. I think for me this goes right down to the moral question of trust. If we cannot trust the people that run our government then who can we trust?

I think we should all take a really good look at who do we really represent here? What about the seniors in our communities who cannot get fuel subsidies? What about the person that cannot get housing because we basically do not have the space? I think those are the people that really count in this society that we are in now, not developing a society so that it is top heavy, so that basically everything at the top is controlled by a few bureaucrats and we basically benefit a few of our so-called friends at the expense of everybody else.

Again, I would like to state that I am totally appalled at what is going on here and I will be supporting a motion asking for the Premier to resign. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. General comments. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I speak now only because I asked for the time last Friday for us to consider what is before us and consult if we need. I asked that we do this over the weekend. It seems that we all did make use of this time.

Mr. Chairman, in contacting my constituents I have to remind the Assembly here that I do not have the option of calling a meeting, going to visit my constituents over the weekend. It all has to be done by phone, and a lot of times when you finally talk to them they are not really fully aware of what is really going on up here. They remind me it is 800 miles away and that they are not the person on the spot.

They say they have put a lot of trust in their representatives, be it me or anybody else I suppose, and I would like to say one thing that none of my constituents were happy with what they heard was going on as far as the Auditor General report was concerned. None of them, but no one asked me to resign if I support the Premier. No one suggested I resign if I do not support the Premier.

What they said and made clear was, I am here, not them. I have to make a decision based on what I had before me, the information I have and what I believe is in the best interests of my riding and the Territory. That is what I intend to do, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. General comments. Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to make a couple more comments. I think it is very important that I bring out a couple points. We talked about this whole situation being an isolated incident, or not being an isolated incident, or is it why we are making our decision and what is it based on? Is it on this question?

Only I would like to just add a few things, Mr. Chairman. I have heard that in some comments today it seems to me I almost heard that I was sharing some information in the House on individuals' contracts. I want to clarify that I do not think I did that. I may have made reference to some conversations I had, I do not think I put any private information out here that I should not have. If I did, I am sorry, but I do not think I did.

One thing has bothered me all this time that these things have gone on, and I think it is an ongoing issue as to when you have trust and when you look at a Member that you have to work with and you have to respect, that sits across in a position of power to be able to make decisions for us in this House, and that you have to have the faith that you can work with those individuals and that they are going to support you as much as they are going to support anybody else in this House.

The last time that our Premier's leadership was questioned, we saw this gallery full of people. It was the only time in the three years that I have been in here that we saw the gallery full of people. Today, because the leadership of our Premier is in question again, the gallery is full again.

I think that I have to say this, that my position goes back a little bit further than just this one incident. It has to do back when this Assembly was full the last time, and the tactics that were used to pressure some Members in this House to make the decisions that were made. It is not in my practice, Mr. Chairman, to tape conversations, but I have one phone call that will not leave my mind.

As a Member of this Legislative Assembly, when I receive a phone call and I am told if you cannot stand up in this House and defend me and support me, you might as well pack your bags and go home. I wonder today if that same message is out there to every Member in this House, because it is a terrible way to try to run government, Mr. Chairman, and it goes a long way, for me, in making a decision. Can I support, go on, doing my job and think that I can represent my constituents in a fair, honest manner? It is a question I am having a hard time struggling with, Mr. Chairman.

I hope that because I stand by my principles, my morals, what I think is right, what I think is wrong, that I do not have to deal with somebody's wrath after, saying you did not support me, or you did not support us, so therefore, your constituents are going to suffer from it.

Mr. Chairman, my decision was made on my own, on my own beliefs, on the evidence that was before me. I am going to stick by my convictions because I have heard no excuse or no evidence in this House today that would make me change my mind in any way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. Delorey. General comments? Question has been called. Mr. Dent.

Committee Motion 36-14(5): To Accept the Auditor General's Conclusion Regarding Termination Compensation for Two Senior Officials (Carried)

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, I will give you a motion so that you have a question that you can pose. If you have no more speakers, I will propose now the committee motions. Mr. Chairman,

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Legislative Assembly accept the Auditor General's conclusion that the government did not handle the matter of termination compensation for two senior officials reasonably and with prudence.

Mr. Chairman, I would request that we have a recorded vote, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. The motion has been circulated. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please rise.

COMMITTEE CLERK (Mr. Inch): Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Steen, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Handley, Mr. Allen, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Delorey, Ms. Lee, Mr. Roland.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise. The results of the recorded vote is 14 for, none against, no abstentions. The motion is carried.

Committee Motion 37-14(5): That the Premier Submit his Resignation Forthwith as Premier and Member of the Executive Council (Defeated)

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will make the second committee motion now. Mr. Chairman,

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Premier submit his resignation forthwith as Premier and Member of the Executive Council.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I would request that we have a recorded vote.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): The motion is being circulated. The motion has been circulated. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour of the motion, please stand.

COMMITTEE CLERK (Mr. Inch): Mr. Dent, Mr. Bell, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Roland.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): All those against the motion, please stand.

COMMITTEE CLERK (Mr. Inch): Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Braden, Mr. Steen, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Handley, Mr. Allen, Mr. Ootes, Ms. Lee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): All those abstaining from the motion, please stand. The results of the vote: yes, 5; no, 10; abstentions, none. The motion has been defeated. Does the committee agree that consideration of Committee Report 11-14(5) is now concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Committee Report 11-14(5) is now concluded. We will now take a short break. We will be back in ten minutes.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. I call the committee back to order. As previously agreed we are considering Bill 26.

I would like to offer the Minister to bring in witnesses. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, I will bring in witnesses, thank you.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Agreed. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort in the witnesses. Mr. Handley, please introduce your witnesses for the record.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. The committee is now considering the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, operations expenditures, Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, special warrants, \$279,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 17, total department, \$279,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 18, Education, Culture and Employment, operations expenditures, directorate, administration, special warrants, \$115,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Advanced education and careers, \$190,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Not previously authorized, \$327,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Education and culture, \$1,467,000 special warrant.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Not previously authorized, \$4,925,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, \$1,772,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Not previously authorized, \$5,252,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 19, Transportation, operations expenditures, corporate services, special warrants, \$166,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Special warrants, airports, \$269,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Special warrants, highways, \$244,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Special warrants, ferries, \$18,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Special warrants, road licensing and safety, \$61,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Not previously authorized, \$121,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, special warrants, \$758,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Not previously authorized, \$121,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 20. Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, operations expenditures, corporate management, special warrants, \$255,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Environmental protection, special warrants, \$38,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Resource management and economic development, special warrants, \$473,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Special warrants, forest management, \$190,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, special warrants, \$956,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 21, Executive, capital investment expenditures, directorate, not previously authorized, \$100,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Government accounting, not previously authorized, \$200,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, not previously authorized, \$300,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 22, Public Works and Services, capital investment expenditures, asset management, not previously authorized, \$386,000. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I just want to ask a quick question regarding the Laing Building and how much money has been spent in the last little while on this project, total?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the total amount that has been spent on the building going back to 1991-1992, the base building cost of \$6,595,000 and tenant improvements of \$3,270,200.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Asset management, not previously authorized, \$386,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, \$386,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 23. Health and Social Services, capital investment expenditures, health services programs, not previously authorized, \$500,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Community health programs, not previously authorized, negative \$1,171,500.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, negative \$671,500, not previously authorized.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 24, Justice, capital investment expenditures, registries and court services, not previously authorized, \$432,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, not previously authorized, \$432,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 25, Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditure, advanced education and careers, not previously authorized, negative \$400,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Education and culture, negative \$905,000 not previously authorized.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, not previously authorized, negative \$1,305,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 26, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, highways, not previously authorized, \$2,250,000. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I get a breakdown on where this money is being proposed to be spent?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, all of this money, the \$2,250,000 will be spent on Highway No. 3. As part of the Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program, all of the money has to be spent on the national highway system. Highway No. 1 and Highway No. 3 are part of our national system. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Transportation, investment expenditures, highways, not previously authorized, \$2,250,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, not previously authorized, \$2,250,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 27, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, capital investment expenditures, resource management and economic development, not previously authorized, \$396,500. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I know that the standing committee has written the Minister asking that the new draft Business Incentive Policy not be implemented without further consultation. Do we actually need this \$50,000 unless we are going to implement the policy?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, this money is meant to help set up a better system for tracking all of the BIP contracts and contractors. I think whether we improve BIP or not, we would still need to improve on our tracking system.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have always been surprised at how long it takes us to get out our quarterly contracts listing, or our annual contracts listing. This \$215,000 is this going to purchase a database program that will enable us to get the information out on a more timely basis?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, it is meant to help us do that, primarily to address accountability and transparency issues that we need to make improvements on.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you. We seem to be running as much as six months behind in getting out the quarterly contract listings. What sort of an improvement in the timetable can we expect with this expenditure? Can we expect to see the contracts listing come out within a month after the end of the quarter?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Voytilla.

MR. VOYTILLA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This particular project does not relate to the payments over \$5,000 report which is the one I think that the Member is referring to. The payments over \$5,000 report is a report done by the FMBS from our financial information system database. We download from that database and restructure it to produce that report.

One of the reasons the report takes a little bit longer is because we have refined the payments categorization. Now when you get the report you will notice that it is broken down in much more detail as to the nature of the contracts, or nature of the payments, whether they are southern, northern as was our tradition but now we have got into a lot more of a finer analysis, hopefully to enhance the usability and the meaningfulness to the reader.

It does take us a little bit more time to generate that information.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that we are going to get more information, I think that is important, but timeliness is also essential. Is there nothing we can do to improve the timeliness of the reports we would get? That would be the first question. There is a second question that I wanted to ask, this \$215,000, is this fees to customize existing software or is this to purchase new software, sort of off the shelf database stuff that would probably provide us the information we need fairly easily?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Voytilla.

MR. VOYTILLA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first part of the Member's question is that we would expect to see the time lines shrink on producing the revised payments over \$5,000 report, simply because the latest one was the first time we had gone through the extra refinement on the information content, and it took us a bit longer than we had hoped to be able to do the work. Now that we have a process and a system in place, we expect the future reports to come out much more timely.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And to the second part of the question, which was is this new software or a revision to existing software?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, it is a new system, but we are not clear whether they intend to build it or buy it, so I really cannot answer the question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would be interested in that sort of detail, so if I could ask the Minister to advise me in

writing, some time in the not-too-distant-future, hopefully, on that sort of detail, I would appreciate it.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, we should be able to get an answer within a day. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, capital investment expenditures, resource management and economic development, not previously authorized, \$396,500.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Forest management, not previously authorized, \$125,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, not previously authorized, \$521,500.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Bill 26, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Schedule, part 1, vote 1, operations expenditures, total supplementary appropriation for operations expenditures, \$22,652,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Part 2, vote 2, capital investment expenditures, total supplementary appropriation for capital investment expenditures, \$1,913,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total supplementary appropriation, \$24,565,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): We will go back to the preamble, page 1. To the preamble.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Does the committee agree that Bill 26 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Bill 26 is now ready for third reading. Thank you, Minister Handley, and your staff. As previously agreed, we are considering Bill 1. Minister Allen. Mr. Delorey.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): There is a motion to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those against? The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of the committee of the whole. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Committee Report 11-14(5), and Bill 26, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2002-2003, and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted, that Committee Report 11-14(5) is concluded, and that Bill 26 is ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Weledeh seconds the motion. The motion is in order. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, meetings tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight; 10:30 of Caucus and of 12:00 noon of Governance and Economic Development.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, October 29, 2002:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions

5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
 - Motion 15-14(5): Request for Special Audit by the Auditor General of Canada on the North Slave Correctional Centre
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 20, Legal Registries Statutes Amendment Act
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - TD 35-14(5) Social Agenda: A Draft for People of the NWT
 - Bill 1, Human Rights Act
 - Bill 22, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act
 - CR 10-14(5), Report of the Standing Committee on Social Programs on Bill 1, Human Rights Act
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills

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

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, October 29th at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

