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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Sahtu)

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Friday, October 10, 2003

Members Present

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Good morning, colleagues. Bonjour. Before I begin the Orders of the Day, by the authority given the Speaker by Motion 4-14(6), the House is authorized to sit beyond the hours of daily adjournment today. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 111-14(6): Department Of Executive

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss in my duties as Premier if I did not take time during this final session of the 14th Legislative Assembly to acknowledge the efforts and achievements of a department that does not receive a great deal of recognition in this House, but one which is nonetheless instrumental in ensuring the overall coordination and management of government – the Department of Executive.

In my capacity as Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, and with the unflinching services of the Department of Executive, Cabinet has succeeded in placing the NWT on the national stage, raising our profile with our federal, provincial and territorial counterparts and, most importantly, establishing the linkage between a booming economy and the benefits to the nation. This positioning has helped to influence the growing national recognition that the territorial government must have greater access to revenues generated here, if we are to reach our goal of economic self-sufficiency. Meetings of First Ministers were used to build alliances with provinces and territories and unanimous support for devolution was gained from all.

On the intergovernmental relations front, we also worked hard to establish a solid working relationship with our northern partners. We signed a bilateral MOU with the Yukon, as well as a trilateral MOU amongst the three territories. Strengthening our northern voice has assisted in raising awareness about northern issues and the challenges northern governments face. For example, the unified approach that we northern Premiers took at the First Ministers meeting was critical in ensuring an additional \$20 million per territory for health care, as well as convincing Canada that per capita funding for federal programs does not help the territories, where populations are small and program delivery costs are huge.

Our relationships with Premiers across the country has never been stronger and it has resulted in their support for devolution and initiatives such as the national diamond strategy. Furthermore, we will be hosting the 2004 annual Western Premiers conference in Inuvik next July.

One important role played by the Department of Executive is the corporate leadership and government-wide support offered to departments. Managers in the Executive chair interdepartmental committees whose purpose is to ensure that information is shared, to promote excellence in their respective fields and to solidify cross-departmental relationships.

The department assists with the development of the strategic, policy and communications aspects of overall government-wide strategies such as the energy strategy, maximizing northern employment, the social agenda and the development of the national diamond strategy – a strategy developed by all provinces and territories and spearheaded by the NWT and Quebec.

As well, the Executive provides leadership in communicating about the government's agenda. The Executive produces the monthly Bear Facts newsletter, to keep our public service informed and connected. It manages the GNWT's Web site and visual identity program. As well, it provides an exemplary protocol service for visiting dignitaries from all over the world. In the past four years, we have planned or played host to over 50 protocol events, ranging from the visits of foreign ambassadors, high commissioners and consul generals to those of Canadian foreign service officers, heads of diplomatic missions and Canadian high commissioners, ambassadors and federal Ministers. With each visit comes an opportunity to promote an increased understanding of the NWT, its goals and aspirations and the opportunities we have to offer.

Through its Cabinet Secretariat, the Executive provides quality advice and analysis that is intrinsic to the Cabinet decision-making process. The thorough examination of all matters and issues that were brought before Cabinet is another assurance that sound decision-making, based on solid information and analysis, remains a cornerstone of governmental processes.

The Executive has provided corporate human resource support through the delivery of a number of innovative programs. The management assignment program, designed to help develop skills of existing employees to better prepare them for management and senior management is now underway. We had 101 applications this year. This group was reduced to 29 who are in the final assessment phase. Twenty will join the existing five participants. This innovative program is one means of providing training and career advancement opportunities within our public service.

A new employee recognition program was launched. It updated the long service and retirement programs, added departmental recognition programs and introduced the Premier's Award for Excellence, which celebrates excellence in public service. We have honoured the recent recipients of this award during this session.

Additionally, we have made strides in standardizing GNWT training in both human resources and in general management skills areas such as staffing and writing decision papers.

These training opportunities are being delivered in all regional centres on a regular basis.

In terms of building the public service of tomorrow, highly successful student and graduate employment programs have been put in place. The graduate employment program, in place for the past two years, has seen over 200 new graduates of diploma and degree programs find initial employment in the NWT in their fields of study. A good cross-section of communities were represented among the graduates and placements. Over 90 percent of these graduates remained in relevant jobs following their initial placements. On the student side, increased coordination has resulted in over 300 students hired in each of the last two summers, one-third of whom were regional placements.

To support staff retention, we introduced a standard exit interview process for those changing jobs or leaving government. The first year of this new process has been completed and a report released on the results. These results will help the GNWT to become an even better employer and improve the retention of our valuable staff.

We have also done a variety of things to improve coordination and consistency in human resource practices across government. This has resulted in regular sharing of information among human resource officers and managers, regular reporting to deputy ministers and improved guidelines and procedures in a number of areas including a complete overhaul of the staffing procedures.

Mr. Speaker, the staff members of the Department of Executive are a hard-working and dedicated group of employees whose talents help ensure the continued smooth operations of the machinery of government. It has been my pleasure to work with them as Premier and I thank them again for their efforts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Minister's Statement 112-14(6): Tourism Marketing Campaign

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, the tourism industry has worked hard over the past 14 years to promote the Northwest Territories as the premier Aurora viewing destination for Japanese tourists.

Since 1989 when 80 Japanese tourists came to view the aurora borealis, the industry has grown to a peak of just over 13,000 visitors during the winter of 2000-2001, who spent \$20 million in the Northwest Territories.

Unfortunately, the growth in this industry came to an abrupt halt with the impact of September 11, 2001. After the tragic events of that day, the number of aurora tourists from Japan dropped dramatically and spending dropped by \$11.2 million. The SARS and BSE outbreaks and the war in Iraq have also impacted the Japanese aurora viewing market and resulted in further revenue losses of \$2.6 million.

Mr. Speaker, Members of this Assembly have recognized that without intervention by this government and our tourism partners the recovery of the Aurora viewing market would not be assured. Many businesses now depend on Japanese

tourism spending, which amounts to about \$1600 per visitor. Any further erosion of this delicate tourism market will have severe impacts on many northern businesses. This government is committed to working with our partners to ensure the Japanese people know the Northwest Territories is a safe and healthy place to visit.

For this reason, I am pleased that the Legislative Assembly agreed yesterday to provide a supplementary appropriation of \$250,000 for a targeted marketing campaign this winter in Japan promoting the Northwest Territories as a safe tourism destination. This investment will lever additional funding from our partners including the Canadian Tourism Commission and industry, bringing the total budget for the campaign to more than \$500,000.

The Northwest Territories Arctic Tourism Association and the Canadian Tourism Commission, in consultation with our major Japanese tour operators, are developing the campaign. The campaign is targeted specifically at the large wholesale tour industry and will include five components: media familiarization tours; travel trade familiarization tours; sales visits; participation at the Japanese tour operators Kanata marketplace; and, print media campaign. The aim is to rekindle interest in Japanese travelers coming to the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that by working together with our tourism industry partners we can bring the aurora viewing tourism industry back to, and even surpass, its previous levels and expand this industry throughout the Northwest Territories. This additional funding is good news for our tourism industry and will be welcomed at the upcoming 2003 Northwest Territories Arctic Tourism Association annual general meeting and tourism conference that will be held in Inuvik on November 6 to 8. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Minister's Statement 113-14(6): Departmental Achievements

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to talk today about some of the achievements of the Department of Justice during the 14th Legislative Assembly.

The department had many significant legislative achievements during the 14th Assembly, including the Human Rights Act and National Aboriginal Day Act. The Human Rights Act is one of the most comprehensive in Canada and everyone in this Assembly shares in this achievement. Other legislative achievements include the Personal Property Security Act, Powers of Attorney Act, raising the minimum wage, and increasing the small claims court limit. These legislative changes support our growing economy and the ability of residents to control their own affairs.

I am pleased that the Protection Against Family Violence Act and Youth Justice Act have been given third reading this final session.

During this Legislative Assembly, the department expanded its community justice program. Working in partnership, we have seen the number of communities involved in justice activities double over the last four years. The community justice program is an alternative to the justice system, encouraging

offenders to accept responsibility of their actions and face their community. By next year, all communities will receive funding from the department to hire a part-time justice coordinator.

Mr. Speaker, considerable work has gone into modernizing the corrections system. We have created a corrections system that is safe, secure and focused on community support and reintegration. The department is using wilderness camps, alternative homes and traditional counsellors to help transition offenders back into their communities.

The department assumed responsibility for probation, expanding it into a community corrections program. With community corrections workers in eleven communities, the department is better able to supervise offenders and assist them in returning to their communities.

The third step in modernizing our corrections system has been the construction of new facilities to replace old, outdated centres. These facilities use new supervision techniques and provide an environment more reflective of aboriginal culture and values to support the rehabilitation of offenders.

Mr. Speaker, improvements have been made to other parts of the justice system as well. In the area of family law, the department has brought together all family programs under the supervision of one person. This has resulted in improvements to both legislation and the maintenance enforcement program. It has also resulted in the delivery of positive parenting programs in Inuvik, Yellowknife and Fort Smith, and support for a new collaborative approach to family law.

The department has also worked with the RCMP to improve the level of police services in the Northwest Territories. During the last four years, the department has provided resources for a new restorative justice coordinator in the RCMP, and to add an additional officer to all single-member detachments.

The department worked to prepare for implementation of the federal government's Youth Criminal Justice Act. This act complements the NWT's existing practice of diverting offenders into the community justice system. The department provided training and materials for all justice partners, including communities to prepare them for the larger role they will play in the system.

The final achievement I would like to highlight today relates to the role of the Department of Justice as the government's "in-house law firm," providing legal advice to government departments. The changing political and economic environment of the Northwest Territories has increased demand for legal advice and support from the department. The department's legal team played important roles in self-government, devolution and land claim negotiations over the past four years, and will continue to do so.

Also, Mr. Speaker, the department's legislation division has worked with both the Legislative Assembly and all departments to meet the active legislative agenda of the 14th Assembly while ensuring our laws meet the needs of citizens.

These are just some highlights of the many achievements of the Department of Justice, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for the opportunity to talk about them.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Minister's Statement 114-14(6): RWED Achievements

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide the Members of the Legislative Assembly with highlights of the major initiatives that the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has undertaken over the past four years.

Resources

The management of our renewable resources, which includes wise use, relates directly to the health of our environment and our economy. RWED has worked hard to promote the management and use of fur, forest, agriculture, et cetera. Mr. Speaker, I recently provided an update on our fur program and the results we are achieving.

We have also worked steadily at improving our forest inventories which need constant updating and are the basis for determining sustainable harvest levels. We are involving aboriginal governments through the development of forest management agreements. In addition, over 670,000 tree seedlings were planted through contracts with communities over the past four years to help renew our forests.

To assist our farming sector, Mr. Speaker, our government has signed the national agricultural policy framework agreement for the 21st Century, and a bilateral agricultural accord that will lever funding from the federal government. Members are also aware of the activities we undertook to deal with the recent outbreak of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, BSE.

Wildlife

The department is responsible for maintaining healthy wildlife populations. Earlier this year, the department initiated the western NWT biophysical study. This \$1 million project will gather baseline data to measure and mitigate the impact of natural gas development on wildlife and wildlife habitat.

We continue to support harvesting of our healthy wildlife populations. Over the past four years, the western NWT harvester assistance program, which promotes community driven, renewable resource harvesting initiatives has committed almost \$1.8 million to 23 qualified organizations, who match our contribution as a condition of participation.

As well, we have worked over the past four years to renew our Wildlife Act and develop a Species at Risk Act. Aboriginal governments and the public have been intimately involved in providing advice so that the proposed legislation will be compatible with land claim agreements and address the concerns with the existing legislation.

Environment

We have taken a number of measures over the past four years to protect and enhance the quality of our land, air and water. The proposed Waste Reduction and Recovery Act will allow us to establish programs that should reduce materials going to landfills and littering the land. Under the protected areas strategy, communities continue to identify land and processes to protect important areas.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 349(6) so that all Ministers' statements filed with the Clerk can be delivered today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive the rules pertaining to the timing of the Ministers' statements, so that they may conclude the remaining ministerial statements for today. There are no nays, Mr. Minister, you may conclude your statement.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Under the protected areas strategy, communities continue to identify land and processes to protect important areas. Last year, lands were withdrawn for protection in the Edzshie or Horn Plateau. Currently, nine protected area candidate initiatives are in progress. In addition, the PAS Implementation and Advisory Committee recently approved a five-year management plan in partnership with the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development that will see more than \$17 million invested to protect areas of significant value in the Northwest Territories prior to the construction of a pipeline.

Climate change is also of great concern to territorial residents. The department developed both the greenhouse gas strategy and the energy strategy to encourage residents, businesses and governments to conserve energy and develop affordable and sustainable sources of energy. We have taken a leading role on behalf of this government to work with other Canadian governments toward the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, which will curb the emission of these gasses on a global level. We continue to develop and adopt new standards, under our Environmental Protection Act, to manage air quality.

In the past two years, the department has coordinated our government's participation in eight major environmental assessments relating to proposed tungsten, diamond, forestry and oil and natural gas developments. The environmental assessment unit was formed this year to help coordinate more effective environmental assessment.

In addition, the department negotiated and signed the Yukon-NWT trans-boundary water management agreement in February 2002, to facilitate closer cooperation and more effective management of shared water resources.

Economic Development

The rapid growth of the NWT economy has provided for many economic opportunities. We have many success stories we could report on.

Mr. Speaker, we began with the creation of the Common Ground Economic Strategy Panel, which undertook a comprehensive review of the NWT economy and recommended actions to foster continued economic growth. The strategy provided a foundation for specific actions in a wide range of areas, including access to capital. We then worked through the Business Program Review Panel to develop a "single window" approach to deliver our government's business development services. Draft legislation and recommended actions have been developed for the next government. We also took into account recommendations from the Bankers' Commission in order to remedy the chronic shortage of capital that hampers economic development in the NWT.

Through our business programs, we have provided the following assistance over the past four years:

- \$10.1 million contributed through the business development fund;
- an increase of 33.3 percent in jobs established through subsidiaries or investments made by the Northwest Territories Development Corporation;
- establishment of the NWT opportunities fund, which provides access to additional capital under the new federal immigrant investor program;
- distribution of over 2000 copies of a new booklet on "How to Start a Business in the NWT" through the Canada/NWT Business Service Centre and community futures organizations;
- over \$2.28 million provided since 2001 through the private partnership fund to territorial businesses to maximize northern employment in resource development;
- socio-economic agreements with diamond producers to access rough diamonds and business support to approved manufacturers in order to establish a value-added diamond cutting and polishing industry. We set up the world's first polished diamond certification program, and we developed a world-class diamond cutting training program that attracts students from every corner of the globe.

We also want to see aboriginal businesses grow and mature. Two highlights are:

- signing of the Gwich'in memorandum of understanding to give aboriginal businesses in the Gwich'in settlement area greater opportunity to participate in government contracting. To date, our overall contracting goals in this area have been exceeded, with a total of \$4.2 million in contracts being awarded to Gwich'in businesses;
- financial and political support for the Aboriginal Pipeline Group, which Mackenzie Delta Gas Producers Group to secure a one-third ownership share of a Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline for aboriginal governments.

We have promoted our tourism industry which has faced severe challenges in recent years. I spoke earlier of our recent actions in this area. As well, an NWT tourism strategy was developed in cooperation with the industry. A comprehensive tourism exit survey and report was conducted last year to create more accurate market data for the industry, and a tourism marketing conversion assessment was completed to provide an accurate and useful analysis of the effectiveness of tourism media advertising campaigns.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has been active and vigilant in conserving and protecting our natural environment, while fostering the prudent and sustainable development of both renewable and non-renewable resources. We have also played an important role in providing meaningful career opportunities for the young people of the Northwest Territories. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Minister's Statement 115-141(6): Departmental Successes

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your understanding, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, "Towards a Better Tomorrow" states, "Our ultimate goal is to improve the quality of life for all people in the NWT." With that goal in mind, I would like to briefly highlight some of the initiatives and accomplishments by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment during the 14th Legislative Assembly.

Early Childhood

In our early childhood education area, Mr. Speaker, to ensure the youngest members of our population have a positive start in life, we have:

- provided funding for 15 language nests – a program whereby the elders and community language speakers work with preschoolers to develop and encourage aboriginal languages, and
- funded the northern parenting and literacy program in conjunction with the NWT Literacy Council – workshops and community family activities in three communities, including training of 150 family literacy coordinators.

Initiatives such as these have been critical to laying a foundation for our youngest citizens to becoming literate and able to prepare them for school.

Kindergarten To Grade 12

For all our kindergarten to Grade 12 students, Mr. Speaker, we have completed initiatives that we feel have not only improved students' ability to learn, but have assisted our teachers and administration to better perform their important task of assisting our youth to be the best they can. These initiatives include:

- lowering our pupil to teacher ratio to 16 to 1;
- initiation of the student success initiative to provide funding for school-based projects; and,
- increase of student supports funding.

Adult And Post-Secondary Education

Mr. Speaker, a GNWT-wide literacy strategy has been developed during the life of this Assembly to ensure that each and everyone in our communities has the opportunity to learn to read, write and perform basic math skills in any of our eleven official languages. This literacy strategy has provided increased access to basic education for adults across the NWT.

Also during this term, we have introduced significant changes to the student financial assistance program to provide increased levels of funding for post-secondary students to help them meet the increased costs of education.

Training And Employment

Mr. Speaker, through the support of all Members of the 14th Legislative Assembly, we have supported training and employment for Northerners, including:

- the maximizing northern employment initiative to help ensure that the people of the North are employed and actively involved sharing the wealth in the NWT;

- our labour force development plan to assist northern workers to develop the skills and knowledge needed to secure employment;
- NWT mining industrial skills and NWT oil and gas strategy proposals to the federal government for a northern workforce to be employed in each respective industry; and,
- socio-economic agreements to ensure northern participation in major resource sectors.

Income Support

To ensure that Northerners who require some help in making ends meet, ECE has:

- increased benefits to income assistance clients;
- expanded the provision of childcare subsidies for after school and summer breaks;
- ensured that income support clients are able to clearly understand their entitlements and their responsibilities through the development of informational guides and a Web site, both developed in plain language.

Culture, Heritage And Language

Mr. Speaker, our last area of responsibility blankets all other initiatives throughout our department. To help Northerners celebrate and demonstrate our culture and heritage including our languages, we have:

- increased support for creative arts projects and our support for northern performers and initiated, as a result of our arts panel response, the development of an integrated arts strategy;
- implemented the aboriginal languages strategy to set goals, objectives and implementation plans for meeting aboriginal language responsibilities; and,
- spearheaded the work required to form the GNWT Response to the Special Committee's Report on the Review of the Official Languages Act, a response that outlines approaches to supporting all the official languages of the Northwest Territories.

These are accomplishments of the department, Mr. Speaker, but I would like to stress that they would not have been possible without the direction provided by Members. The questions, suggestions, criticisms and general input of Members, whether in the House, or in standing or special committee have been invaluable in moving us towards these accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, this is the last session in which I will have the honour of being the Minister of this department and a Member of this House. I can say unequivocally that I am proud of the many things we have accomplished.

I would like to thank all Members of the 14th Legislative Assembly, my staff who have assisted me throughout my past four years, officials in my department and throughout government, as well as all industry non-government organizations, aboriginal governments and community governments. Together, we have all helped to improve the quality of life for all Northerners. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Development Of The NWT Tourism Industry

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was happy to hear Minister Antoine's statement on tourism marketing today. The Minister listed the factors that have been having a negative impact on the tourism industry in the Northwest Territories. There's been a great deal of focus on developing our non-renewable resources lately and that's right. It's the thing we need to do because this sector has been the biggest driver of growth in our economy of late.

Mr. Speaker, the tourism industry is also a huge contributor to the NWT economy and a major player in the NWT's GDP. Our hotels, restaurants and other small businesses rely on tourism dollars and, Mr. Speaker, guiding brings dollars into many northern communities. Unfortunately, the industry has struggled for many years for their fair share of government support. We are lucky to have the kind of natural wilderness that attracts tourists from all over the world. As the Minister noted in his statement today, in recent years there's been strong growth in the aurora market attracting Japanese visitors every year. The North's abundant wildlife also attracts many sport hunters and fisherman who pay premium dollars to participate in a true northern adventure.

Mr. Speaker, the continued trend towards eco-tourism and cultural tourism can only be good news for the Northwest Territories. We still have vast areas of unspoiled wilderness and our outfitters are ready and able to bring in visitors to experience the pristine wilderness of the NWT.

The strength and uniqueness of northern culture offers a remarkable experience for visitors to the Northwest Territories and provides employment for people in our smaller communities. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to hear the Minister's announcement of the \$500,000 campaign to market aurora tourism in Japan, but there needs to be even more support for the industry to survive the current downturn and to expand its product. The economic impact of tourism cannot be underestimated whether it's viewing the northern lights, rafting the Nahanni River or tracking caribou, our tourist visitors leave behind many dollars in our territory.

Mr. Speaker, it would be an important challenge for the 15th Assembly to see whether they can properly support the tourism industry so they can achieve its full potential. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Reflections On The 14th Legislative Assembly

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's been interesting to hear over the last few days the Ministers' remarks on the achievements the departments have made over the life of this government. There are many accomplishments

that we can stand up as Members of the 14th Assembly and talk about the work that's been done.

Mr. Speaker, we've also had our dark days in this Assembly but, as we've heard, we've come through it to the end of the days as Members of this 14th Assembly. Something I have always looked at, Mr. Speaker, is when members of my community sent me to work on their behalf, they did so knowing that I stood up and would represent them to the best of my ability on whatever issues would come forward and to respect their wishes and not to put name tags on them or put them in sections or categories of people, but to try to represent them as a whole community. Mr. Speaker, that's important because I stand here in this Assembly as a Member of a public government of the Northwest Territories representing all people in the Northwest Territories, not just one group of people versus another group. That's very important, Mr. Speaker, as we travel down this road that we are on. As the next government is put forward by the people of the Northwest Territories, all those using their democratic right to put an "X" beside an individual's name must do so looking forward to what leadership would be put here and the decisions they would make.

Mr. Speaker, it's important that we continue to work to the benefit of the people in these last days. I think you will see that by the amount of legislation that's been passed. It impacts people across the North. Mr. Speaker, when we stand in this House to represent people, we must remember we represent all people across the Northwest Territories who live in our communities. I would hold that up to all Members as a measure that we use not only for ourselves but for others in this House and other leaders across this land. Thank you.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Acknowledgment Of Mackenzie Delta Constituents

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to take this opportunity to thank my constituents to have the opportunity to have been their voice in this Legislative Assembly for the last four years. I have served two terms.

Mr. Speaker it's not often we get to thank the people who have put us here, but today I would like to do that, especially the elders, the youth, the community leaders and those people who we serve everyday. Mr. Speaker, without having that connection to the people we serve and having the ability to be able to contact them and help them out with their problems, their issues, and our community leaders have challenges along with us to assist them to improve the lives of those people who we serve. That is key. We are here to serve the people, not for them to serve us. It's an opportunity that one is blessed with to be able to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I have always strived to improve the lives of the people I serve in the Mackenzie Delta communities and to be able to stand here knowing that when I speak, I am not speaking for myself, I am speaking because someone has asked me to raise an issue, to make a problem either go away with the help of the Ministers on the other side and not just stand here and rant and rave day in and day out and hope someone is listening. Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that that opportunity we have to serve also means we, as a government,

have to change the whole system. We have to ensure that we are listening as elected officials and that the government across the hall is hearing what we are saying.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a real honour to serve two terms in this House for the people of the Mackenzie Delta and deal with the challenges we have and the many we have ahead of us such as pipeline development, self-government arrangements...

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his Member's statement. Are there any nays? Mr. Krutko, you may conclude.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, in the Mackenzie Delta, we are facing many challenges such as oil and gas development, pipeline construction and negotiations for a regional self-government agreement. Mr. Speaker, all that doesn't mean anything unless the individuals we represent in our communities can see a change or improvement in their lives and in not having to cope with the stresses that we, as a government, should be managing. In most cases, those are the issues that are raised in this House.

Mr. Speaker, the programs and services we deliver as a government are our responsibility to ensure that they are being delivered fairly, equitably and to all residents of the Northwest Territories, especially, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we work for the benefit of all our people.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I'd like to thank my constituents again and I look forward to serving for another four years. Thank you.

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

Member's Statement On Honouring Commitments To The North Slave Region

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier made reference to the comment he made in Rae-Edzo. On August 25th, in front of the Prime Minister, in front of all the government officials and witnesses to the signing of the Tlicho land claim, he stated, if you take care of the Tlicho, the Tlicho will take care of you. The Premier went on to say that these words apply to this government in particular.

Mr. Speaker, these are strong words. Unfortunately, over the past four years I have seen numerous government studies, plans and reports dating back 10 years which have overlooked the North Slave riding. Some of these documents and studies include the highway strategy, Corridors to Canada document, the energy strategy, and the Health and Social Services action plan.

Mr. Speaker, last week in the House the Premier acknowledged my relentless pursuit over the past four years for improvements on Highway No. 3 and road access to the smaller communities in my region. Has Cabinet listened and responded? No. The highway is still in terrible shape and there are still no plans for roads to the small communities.

Mr. Speaker, there is an opportunity for the Premier to go beyond lip service with his reference to a strong partnership

with the Tlicho. As this Assembly is winding down, transition documents are being created for the next Assembly. I urge the Premier to make sure that the best interests of the North Slave are considered by including in this document:

- plans for an addiction centre in the North Slave;
- policy changes for housing programs;
- changes to the highway strategy; and,
- the establishment of health service delivery standards throughout the North.

These are all areas which I have brought up. These are areas of ongoing concern. When he talked about the land claim, the Premier commented that the Tlicho have taken a bold step to say we were partnered with this government. I only hope that this government will walk with the people of the North Slave and ensure that they are included in government plans, strategies and reports. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Recognition Of Youth, Family And Constituency Assistant

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as this is our last time in this House together as Members of the 14th Legislative Assembly, and seeing as Thanksgiving is this coming weekend, I thought it would be appropriate to give well-deserved recognition and thanks to various individuals.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by giving thanks to our youth. We are blessed in Hay River with having some fine examples of youth excelling in their chosen endeavors. One fine example of this, Mr. Speaker, are the three young people from Hay River who recently participated in an extremely intensive Canadian Forces program called the aboriginal entry program.

Mr. Speaker, the three youths are Robert Lafleur, Brandon Starcevic and Angel Asels. Brandon has been accepted into the Canadian Navy and Robert has been accepted into the Canadian Army. Both Robert and Brandon are currently in the throes of their 10-week basic training program before they commence a three-year tour with the Canadian Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, I am a strong supporter of seeing our youths succeed. Therefore, I would like to recognize and thank them for their commitment and dedication and wish them continued success.

As all 19 Members of this House are aware, Mr. Speaker, our four-year terms of office are an arduous process and we couldn't possibly accomplish what we do without the tremendous support of our beloved families. Mr. Speaker, our family's constant support is what keeps us going. As I do in every day of my life, I would like to give enormous thanks this time to my wife, Davida; my daughters, Michelle, Monique and Katrina; and my son, D'Arcy.

Mr. Speaker, also at this time, I would like to thank and recognize a very special young lady who has been an enormous help to me over the past four years: my constituency assistant, Ms. Debra Mageean. She has been extremely dedicated to my office and has been a strong link

between my constituents and myself, especially when I've been away on government business.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by saying that I have thoroughly enjoyed my four-year term of office here representing the interests of my constituents of Hay River North. I give thanks every day for their continued support and I look forward for the next month or so being in very close contact with all my constituents. Hopefully I will be here to represent them for another four years, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Passing Of Elders In Tu Nedhe

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my riding has lost quite a bit this past week. Yesterday, Marie Casaway – known as Marie-Louise, but better known as Granny – passed away in Lutselk'e. I spoke earlier in the week about a lady passing away in Deninu Kue. Combined, Mr. Speaker, we lost 195 years of life experience.

Marie was born in 1908 and when I was born, Mr. Speaker, just to give you an idea of how old this lady was, she was just collecting the old age pension. That was 36 years ago. She was a woman who had many children and many grandchildren and many more great-great-grandchildren. A woman who is known to our government because our government has been helping to pay for her care in the community. Members of my community in Lutselk'e did not want to send her to an old age home in Yellowknife or anyplace else. In that sense, Mr. Speaker, she became everyone's granny in Lutselk'e.

I'd like to celebrate her life with the Members. I will be going home tomorrow and celebrating in mourning her life with my community as well. A woman that stays with you that long has an effect on everybody in the community. Everybody called her Granny and it's not too often that you find a woman that lives long enough for everyone to adopt as their granny. It's a sad day for the community, for the region and, again, Mr. Speaker, we lost a wise old lady who helped many peoples, including many generations.

I'd like to officially thank her on behalf of my constituents in the people's House here today. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Condolences go the family of Granny Casaway. As a young social worker I had the pleasure of knowing her and learning from her advice way back in the 1960s. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement On Fairness To Income Support Recipients

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seeing as this is our last day I'd like to raise the issue facing our income support residents of the Northwest Territories and more specifically the disabled residents of the Northwest Territories one more time. That issue is the clawback of certain dollars in the support system that are intended for the disabled.

Mr. Speaker, these individuals currently have a program called the community living benefit program to assist in meeting their daily needs. This entitles them to income support, including

\$300 for their disability needs. Like any other income assistance recipients, all other income is deducted from their monthly payments. With the high cost of living in the North and after all the deductions, this leaves these people in a financial situation of poverty that's difficult to work your way out of.

Under the income support program, the allowable income without interference is \$200 for singles and \$400 for families on a monthly basis. Everyone has debts and other essential needs and these debts are not considered as basic need expenses. Consequently, these expenses are deducted from their monthly payments.

Mr. Speaker, also, all other federal and territorial funded programs are deducted from the recipients. Many of these programs are intended to address child poverty or career development. These programs become meaningless if they're not received by the very people they're targeted for. After reviewing an Alberta government guide for assured income for the severely handicapped, also known as the AISH program, which entitles the handicapped to medical and financial benefits, I see that in that province these benefits are assured if your disability impairs your ability to earn a living and is modified based on the severity of the disability.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta government enables those in poverty to better their lifestyles by exempting certain incomes, such as Canada child tax benefit under the Canadian Income Tax Act; death benefits under the Canadian Pension Plan; land claim settlement payments; grants intended to enhance employability; and also allows an income of \$400 for each child receiving maintenance.

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

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

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, in Alberta, these exemptions allow the families that are experiencing financial difficulties to get back on their feet without jeopardizing essential needs. It may also be the key to recipients relying less on income support payments.

Mr. Speaker, with the program we have in place compared to the AISH program, our disability assistance recipients fall short of their needs. I'm especially concerned for the disabled with terminal illnesses. They have to worry about finances that are not being covered under current benefits. Some don't qualify for any special benefits. Mr. Speaker, this government has to change their attitude towards the people on income support, especially towards our disabled residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Appreciation For Colleagues, Constituency Assistant And Family

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this being the last day of session for the 14th Assembly, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues in this House for the pleasure of having worked with them for the past four years. As I've said before, it's a very unique working environment. We've spent a lot of time together. Sometimes we agree and sometimes we don't. But we attempt to maintain a high level of decorum so that everyone can express themselves and feel that their input is valued and heard.

At the end of the day, we are all here for the same reason. We want to ensure the best outcomes for our constituents and the people of the North, where our decisions, programs and services impact on their lives. In that sense, it's an awesome responsibility.

I would like to thank my constituents in Hay River for allowing me this opportunity to be their voice in this legislature and I know that they expect me to do this to the best of my ability and I trust that I have done that.

I would like to thank my awesome constituency assistant, Wendy Morgan, for all of her help and support. I would also like to thank my honourable colleague from Hay River North. I supported his bid for this job. He is my MLA. I voted for him and I have not been disappointed.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank my family: my husband, Rick, who's here today; my children, Jordan and his wife Kathleen, my son Jeffrey and his wife Kandace, and my very opinionated and ever-active daughter Jillian. As our children grow up and pass different milestones like graduations and weddings, it's a reality check for us and a stark reminder that time marches on. Jillian was in Grade 1 when I was elected the first time and now she's in Grade 9. By the way, Mr. Speaker, might I say she's serving her third consecutive year as class president. I've had serious competition for willpower with her, but I think that Mommy is still the boss.

As we watch our family grow it gives us cause to reflect on the choices that we've made and the choices that we will continue to make in the future. Life is precious and time is valuable and I'm always conscious of an admonition of my late father. One of them was, let's make the day count for something. In other words, get up and get to work. Even though we won't always fully understand or realize all the consequences of our decisions or our work until we're some ways down the road, I'm thankful for the privilege that I've had of representing Hay River and working for my constituents. Working in this environment and in this capacity is not something that I would trade and I hope to be back.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to just quickly conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member seeking unanimous consent to conclude her Member's statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss today if I did not also thank God for all of his blessings. Whether we choose to acknowledge it or not, any skill or talent that we have we can thank Him for. I would like to end my statement with a verse from the Bible which answers the

question of what was required of Israel at the time. Michael was a prophet and he said, "He has showed you, oh, Man, what is good and what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." This is my prayer for myself and for our government: to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Education And Training For Northerners

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought today about issues I might like to highlight in my last Member's statement. I think for me it was an easy choice. I wanted to again remind us of our challenge and that is to ensure that we can do everything we can for the people of the Northwest Territories in terms of education and training.

It's no secret that many of the discussions we've had as a legislature have been difficult. They've been tough discussions, but they've been about the sense that there's a growing disparity between the have and the have-not communities of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that more than anything education and training can be the great equalizer. I think that if our education system across the Territories is successful then opportunities will open up for everyone. Yesterday I mentioned the program south of the border, the bill, Leave No Child Behind. I think our education system has to leave no community behind.

---Applause

I think, Mr. Speaker, we did a good job as an Assembly. When we started we put a lot of money into the pupil/teacher ratio. I'm proud of that, but I think we can do more especially in terms of student supports, Mr. Speaker. I also believe that if there was an area that we've fallen short of in education, it certainly, I think, is in terms of trades and apprenticeship. We did have much discussion about the need to meet the opportunities for jobs that are becoming more and more available in the Territories, but we really need to look at our priorities and, I believe, spend more effort encouraging young people to enter this area of employment and ensure that we put the resources there so that our young people across the Territories can get training.

Mr. Speaker, speaking of resources, another program that I think we seriously need to improve is our student financial assistance. It has come some way and four years ago I remember discussions about student financial assistance, if you can believe it, not recognizing distance learning. We are there now, but we need to continue to improve its flexibility. I've had constituents come to me who wanted to go to cooking school, take real estate training, financial services training and our program simply didn't meet them half way, Mr. Speaker. It seemed to be more concerned that they were attending a typical university program in the South, two semesters a year, a certain number of hours a day. Mr. Speaker, we have to get out of that mindset so that we can meet the needs of all of our residents. I certainly hope the next government will make that a priority. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Significance Of The NWT Tourism Industry

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The tourism industry, as Mr. Dent has talked about earlier today and I've talked about on a number of other occasions, is one of our quiet strengths, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to recognize the significance of the contribution that we just approved that will go into the Japanese market. I will also be leveraging significant funds from the national government, the Government of Canada, in recognition of how important this is.

Tourism is one of those magic industries, Mr. Speaker, that spreads itself across our economy. It's been estimated that a dollar spent by a tourist is a new dollar that comes in and it makes its way up to seven times across the restaurants, the taxis, everyone who provides a product.

We need to be aggressive, not only to win the tourism market share, but to keep it. Mr. Speaker, the ecotourism and cultural tourism sectors really are the ways of the future. This fall, I had the pleasure of experiencing three days on the Barren Lands about 300 miles east of Yellowknife to enjoy and experience and sample this rare and this wonderful product that we have out there. It went far beyond just looking at the magnificent natural wildlife of the caribou and muskox, but there was tremendous evidence there of the Dene culture and the trapping from the early days.

I was very interested, Mr. Speaker, to talk to the other guests who were there, mostly American, to find out why they wanted to be here. Well, besides their passion for photography or the wilderness, Mr. Speaker, they like Canada -- of course they like our dollar compared to theirs -- and they like our style. Our tourism product is a great strength. It gives us diversity. The operators and the owners who believe in it, who have invested in it, are passionate about it. I'm very pleased to see that at least on this occasion we were able to match that with some investment.

Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to conclude my statement.

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

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, this industry is worth protecting. It is worth investing in. It is worth growing in. I would like to wish the members of the industry and the people in our government and other communities and organizations who work in the industry, all the success this coming winter season and next season and at their annual convention in Inuvik in November. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Appreciation For Colleagues, Staff And Family

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning. Mr. Speaker, as this may be the last day for the Members of the 14th Assembly in this House, I wish to thank

you and all my colleagues for your cooperation and understanding while serving as a Member representing Nunakput and all residents of the Northwest Territories. I wish to thank the Clerk and his staff for their assistance over the years. Mr. Speaker, I could not do the job I have over the past four years without the professional assistance of my executive assistant Kat Nicholson; my constituency assistant in Tuktoyaktuk, Lena Kotokak; and, my executive secretary here in Yellowknife, Judy Payne. Thanks to them all. I must not forget to thank my summer student assistant, Amanda Nasogaluak. I wish to acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, the cooperation I received from community leaders in Nunakput.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a productive four years, in my opinion. Time seemed to fly because we have been so busy. Will I be back, Mr. Speaker? I don't know. I do know I will let my name stand for re-election. With the support of my voters in Nunakput, I could be back.

Mr. Speaker, a big thank you to my wife and partner, Betty, and to all my family for their endless understanding of my absence from the dinner table at home.

Mr. Speaker, a happy Thanksgiving to you, my colleagues, and everyone back home. I hope to see them all soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement On GNWT Daycare Subsidy Program

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier today the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment outlined the accomplishments of the department and I acknowledge that happily. I don't want to take anything away from that, Mr. Speaker.

At the same time, I know he will continue to work diligently on his portfolio until the last day, even when all of us are out there doing something else. So I wish to highlight something I need to look at, which I have mentioned in this House before, and that has to do with improving the government's daycare subsidy program and how it's applied to a licensed daycare home.

Mr. Speaker, a licensed day home is a small home-based operation that is just a little bit bigger than a regular babysitting service where the operator is allowed to have up to eight children and up to six of them of preschool age. Currently, Mr. Speaker, the government subsidizes \$28 per child per day, while the going market rate is \$35. Once they're billed, the government often takes months and months to pay their bills. In the meantime, these operators are expected to pay for these children and carry the cost until they are paid. This is not a fair practice, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that the subsidy should be increased to at least meet the market rate. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I am advised that these clients on subsidy are cut off for whatever reason and often no notice is given to the operator. The operators usually expect a 30-day notice from any other parents that bring their children. The operator is then left out in the cold without ability to fill the spot because she or he was given no notice. No business would be expected to operate under these conditions, Mr. Speaker.

I would suggest to the government that the government consider reserving spots for a daycare subsidy or at least pay for the duration of notice. Mr. Speaker, the important point here is that the daycare program is a much needed service and

there's not enough of it. The daycare subsidy program is one small thing the government is doing and it's a good thing. It's just that it should be done better.

Mr. Speaker, daycare operators will be less and less willing to take the children on daycare subsidy unless the situation is improved. I do believe that the Minister believes in the importance of this program and that he will work until the last day to improve it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement On Appreciation For Colleagues, Staff, Constituents And Family

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I spoke in June with my reply to the Opening Address, so I appreciate being able to use two-and-a-half minutes here to express my thank yous and thoughts of my eight-and-a-half years in political life.

Mr. Speaker, I told my colleagues how far we have come in the time I have been a witness to the evolution of political life in the Northwest Territories, some 40 years. In 1964, the Eastern Arctic didn't have political representation and that area is Nunavut today. Today we have the Tlicho bill before us and what remarkable progress we've made, Mr. Speaker. Even in those early days, the representation was from appointed Members from southern Canada, so we have evolved tremendously. For me, Mr. Speaker, the past 50 years of my working life here has been as a civil servant, as a business person, and they've been exciting and interesting and a fabulous life for me, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take an opportunity to thank my staff who have worked with me over the past four years so diligently, some have come recently. I would like to acknowledge my EA, Evan Walz, who is in the gallery today; Kathy Wind, my secretary; Pearl Benyk, my CA; and, I would also like to thank them for their tremendous support that they've provided to me over the four years. Of course, it's been an honour for me to represent the constituency of Yellowknife Centre and I thank my constituents.

Of course, the most important thank you I leave to my wife, Margaret, who's been my supporter and, like Mr. Steen, I have missed many a day for supper and that's sometimes hard to take for people who support us, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to say hello to my son, Luke, who today is a geologist with this government and I am sure he'll enjoy his life here in the Northwest Territories. In December, I will leave public life, Mr. Speaker, and I will devote myself until the last day diligently and totally dedicated. Then I will go on to my next hurrah in the North here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 411-14(6): Approval For Giant Mine Remediation Project

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a return to oral question asked by Mr. Dent on October 8,

2003, regarding the approval for Giant Mine's remediation project. In response to the Member's question, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has been aware of the following information on the timing of surface remediation at Giant Mine:

- Surface remediation at Giant Mine does not depend on the Government of Canada finalizing the plan to manage the arsenic stored underground at the mine and to obtain the necessary regulatory approvals.
- While any long-term management plan for arsenic underground will necessitate access to the storage vaults and for some surface structures such as the C-shaft headframe work to remain functional, the federal government could initiate cleanup of other surface liabilities immediately.

However, as the Honourable Joe Handley stated to this Assembly, there is a difference of opinion between this government and the Government of Canada as to whose responsibility it is to remediate and fund the surface cleanup. Despite the Government of the Northwest Territories formally inviting the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in November 2001 to enter into discussions to resolve our differences, progress to date has been minimal. Territorial officials continue to pursue DIAND for speed and resolution in this matter, Mr. Speaker. We recognize the Member's concern over the slow pace of remediation at Giant Mine, however this government must continue to be diligent in ensuring that the Government of Canada fulfils its legislative and fiscal responsibility at Giant and that correct management decisions are made with respect to the long-term health and safety of Northerners in our natural environment. We need and will continue to be very careful when making these decisions. Our future generations would expect no less than that. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize two of my staff in the gallery, Kat Nicholson, my executive assistant and Judy Payne, my executive secretary.

---Applause

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize two very close friends of ours; Twyla Campbell, and it's her first visit to Yellowknife; and, long-time friend Steven Cooper who is no stranger to the North. They are visiting here today. I would also like to recognize my constituency assistant Wendy Morgan. Without her support, I truly could not do my job. Also, Mr. Speaker, today in the gallery, I would like to recognize my husband, Rick, who has been my biggest supporter and fan. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not often I do this, but today I have a special visitor: my son, Thomas Keenan, who's got a day off school and is attending the session.

---Applause

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

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize two fine young people from my constituency of Hay River North who have been here paging all week. They are Ms. Bailey Mackie and Morgan Monkman. I would also like to recognize my constituency assistant, Ms. Deborah Mageean, who is in the gallery today. I would also like to recognize a constituent of mine, Rick Groenewegen, in the gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, I would like to recognize my constituents from the North Slave; the aboriginal leaders from the North Slave; and, other people who are back there that I can't see. Thank you.

---Applause

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

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take the opportunity this morning to recognize Tom Williams, my former executive assistant who now plays a major role in the Gwich'in Tribal Council. Welcome. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a couple of my chiefs from the Mackenzie Delta; Chief Abe Wilson from the Tetsit Gwich'in Council, along with Chief Peter Ross from the Tsiigehtchic Council and also Tom Williams, the executive director of the Gwich'in Tribal Council. With him is his sister and his mom, Agnes. Welcome to the House.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a number of people in the gallery today. First I would like to recognize Jim Excell. He's president of Ekati diamond mines. He, like some of us here, will be retiring later on this year.

---Applause

I would also like to recognize the members of the NWT Business Coalition. Kelly Hayden is past president of the NWT Chamber of Commerce; Denise Burlingame is president of the NWT Chamber of Commerce and is also senior public affairs officer with BHP Billiton; I would like to recognize Georges Erasmus, a long-time leader and friend of mine; and I would like to recognize two Pages from Fort Simpson who have been serving us all week, Megan Okrainec and Anthony Roche.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize constituents Sandra Knight and Georges Erasmus and members of the business coalition partners and friends of this Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---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 the members of the business coalition. They are all my constituents, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize another constituent, Gary Black, who is with us today, and my executive assistant, Evan Walz, and my secretary, Kathy Wind, who are in the gallery today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize my constituency assistant Caroline Sanderson and I would like to recognize my constituents of Lutselk'e who are in the House and are always with me in the House in spirit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to recognize my constituent assistant Sherry Landry-Braun and thank her for all the work she's done for me.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Colleagues, I would like to welcome two special people in my life, my son, Ian, in the front row...

---Applause

...representing his two brothers, Blaire and Warren. The other person I would like to recognize is my former assistant Mrs. Barb Paquin.

---Applause

And I promised my mother that I would say hello to her in Thebacha. Mom.

---Applause

Any further recognition of visitors in the gallery? I would like to direct your attention to the presence in the visitors' gallery representing the North Slave Metis, Mr. North Douglas.

---Applause

I would like to say a special welcome to the folks who are taking time out of their day who are watching the Legislative Assembly. It's going to be a very busy day. Welcome.

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

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 424-14(6): Proposal For TI'oondih Healing Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are directed to the Minister of Justice. We have been in discussion with the department and Fort McPherson band council trying to find a program that can be delivered out of the TI'oondih Healing Centre. I would just like to get an update from the Minister. You were making some progress on this program, but it seems like it's hit a brick wall. I would like to ask the Minister, could you give us an update on where we are at with that project and how soon we can see some activity happening on that?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

Return To Question 424-14(6): Proposal For TI'oondih Healing Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the question of continuing discussions, yes, our department has been working with the community. To what degree over the last several months is uncertain at this time. I believe we are still pursuing the intent of that proposal which is to facilitate some form of restorative justice programs at the TI'oondih healing lodge.

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

Supplementary To Question 424-14(6): Proposal For TI'oondih Healing Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can I get a commitment from the Minister here today in the House stating that this project will continue and that we will have a program up and running? It seems like we are not too clear on where we are going here. Can I get a commitment from the Minister that this program will continue?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

Further Return To Question 424-14(6): Proposal For TI'oondih Healing Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand there was a proposal submitted from the community. We are in the process of evaluating the cost of that proposal and I am sure that I can direct our senior officials to work closely with the community to try to resolve any outstanding issues in response to that proposal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 424-14(6): Proposal For TI'oondih Healing Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to get a verbal commitment from the Minister. It was made clear in the meeting held with the community leaders, along with myself and the Minister of Justice and his staff, that this program will become a reality. I would like to have a commitment from the Minister here in the House that we will see this program delivered, concluded and hopefully implemented within the next couple of months. Is that still the plan?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

Further Return To Question 424-14(6): Proposal For TI'oondih Healing Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I may also speak to the subject of the schedule we spoke of during our discussions, I am not sure whether we can meet the exact dates, but we will pursue this with due diligence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 424-14(6): Proposal For TI'oondih Healing Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister for a yes or no answer. Is the government committed to implementing this program at the TI'oondih Healing Centre?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

Further Return To Question 424-14(6): Proposal For TI'oondih Healing Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe we are committed and I believe we can show proof between the continual liaison between the department and the community of representatives. I want to assure the Members that if there are some shortfalls between now and the end of the fiscal year, we can deal with it in a timely basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 425-14(6): Clawback Of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Honourable Jake Ootes, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. As it is the Minister's last day in the House and this will be the last time I am able to ask him this question, which I have asked for the last three-and-a-half years, will he make arrangements so that impact benefit agreements are not clawed back as part of the clawback the Minister has initiated in his department? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 425-14(6): Clawback Of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The IBAs we have looked at extensively and they have many implications that we have not yet worked out. There are implications legally as to how IBAs are treated by other agencies. Even the federal government has not been able to develop a position on impact benefit agreements. It affects our whole policy area of the principles of income support, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, that's still an area that a lot more work needs to be done on.

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

Supplementary To Question 425-14(6): Clawback Of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister as he is now aware, a colleague of mine put in his statement that Alberta does not claw back. If Alberta is not clawing back, Newfoundland is not clawing back, why is this Minister and his department so set on clawing this money back from the people that need it the most, the people on income support? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return To Question 425-14(6): Clawback Of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I say, I go back to the principles in the program, Mr. Speaker. That's a program that meets the basic needs of individuals, but the program is intended to let individuals help themselves. We've also introduced for many years and applied the productive choice component. Really it comes into question of how far we can go providing support for people from public money and then not take into account other monies received, Mr. Speaker, especially in cases where we haven't completely outlined and know the parameters of an IBA. I personally don't know what the content of an IBA agreement is, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 425-14(6): Clawback Of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister is right in saying there are programs out there to help these people, but the impact benefit agreement is based on the land claims agreement and this is compensation for the loss of the use of the land. If this is something that they are entitled to, why is he clawing it back when others in Canada aren't? Why is he wishing to be so different? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 425-14(6): Clawback Of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know I hear reference to other parts of Canada, but other parts of Canada don't recognize treaty payments either, Mr. Speaker. It depends on the jurisdiction you go to. So what I am saying with this, Mr. Speaker, is we need more work done on this. For us to step in and say we'll do this, I am looking at a total policy

change here, Mr. Speaker. That's the role of all of us here, not just me, Mr. Speaker. We have to take into account the legal basis for IBAs. As I say, not even the federal government has defined the IBA situation of how to treat that, tax-wise, et cetera. So there are complications, Mr. Speaker, in many ways. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 425-14(6): Clawback Of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. About a year-and-a-half ago, the Minister stood up in the House and said he had a legal opinion on this. Now he is saying they are not sure what the legal issues will be around them. The legal opinion he had was publicly funded. Why is he withholding the legal opinion from the public? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The honourable Minister of ECE, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return To Question 425-14(6): Clawback Of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Mr. Speaker, I think that's the primary question being asked. The legal opinion is always for Ministers' eyes only and it's such stated on legal opinions. We've been through this debate before, Mr. Speaker, but it really doesn't provide a definite answer either.

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

Question 426-14(6): Aurora College Academic Appeal Process For Students

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question this morning is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. It concerns the establishment of an appeal mechanism, Mr. Speaker, whereby students can get decisions made when they run into complications with processes at the academic and training processes at the school. So my question is would the Minister establish at Aurora College an independent appeal board separate from the college to handle academic and student appeals? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 426-14(6): Aurora College Academic Appeal Process For Students

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we, early on in the term of this government, decided that we would establish an independent appeal board for student financial assistance and we followed that up with an independent appeal board for income support clients that includes the areas of income support and senior fuel subsidy or any of those particular areas. That's working wonderfully, Mr. Speaker. That provides an avenue for an independent look for decisions that are made by the public service on decisions and it gives the applicant an opportunity to get a decision. There may be cases, Mr. Speaker, where decisions are made that overturn the decisions made by the appeals done by the original individuals, but we found that this works tremendously well and it is an area to get on to the question the Member is asking we should pursue, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 426-14(6): Aurora College Academic Appeal Process For Students

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to hear that the Minister is receptive and I think supportive of this initiative. It has not come up too often for me as an MLA, but when constituents have come with issues it has been problematic to get what everyone agrees is a clear and independent process. I wanted to ask the Minister, in other colleges or academic institutions are there models that could be followed for this kind of thing or are we going to be looking at, I guess, a new design process here? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister of ECE, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return To Question 426-14(6): Aurora College Academic Appeal Process For Students

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it will be of value for us to do some research as to how this is treated in other institutions, universities and colleges in other jurisdictions. That will be easy for us to find out and to follow. Mr. Speaker, even though other jurisdictions may have a particular system, that doesn't mean we have to follow that particular case in this instance. I think there's value to establishing an external review board outside of college staff and so forth, Mr. Speaker, and I believe we should pursue that. Thank you.

---Applause

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

Question 427-14(6): Impacts Of Auditory Ailments In Young People

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. I know the Minister received a letter from the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association Yellowknife branch because I was cc'd on the letter, as were other Members, Mr. Speaker. They make the case that auditory problems can impair speech, language development, cause difficulties in learning to read and write and cause delays and problems in school. They go on to talk about how expensive hearing aids are. I'm wondering if the Minister has had occasion to meet with the CHHA and discuss the hearing aid issue and the importance of having hearing aids available for our youngsters in school. Thank you.

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

Return To Question 427-14(6): Impacts Of Auditory Ailments In Young People

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the letter has been referred over to the deputy minister and we're working on a response. I have not personally sat down with the organization in question. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 427-14(6): Impacts Of Auditory Ailments In Young People

MR. BELL: Thank you. I certainly hope the Minister will take occasion to meet with this organization. I was surprised. This was not something that had occurred to me. Given the rate that young people grow, and they grow so quickly, they need to continually have new ear molds cast if they have hearing problems. Hearing aids can be as expensive, I understand, as much as \$2,000. So if you need a couple of hearing aids and need to get them changed a couple of times a year it's quite onerous on a family. I hope the Minister will give me his commitment in the House here today that he is going to meet with this organization to discuss this very serious problem. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 427-14(6): Impacts Of Auditory Ailments In Young People

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I would be willing and interested in sitting down with this organization. Thank you.

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

Question 428-14(6): Subsidy Payments To Daycare Operators

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and it's further to my Member's statement earlier today. I know that the Minister is familiar with this issue. May I ask the Minister as to whether he would consider reviewing the procedures of his staff to see if the payments, for example, for this subsidy program could be paid to the operators in a speedy manner? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return To Question 428-14(6): Subsidy Payments To Daycare Operators

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, interestingly enough, I compliment the Member for pursuing this issue because she raised the issue in June and it gave us an opportunity to follow up on what we had put into plans already to introduce in September, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I'd like to say that over the past two or three years we've substantially increased our support for daycare funding. The issues that remained on the table, Mr. Speaker, were the administrative processes. They were cumbersome and difficult for individuals applying. So we did make some changes, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question that was asked was regarding payment after the fact. Today, Mr. Speaker, we pay in advance and both individuals and organizations can apply to be paid four months in advance, Mr. Speaker. That's really good governing. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 428-14(6): Subsidy Payments To Daycare Operators

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I assure you, there was no script prepared on this one. I didn't talk to him before, but I am glad to hear the Minister's answer. Mr. Speaker, may I get the Minister to comment then also on giving notice for those recipients of this subsidy who might be cut off to the operators in advance so that they are not left with a spot that was reserved for a child, but for whatever reason the department uses to cut off the subsidy, then the operators are left with a vacant position that they can't fill for another month or so? Could the Minister indicate as to whether that aspect of this program has been fixed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister of ECE, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return To Question 428-14(6): Subsidy Payments To Daycare Operators

HON. JAKE OOTES: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure of the process that's followed now. It's my understanding that the organizations notify the department that there are delinquent individuals attending and when that transpires, based on attendance, Mr. Speaker, then the payments are withheld. However, I can look into this further and provide further detail to the Member and if there are complications for that we can look to see if we can streamline that even further, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 428-14(6): Subsidy Payments To Daycare Operators

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the interest of a thorough and detailed answer to my constituent who has raised this issue, may I just ask the Minister to provide me with written information explaining what he has done to improve this daycare program and the procedural problems that I have indicated? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return To Question 428-14(6): Subsidy Payments To Daycare Operators

HON. JAKE OOTES: Yes, I will, Mr. Speaker. I'll put that all in writing and provide some excellent detail that I feel would be helpful for the Member. There was reference earlier to the \$28 a day child subsidy. Mr. Speaker, we do pay \$32 a day, but that's to a licensed daycare facility. A day home receives \$28 a day and the reasons for the difference, Mr. Speaker, just to put it on the record, are that you know a licensed daycare centre has greater fixed overhead costs, they have staff, they have facility costs, maintenance and so forth, taxation on their property that they need to pay, safety measures and they have to comply very diligently to the legislation, Mr. Speaker, all of which adds a tremendous amount of cost. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Your final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 428-14(6): Subsidy Payments To Daycare Operators

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought that I had given my last supplementary, but with that answer I have to challenge the Minister's notion about...

AN HON. MEMBER: Excellent detail?

MS. LEE: Yes, a daycare home having less cost to operate and I could tell you, I just want to reiterate that when this daycare home only has spaces for six children and they have one or two that are on subsidy and they get cut off and get no notice, that has a huge impact. Could I get the Minister to re-examine his facts and decrease the inequality between the centres and homes? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return To Question 428-14(6): Subsidy Payments To Daycare Operators

HON. JAKE OOTES: You know, this is great, Mr. Speaker. I have to go back and check my facts. I think my facts were fairly accurate, but we'll certainly do a bit of homework on this so that the Member has a lot of information on her side to be able to respond to her constituent, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Question 429-14(6): Increase Funding For Tourism Marketing Initiatives

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Mr. Speaker, I welcome the Minister's statement outlining the \$500,000 to market aurora tourism in Japan today. This sector has been hard hit since 9-11, the SARS outbreak, West Nile and mad cow scares. Other tourism areas have also been hard hit; outfitters, hunting and fishing lodges are struggling, as well. Will the Minister direct his department to put more funding to help market tourism in the business plan and draft budget for next year?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 429-14(6): Increase Funding For Tourism Marketing Initiatives

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, there is an Arctic tourism conference coming up in Inuvik the beginning of November and there will be a number of presentations made and a lot of discussions will take place. We see this conference as important for the continuing development of how to pursue tourism development in the North. Up to this point in time we've been dealing with BSE, SARS and so forth, and at this conference we will be talking about how to pursue tourism in the future. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 429-14(6): Increase Funding For Tourism Marketing Initiatives

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister talking about coordinating with the tourism industry. But any sort of response to deal with the problems facing the tourism industry in the North is going to require money. Will the Minister direct his department to start the process now of identifying funds in the business plan and the budget for next year?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 429-14(6): Increase Funding For Tourism Marketing Initiatives

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the \$250,000 that I finally got approved was part of a large package similar to what the Member is talking about. Because of fiscal restraint, I was only allowed to receive what I received at this point in time. Certainly we will continue to pursue it. I think it's needed and all our arguments on getting more dollars into the tourism industry have been put together by the department already, we just have to go through the proper process to try to pursue that. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 429-14(6): Increase Funding For Tourism Marketing Initiatives

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just for the record, I was asking the Minister to get his department working on funds for next year. Ecotourism and cultural tourism are fast growing areas in tourism and they benefit the smaller communities in the North in particular. What is his department doing right now to support ecotourism and cultural tourism?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 429-14(6): Increase Funding For Tourism Marketing Initiatives

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department has been working and trying to develop the tourism industry. We're encouraging businesses that want to pursue this in the North and we're working very closely with NWT Arctic Tourism. The last few years we've been putting a number of dollars into them. In the meantime, the department has the existing programs that we currently have that are available and that is the approach that we've been taking. Thank you.

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

Question 430-14(6): Amendments To The Wildlife Act

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. We're hoping that there would have been some sort of tabling of the draft legislation for the Wildlife Act provisions but, as we all know, it's probably not going to happen.

This government has expended some \$1.375 million since 1999-2000. Mr. Speaker, a lot of those dollars have been expended on drafting consultation and whatnot. Yet, Mr. Speaker, one of the concerns that is apparent, especially from the Inuvialuit Game Council and the Gwich'in Tribal Council, is that there's no intervener funding on behalf of those organizations to have their own drafters or lawyers look at the implications of what's in their land claims agreement and drafting that legislation along with the government. Right now, you're basically stating that you're consulting with those groups by way of the consultation process.

Mr. Speaker, I raised this issue last week in the House about what exactly consultation really means. Consultation under the land claims agreements is pretty clear. It's that consultation is to provide the party with consultation and notice that the matter of discussion is significant in form and detail, and allow the party to prepare its views and matters.

MR. SPEAKER: Can we have a question, please?

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, in regard to that statement, it's clear to me that it means more than just sitting down and talking. I'd like to ask the Minister, have you considered the Inuvialuit request that they do get intervener funding so they can have their own drafters make amendments to the Wildlife Act and bring it forth to this government?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 430-14(6): Amendments To The Wildlife Act

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice is drafting the wildlife legislation. We're working with them in RWED. The land claims organizations and the wildlife co-management boards are required to integrate the wildlife harvesting management provisions of their land claims agreements into the draft legislation. So you have a number of them. You have the Inuvialuit, you have the Gwich'in, you have the Sahtu and now you have the Tlicho that all want to take their wildlife harvesting management provisions of their claims and have it put into the draft legislation. There's a difference of opinion on how to do it. The land claims organizations have requested that further consultations not be undertaken until initial draft legislation is complete. That's what we're trying to do. Each of the land claims organizations have received funding to assist with the cost of the legal review of the proposed legislation. That is the approach at this time. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 430-14(6): Amendments To The Wildlife Act

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the request I'm making to the Minister is, will the Minister allow for the First Nations organizations that do have land claims the ability to have their own legal drafters at the table to present their comments and provisions to the legislation so that they can feel a part of this process, and not simply give them funding to have consultation with no legal presence at the table? Will he allow the First Nation groups with land claims agreements, who we're obligated to work with, to have their own legal drafters at the table when drafting this legislation?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 430-14(6): Amendments To The Wildlife Act

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the Department of Justice is the one that is drafting this legislation. Even though RWED is involved, this is the drafting procedure of this government. The request from the aboriginal governments is that they want to have their own lawyers actually sit with the Department of Justice lawyers to actually draft the document themselves. The approach that Cabinet has directed us to do is to do the normal process of drafting legislation, whereas the Department of Justice is drafting it and we're working with the aboriginal groups as we come up with the provisions. So at this point in time, it's a Cabinet decision for us to continue drafting legislation the way that we normally do it. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 430-14(6): Amendments To The Wildlife Act

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my understanding of the process that is used in the Yukon, the Yukon government allows the First Nation government to have their own drafters work on drafting the legislation with the government drafters. I'd like to ask the Minister, if this practice is being done in the Yukon, why can't we do it in the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 430-14(6): Amendments To The Wildlife Act

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, in the Yukon they have one umbrella claim that encompasses all the 14 First Nations. The wildlife provisions are contained under one umbrella agreement. In our case in the Northwest Territories, we have the Inuvialuit land claims agreement, we have the Gwich'in, we have the Sahtu and now we have the Tlicho. We have the Deh Cho who are negotiating their own and Akaitcho, then the Northwest Territories Metis Nation and the different First Nations. It's a different scenario in the Yukon where they have one entity that they have to deal with. It's simpler and easier for them to do that. Likewise, in Nunavut they have just one organization. It's easier. In our case, we're going to have legal representation from the Inuvialuit, the Gwich'in, the Sahtu, the Dogrib, perhaps the Deh Cho and Akaitcho. You're going to have about seven other aboriginal lawyers sitting with the Department of Justice drafting the legislation. It makes it very difficult. The approach that Cabinet has directed us to do -- it's a Cabinet decision, not mine alone -- is to continue to do the legislation the way we would normally do it through the Department of Justice. We draft it and we have close consultation with the aboriginal governments so they are aware of what we're doing. There's lots of information and communication back and forth. Until Cabinet makes a decision on allowing lawyers from the aboriginal governments to actually sit down and draft legislation, then this is the approach we're going to take. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 430-14(6): Amendments To The Wildlife Act

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the largest sections of the land claim agreements with the Inuvialuit, the Gwich'in, the Sahtu and the Tlicho is the wildlife provision section. It's a large section. You're looking at almost 24 pages. I think for the government to say, well, it's the system they use in the Yukon. The system they used in the Yukon included the Inuvialuit. The Inuvialuit were able to get their own drafters and lawyers to draft the legislation and present it to the Yukon government. What we're seeing in the practice of this government is that this is a fundamental component of the land claim agreements. It's not something the Department of Justice alone should sit in the back room and deal with. I'd like to ask the Minister, will you meet with the First Nation aboriginal groups that have concerns about this process we're using, especially regarding the Inuvialuit Game Council and the other land claim organizations, to allow them the opportunity to present their case and have their own drafters at the table?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 430-14(6): Amendments To The Wildlife Act

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, we could do that. The Department of RWED and Department of Justice officials have been working very hard in trying to have this consultation going and having some meetings on how to approach it. We'll continue to do that. Thank you.

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

Question 431-14(6): Invitation To Attend Grey Cup Festivities

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question this morning is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, we all know what a big sports fan the Premier is, especially for football, and I'm sure he was delighted to receive the invitation from Prime Minister-elect Paul Martin to join him and other Premiers in Regina during the Grey Cup Summit, which I guess is a tradition, Mr. Speaker, among Canadian leaders. The question I wanted to ask, Mr. Speaker, was if the Premier has received this invitation and is he going to accept the invitation to meet with other Canadian leaders in Regina during the Grey Cup?

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

Return To Question 431-14(6): Invitation To Attend Grey Cup Festivities

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe all the Premiers have received an invitation from Paul Martin and the Premiers had a conference call yesterday and we have agreed to attend. We believe it's a good way to develop a relationship. The intent is to have an informal get-together and dinner to talk about the state of affairs in each of our jurisdictions and to start developing a good, positive relationship with the person we believe is going to be the next Prime Minister of Canada. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 431-14(6): Invitation To Attend Grey Cup Festivities

MR. BRADEN: Thank you. I'm pleased to hear the Premier has accepted that invitation. I'd like to ask if he could give some indication of what his message will be at this fascinating time. It will be the start of a new regime, of course, for the Northwest Territories over the next few months and also of a new federal regime. How is he going to position us? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 431-14(6): Invitation To Attend Grey Cup Festivities

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of the Northwest Territories has already spent a considerable amount of time developing a good relationship with the former Minister of Finance Paul Martin. We worked with him very well during his time as the Finance Minister. Since he became a Member of Parliament we have continued to have communications with him. He has always been very excited and supportive of the agenda of the Government of the Northwest Territories and this legislature. He continues to express that. He has, for instance, indicated he supports the idea of having the net fiscal benefit included in any revenue-sharing talks and has expressed interest in concluding a revenue-sharing arrangement with our government. The issue of devolution, revenue sharing, northern development regarding pipelines and diamond mines are all issues that he is already very well aware of and will continue to advance those in the time that we have as your government. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 431-14(6): Invitation To Attend Grey Cup Festivities

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, thank you. One initiative that I think has just recently come to light among the Premiers is the creation of some kind of new alliance or federation on which to set up a new basis or relationship with the national government. Could the Premier tell us a bit more about that and how we will be engaging in that new and quite interesting process? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 431-14(6): Invitation To Attend Grey Cup Festivities

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the opportunities we have is to look at developing a less confrontational relationship between the next Prime Minister and the Premiers. The idea of having First Ministers meetings has, over the years, always had high expectations and always had a wide difference of approach and opinion between the Prime Minister's office and the Premiers. This has always lead to Canadians feeling somewhat divided and disillusioned with the type of leadership we provide, where we always seem to be fighting and having differences of opinion and blaming one another. We're looking at the idea of having more frequent information meetings, lowering expectations and developing a better relationship. As well, the council of the federation is one that was advanced by the Premier of Quebec as a way to

develop a better relationship, as I've said, between the political offices and leaders of this country. As Premiers, we'll continue to advance that. We'll be going to Quebec in a couple of weeks. The Grey Cup meeting is on November 16th, on the Sunday, and we will also be meeting as Premiers on the 23rd and 24th of this month in Quebec City. We are continuing to work, as I've said, and of course we're interested to know whether there's going to be a surplus in the federal budget because if there is, there is a commitment to provide another \$2 billion for health to Canadians by the federal government. Thank you.

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

Question 432-14(6): Gwich'in Wildlife Harvesting Rights

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. It's in regard to a notice that was posted by this government in regard to the Dempster Highway one-way closure that was set from September 25th to October 2nd. It basically says that the closure will apply to the Northwest Territories, which is an eight kilometre strip from the Peel River to the Yukon border. Mr. Speaker, one thing that's been kind of shocking this year is that apparently the Yukon government didn't pass this similar regulation to have a similar closure on the Yukon side and we, as the Northwest Territories government, are the only ones who have done that. Mr. Speaker, because the land claim agreements and the wildlife provisions haven't been changed, in the land claim agreement it's clear that the Gwich'in have the right to harvest with any means, can harvest for the purpose and use of equipment to carry out that harvest. Mr. Speaker, that's section 12.4(14) of the Gwich'in agreement. Yet this government continues to pass regulations and restrict hunting rights of the Gwich'in people, especially on the Dempster Highway and from the community of Fort McPherson. This year, very few people were able to get any caribou, and then on top of that there was this one-way closure. I'd like to ask the Minister, would you hold off on signing any more regulations until the wildlife amendments have been concluded and it's brought back to this House and the First Nation claimant groups have the ability to implement those sections of their agreements in territorial legislation?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 432-14(6): Gwich'in Wildlife Harvesting Rights

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, the regulations that were changed were on recommendations from the different management boards that are up in the Mackenzie Delta, in the Member's riding. It's part of our agreement that whatever they recommend, we do that. I think the idea there was that there was the Porcupine Caribou Herd that was going through and they identified that period of time as when the lead herd is going through. This is the normal practice year to year. I have to check on that, but that's the way I understand the Member's question. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 432-14(6): Gwich'in Wildlife Harvesting Rights

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a government we make regulations without really dealing with the issue on the ground. The main herd was not even at the Dempster Highway at the time this thing was going to be passed. The large portion of the herd did not even arrive in that area around the dates that were used, yet they went ahead and closed the highway anyway. I suggest you don't pass any regulations to begin with but, if you're going to do it, at least give the communities an opportunity to give you some advice on what dates are appropriate for them.

AN HON. MEMBER: There was a question.

MR. KRUTKO: Could the Minister work with the communities if he's going to come forth with regulations setting dates for closures and at least try to get the communities on side before you do that?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 432-14(6): Gwich'in Wildlife Harvesting Rights

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, I only, as the Minister, can follow advice and direction of the Members that are working with my department in regard to the Dempster Highway special management area regulations. The intent is to close the caribou harvesting season in that special area for one week to allow the caribou leaders to pass through the area. That's the intention of this regulation, and I guess part of the conditions and through consultation they've consulted extensively. So I have to check on that. The parties had agreed that a one-week closure would commence once 200 caribou had passed through the Dempster special area. Once that criteria is met, that's when they initiate this regulation. I'm going to have to ask the department on exactly what sequence of events has to happen for this to happen and I'll take the Member's question and see what we can do in terms of not passing any regulations until we have real thorough consultation. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 432-14(6): Gwich'in Wildlife Harvesting Rights

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if he can talk with his counterparts in the Yukon because I believe the Yukon is not going forth with establishing restrictions based on the court case that is presently before the court in Dawson City where a couple of local aboriginal men have been charged under these regulations and are challenging it under their land claim agreement. I think it looks like it's a good chance that the Yukon government will lose this case. I think because they know the percentage is high of them losing this case, they did not want to jeopardize having more cases brought forth this year. They did not implement these closures on the Dempster Highway on the Yukon side of the highway. I'd like to ask the Minister, would you consult with your Yukon counterparts and check with your Justice people on the ability of this court case in Dawson City in regard to aboriginal hunting rights?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 432-14(6): Gwich'in Wildlife Harvesting Rights

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, we will check with our counterparts in the Yukon and let the Member know about what we find out. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 432-14(6): Gwich'in Wildlife Harvesting Rights

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just on a couple of points I made today, that is why the First Nation groups want to be at the table to negotiate changes to these restrictions. They have exclusive hunting rights in our land claim agreements, especially when it comes to being able to have the exclusive right to hunt on their lands. They have exclusive right to certain species and they also have the exclusive right to access. I'd like to ask the Minister, could you have someone within your department or someone at the Department of Justice really look at what has been negotiated in these land claim agreements when it comes to aboriginal rights?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 432-14(6): Gwich'in Wildlife Harvesting Rights

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice and RWED have people in our departments who are tasked with making sure we comply with the provisions of the land claims. Yes, I will check with the department on what exactly they're doing and what kind of positions they're taking with regard to the drafting of the Wildlife Act. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to Opening Address. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

Mr. Dent's Reply

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take the time with a reply to the Opening Address today, to have a bit of a look back over the past four years.

I have to say that I'm proud to have been part of the 14th Assembly. I know that I've heard some critics of the consensus system who say that we're too slow to get things done or criticize the fact that a group of us aren't elected with a mandate to push forward with. However, Mr. Speaker, I think the system works. I think that we can point to the amazing amount of legislation that we have passed in the last four years to demonstrate that the system can work.

A lot of the legislation that we've passed is not simple housekeeping legislation either. A lot of it has been very important legislation. I think probably one of the most important is the human rights legislation. I think the legislation that we passed is one of the best examples of human rights legislation in Canada. We just yesterday passed the Protection Against

Family Violence Act. Again, another very important tool in the social fabric of the Northwest Territories. We passed recycling legislation. This is one that my constituents have talked to me about for a long time.

There have been an awful lot of initiatives that we have undertaken and I won't take the time to go through all of them, but I think if people were interested in taking a look at the record, we have passed an awful lot of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we've all worked together on important initiatives and I think that has paid off. For instance, the funding for infrastructure. We all, in this House, supported the efforts of the government on that. I know I travelled to Ottawa with Premier Kakfwi and members of the Business Coalition to lobby for support, and recently we heard that we're going to start to see some money flow for that. Everyone in this House supported the Premier in the health care fight with the other Premiers. Again, it paid off. There were a number of other initiatives that you could point to.

I think it's important to note, Mr. Speaker, that we reduced taxes in recognition of the high cost of living in the North. We have one area of exception there, of course, with sin taxes. We have, in fact, increased the taxes on tobacco and alcohol and I think that's something that we have to continue to look at doing in order to reduce the use of those commodities.

I think there's a lot we can point to that we've accomplished. I would say to those who are critics of consensus that we've done not bad for a group who were elected without a mandate. Mr. Speaker, with an election coming up there will be some new faces around the table. I know we have heard at least four who will not be here when the next Assembly convenes. I would like to salute those Members.

Mr. Speaker, you, our friend and colleague, will not be seeking re-election. Mr. Speaker, you have been a very strong influence in this House and one that will be missed.

---Translation not provided

Members who have served with Mr. Whitford will not soon forget his efforts at French.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

MR. DENT: He's maintained the dignity of the Speaker's position and, at the same time, encouraged an atmosphere of cooperation. I wish Mr. Speaker the very best of luck and I know that he will bring the same enthusiasm and caring that he brought to this Assembly to all of his new endeavors.

Another long-term Member leaving us is the Honourable Jake Ootes. Mr. Ootes has been a dedicated Minister and Member of the government Cabinet. As a previous Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, I know the challenges that can go with this portfolio and Mr. Ootes has risen to the challenge.

Mr. Speaker, another long-term Member that we know is leaving this House is the Honourable Jim Antoine, who is leaving to pursue other opportunities outside of territorial politics. He's been a Member of this House for a good time. In fact, we were both elected at the same time and I have fine memories of working together with Mr. Antoine on the Standing Committee on Finance and then on Cabinet. He has always demonstrated calm, quiet leadership and a real commitment to consensus government.

Mr. Speaker, another very familiar face that we will not see in this House again is that of the Premier, Stephen Kakfwi. His announcement that he will not seek re-election came as a surprise to me. I think his presence in this House has become a given for many of us and it will be strange not to see him on the floor of the House in the next Assembly. During this session I have recognized the Premier's efforts on many fronts, including the Con Mine trailer park and negotiating resource royalties and infrastructure funding with the federal government. I would like to reiterate again today my appreciation of the Premier's efforts over the past four years. So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish all of the departing Members of this House the best of luck with their future endeavors. They should be proud of their accomplishments and should be recognized for their long-time commitments to their constituents and all Northerners.

Mr. Speaker, it doesn't seem all that long ago that I first came to the Legislative Assembly as a first-time MLA. As a new MLA I felt privileged to be here on behalf of my constituents and I wanted to serve them well. But I needed some help. That help came in the form of the Clerk's office and specifically Mr. David Hamilton.

Mr. Speaker, we saluted Mr. Hamilton earlier in this session, but again today I would like to say how much I've enjoyed working with him and how he has always handled difficult situations with skill and professionalism. We'll miss him.

Mr. Speaker, this morning I chaired the 259th meeting of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight. Two hundred and fifty-nine meetings. Some of those meetings, Mr. Speaker, were three-day affairs. Some, obviously, were very short. It's been an honour for the past four years to chair the standing committee and I'd like to point out that I think it's been a very important step in the evolution of our own style of government because it brought together in a formal committee all Members who were not part of the government, which are those who were not on Cabinet. This is the first time that group has been formalized.

It's been an interesting group to chair. All Members have goals and aspirations for their constituents in the North and oftentimes, Mr. Speaker, they are not aligned with each other. But you know, over the past four years we have come together on important issues to direct government action. Together we have made a difference.

I've enjoyed working with all Members in this House. Even when we haven't agreed, it's been obvious that each and every one is motivated by a desire to do their best for their constituents and all of the North.

Mr. Speaker, last week the Premier said he has the best job, well maybe. Mine has been pretty good too. I couldn't have done it without the support of a lot of people who have worked in this Assembly building in the research department. I'd like to recognize too the support that I have received over the years from some really great constituency assistants, first of all Robert Redshaw, then Allison McCambridge, Sahara Pawluk and right now Katherine Robinson.

Mr. Speaker, I have also been able to do this job because my family has allowed it, and I appreciate the support that I get from my wife Eileen and son Tyler. Mr. Speaker, since I enjoy this job and since I think I make a difference in doing it, I plan to seek my constituents' support to keep on doing the job for another four years. So, Mr. Speaker, to those who are leaving I bid you farewell and I look forward to working with those who return after the election. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 9, replies to Opening Address. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Hon. Roger Allen's Reply

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my introduction, I'd like to speak a bit about when we first got elected and first entered this Chamber in early January of 2000. In my opening remarks to my colleagues and to people of the Northwest Territories as a relatively unknown, that while I had served many years first in the capacity for the Mackenzie Delta, I still remain committed to that opening statement. I came in knowing that I would never make changes, but only influence changes as we progressed in our evolution. Certainly, like everybody else, I am really proud and very happy to have represented the riding of Inuvik Twin Lakes, a new riding, but one which consists of many different ethnicities, a very large disparity in the social economics in my riding and I have stated that many times. As Ministers, we don't have the ability quite often enough to express the way our ridings are treated, but certainly and hopefully the way things have developed over the last four years, my riding got as much respect as others.

Mr. Speaker, I'm notoriously known to be very quiet and I want to say that I am a better listener than a speaker. I have listened to the constituents across the Northwest Territories and I have done that through a lot of community visitations. I have sat face to face with community leaders, with community constituents who have had serious questions about housing, about justice, about youth, about the high cost of public utilities and, again, how we should deal with issue promises, and many other portfolios I have had the pleasure of representing on behalf of other Ministers.

As I quote my colleague from Tu Nedhe that I am "a man of action, a man of few words," and I would like to say that I have done it well. Also I would like to talk about some of the areas where we have worked together collectively, and I want to quote a bit of an excerpt from the Inuvik Drum, October 2nd, in saying that "and may it point out that the consensus government does not work very well for Inuvik. We can hope that everything will work in the spirit of cooperation and consensus but the territorial government has not been the best example of that. Inuvik has sat on the outside for 15 years without any capital funding." Mr. Speaker, when I talk about teamwork, I include my honourable colleague from Inuvik Boot Lake, and certainly at the beginning of this Assembly, Inuvik was not treated fairly and I can sincerely agree with a lot of the comments raised by the small communities which always had the problem of how capital should be shared across the North and how our priorities should be set.

I want to say that I am pleased that in my short term I have had the privilege of standing with eight new Members for the 14th Assembly, that Inuvik in the last four years has reached the pinnacle, the pinnacle that is in excess of \$60 million in new capital investments in our small town. They very well deserve it. That included the new hospital, young offenders facility, the repaving of the airport runway, and many new housing developments including new land developments that were well needed and required.

Mr. Speaker, I am not here to take the credit. I think it involves the Assembly, and the Minister is just one of six privileged Members to be able to sit down and help reach some decisions. I certainly want to talk a bit about the importance of

the Members across the hall here that offer questions on where we are going with policy development and how we should meet the growing demands of all constituents. I too have taken a lot of Christmases of not being home which I am not afraid to say today that I feel privileged that I could not only serve my constituents but the constituents across the Northwest Territories.

Also, I want to commend the mentorship I have received in this House from my honourable colleague, Jim Antoine, who mentored me in my early beginnings and still today, has a profound impact on the way I present myself in this House and across the Northwest Territories.

There is a gentlemen in this House as well that I want to say had profound effect on myself in learning the procedural process and that is my esteemed colleague from Nunakput, Minister Steen, who I claim is the dean of rules and procedures, and we learned over the course of our short tenure here to respect his invaluable assistance and knowledge.

In the absence of Minister Handley, I want to say that because of his eloquence, being able to stand up and share in the joy and smile a lot and, again, as I recall one important question was raised by the Member for Deh Cho, and asked what he was going to do about the buffalo roaming the town he said well I hope that now that winter is coming that the buffalo will leave their urban settings and move back into the wilderness. So those are things you remember as a jovial part of our work.

Certainly, I have sat through many meetings across the Northwest Territories and they often ask me what Michael Miltenberger is like to work with and I said that he is our in house political scientist and I have a lot of respect for Mr. Miltenberger because he has often given us a lot of excellent advice on how we should deal with situational problems often raised in this House.

Mr. Ootes, again, my colleague to my left, fortunately we both share one thing in common and that is we are both hearing impaired so I am glad he can hear in his right ear and I can hear in my left so we often have to pull off our ear pieces and talk to one another, and when Mr. Antoine is up with his standing committee with his staff we want to reconfigure his seating arrangements so we can have a few extra things to see. Only Mr. Antoine will know what I am talking about.

So everyone has valuable input and I'll save the best for last and I want to personally give my quiet and share in my quiet respect for the Premier. Again, I have sat for four years relatively quiet, throughout a lot of deliberations, but it is only those who have the privilege of sitting there and watching him guide the deliberations, the discussions and coming out to some conclusion, that that respect is certainly something I wanted to talk about today.

Mr. Speaker, I hope I didn't miss anyone here. I wanted to say in my concluding remarks that I had the privilege as a young adult to gain a lot of experience. I had also achieved a lot as a young man, in four short years, Mr. Speaker, and I am glad the chair or the Speaker would change seats because Mr. Krutko would know what I am talking about as an athlete. Careers are very short in athletics and they are also very short in politics. We know that, we are at the vulnerability of our voters and I want to say in concluding, it has been a real privilege to represent this small riding, but not only that, it is also a privilege to work with all of the advocacy groups across the Northwest Territories and with those who continue to pursue excellence.

Excellence in the local forum and without doubt, many of us will pursue that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate everyone who is going to be departing, and I know from our side there will be three departing Members, which I will thoroughly miss, and I certainly want to say to them that sincerely I wish you more future endeavors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Item 9, replies to Opening Address. Mr. Bell.

Mr. Bell's Reply

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to take this time here today, Mr. Speaker, to thank a number of people and maybe more importantly, not to try to talk about the good things that I think this Assembly or I personally have done. I'll be seeking re-election, there is plenty of time for that and as it should be the voters that will have the decision as to whether or not I have done an adequate job.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to take the opportunity here to thank my entire family, all of who live in the Northwest Territories and are still here. This has been, certainly, and I can say without a doubt, the best four years of my life and everybody knows, I think certainly the people in this room, that this can be a difficult job at times but it is a wonderful job, it is the best job as well. The thing about family I guess, Mr. Speaker, that is so important, is that you are going to have good days, you are going to have bad days. You are going to have days when you haven't made the best of decisions and others when you have, but family, certainly my family have always been there with unconditional love and support for me and I certainly appreciate that.

We are in the limelight a lot of the time and are criticized quite frequently, rightly or wrongly, but I think the fact that my family is always happy to see me come home at the end of the day no matter how good or bad the day has been has certainly been rewarding for me.

I want to mention five very important colleagues leaving this House. Stephen, Jim, Jake, Tony and Dave Hamilton. You know, I have learned a lot from these five very important people, and I have learned a lot by watching them, their quiet leadership, the fact that they lead by example has been something that I have been able to watch and pick up and understand and appreciate. Certainly there have been many times when we've had disagreements, Mr. Speaker, fundamental disagreements, about issues and I think that this is something that a number of people in the public could talk to me about that have said there is such a disagreement on certain issues, how can you continue to come to work and work with folks day in and day out and put these issues behind you. I think it would be very difficult, Mr. Speaker, if I had any doubts about their commitment to the people of the Northwest Territories. We may disagree on issues extremely at times, but I have never doubted these five folks. I have never doubted their unwavering commitment to the people of the Northwest Territories and I think that's certainly what makes the difference and allows us to move past certain issues and continue to move forward, try to move the bars and ensure that our reach continues to exceed our grasp.

Mr. Speaker, I can never repay these five people for this, for what they have been able to do for me quietly. I guess about

the best I can offer them is that should I be successful and be fortunate enough to come back to this House, I will in my own quiet way try to do what they have done for me and for new Members, if I can be of any help, I will certainly offer that as they have done for me.

I'd like, Mr. Speaker, to thank maybe most importantly the work on behalf of my constituents done by my assistant, Mary Anne Woytuik, who has been with me the entire four years. This is a person who truly gets up every day wanting to help people and it has made such a difference in my job and it has been inspiring for me. She continues to try to do better for our constituents. I appreciate that and this would have been so much more difficult without her. I want to thank her for sticking with me through these four years and certainly thank her for all the work she has done on behalf of our constituency.

I have made a lot of friends in staff in the GNWT over the course of four years. I have been fortunate enough to work with the people in this building, a very professional, committed group of people. I have learned a lot from them. A number of GNWT staff as well, especially in my role as chair of the Standing Committee on Social Programs and I have had quite a number of dealings with people in the social envelope departments and there are some excellent top shelf people working in this government and I appreciate what they are doing on behalf of all the people across the Northwest Territories.

I particularly want to mention two gentlemen who have worked closely with me on the Social Programs committee. David Inch, the Clerk of Committees; if he tires out he never shows but he never seems to tire reminding me of the same simple fundamental rules of chairing committees, always there with the cheat notes for me. It seems that something happens when you get into the chair of committee, you suddenly start to forget things like your own name and Dave Inch has always been there to help me and remind me and make me certainly look much better than I have been and I appreciate that. Robert Collinson, in research, as well. There are many nights, if we think it is difficult for us going home at 8:00 in the evening, I tell you we task our research people after we leave at 8:00 with coming up with volumes of work by 8:00 the next morning, they are not going home until much later, Mr. Speaker. I know that and quite often I don't think I acknowledge that enough, but I would like to thank Robert for his hard work over these four years.

I would like to thank all of my colleagues. I have made a number of very close friends here among the 19 of you, but especially let me say that I have new found respect, I think over the course of four years, for my out-of-town colleagues. I know how difficult session is now. I go to work in the morning when my young daughter is still asleep, I come home at night and she is asleep again. I don't dare wake her up so I can only sit there and watch her sleep, Mr. Speaker. But for the colleagues of mine who are from out of town who have to go away for weeks on end and come to Yellowknife and can't be with their families, it is amazing that they stay the course and are that committed, and I know that their constituents appreciate them for that.

Lastly, let me say thank you to my constituents for putting their trust in me. I didn't come into this job with a 10-page resume and 30 years of work experience, and they took a flyer on me, put their trust in me and I will certainly never forget that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 9, replies to Opening Address. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Hon. Jim Antoine's Reply

MR. ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Colleagues, it is an honour and a privilege to stand in this House today. It is my last day to be in the House. I just want to say that I appreciate the opportunity to reflect today on my three terms in office as an MLA serving the people of Nahendeh and the Northwest Territories and Legislative Assembly.

I made it public that I wasn't going to run again. I did that on June 24th at Kakisa during the Deh Cho Assembly and I did it in my language because leaders and representatives of most of the communities that I represent were there and I did it in my language because I figured that they elected me so I wanted them to hear first in our own language. So it would give an opportunity for whoever is thinking of taking over, it would give them enough time since June to consider it and rearrange their affairs so that they would probably try to take on this position. I will leave this House with the personal satisfaction of having assisted in improving the lives and the prospects for all the people in the Northwest Territories.

MLA Charles Dent and I entered this House together in 1991. We moved from the Yellowknife Inn to this new Assembly building and as I move on to other challenges, I can wonder who aged the most over those 12 years. Mr. Speaker, although the Member for Frame Lake may have acquired more white hair during his three terms, I want to remind him that I came to Yellowknife as the father of four and I am leaving here as a grandfather.

---Laughter

In my previous political careers as well, Mr. Speaker, in the communities as a chief, living in the communities we don't have occasion to wear a suit and tie and I remember when I first got elected in 1991, I was told that I had to come here and wear a suit, and I knew I had a pretty decent sport jacket in the closet so I dug it out and the sleeves were rolled up and there was a bit of red and green paint on it, so I asked my wife Celine what happened to my jacket and she said well one of the kids used it for a Halloween costume last year.

---Laughter

So I had to clean it off and that is how I showed up here. Since that time a lot of things have changed. We have learned how to dress and I guess we call the suit and tie our work clothes here. Mr. Speaker, in my second term it was a compliment from the Member for Thebacha who always comments on this side of the House that as Ministers we look like a bunch of undertakers. So we must have deemed a new style befitting the position of Cabinet at that time. I cannot forget the fashion statement made by my colleague from Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko, who provided the new style, I think it is called the Dene Disney Chic.

Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of the third term, we witnessed different dress styles from the new crop of MLAs, including my friend and colleague, the tall and lanky Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. So when Mr. Allen showed up, he was wearing a very short tie and our fashion guru from Thebacha made a comment correlating the length of his tie and the next day Mr. Allen showed up with a very long tie. Since then he has learned how to dress very well.

In all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, the past 12 years have been very challenging and also very rewarding. We did not scare at the difficult issues, we met them head on, we met fiscal challenges, we created two new territories, we encourage and support huge economic development projects, we negotiated land claims and self-government agreements, we have protected vast areas of land and built a very strong case for devolution of responsibilities and resource revenues from the Government of Canada. We are on the right track and the future government must bring home more of the bacon.

It has been a very great honour to have had an opportunity with the dedicated colleagues here in the House. Premier Stephen Kakfwi, who is also not going to be running, will be pursuing other walks of life. I have always took their approach as my role in Cabinet with him as Premier that I was working with Stephen Kakfwi and taking on the different challenges that came our way.

Joe Handley goes to work too early for me, something like 6:00 or 7:00 and he stays late and is very dedicated and he will probably continue to do that. My colleague Mike Miltenberger has been a very quiet commentator and given very quiet, solid political advice and he tries to beat Joe here every morning at work and he is a good asset to this government and to the Legislative Assembly.

Another person that is going to leave is Jake Ootes who was here for eight years, the last four years as Cabinet Minister, and he is also dedicated and was very committed to his work and he will be missed in this Legislative Assembly.

My colleague Vince Steen has been a solid Cabinet Member. He repeats and looks at everything and asks a lot of tough questions in Cabinet and you have to be ready to answer him.

Our friend and colleague Roger Allen from Inuvik Twin Lakes has been a solid support and we come from a similar background so we understand what we are talking about when we talk about small communities, aboriginal, we are also involved in business so it was a pleasure meeting and working with all of them.

With the political and business leaders we have worked very closely with them. I have really enjoyed my time in Cabinet and working in all of the areas, and also with all the different residents from across the North. In our travels to the different communities, attending different conferences, it was always very enjoyable to meet people in the North. I see it as we are all working together to shape a Northwest Territories that will serve the best interests of the generations to follow. Our residents that live in the communities, and I must say that in all the communities, our infrastructures are in place, there might be an odd one or two that needs it in place but generally what we have done over the last four years and even before that, we have put in really good infrastructures in our communities.

I had the opportunity to travel to other parts of this country, even into Alaska, and about four years ago when I was in Alaska, there were about 200 communities in there that still had honey buckets compared to none in our communities. So we have done really well in terms of putting in really solid, good infrastructures in our communities and our people are enjoying a better standard of living. They have access to a healthy environment and country foods. Residents have a growing number of interests in employment and business opportunities that we have never seen before and access to a wide range of essential public programs and services.

It is my contention, Mr. Speaker, that we cannot afford to rest on our laurels, and the future governments and leaders must continue to work towards improving opportunities for our people, especially for our youth. I am confident that we know now more clearly than ever where we want to go as people from the North. However, everyone has responsibility to strive to improve their own lives. Everybody blames the government for almost everything that comes up but there are people in our communities who are doing things on their own and not everybody is depending on government and that is what we should strive to improve, their lives and to contribute to their prosperity in the Northwest Territories. The main goal of government is to create a political climate to support our residents and their families in this task.

Mr. Speaker, I was elected by the people of Nahendeh in 1991 and I was returned to office twice afterwards, in 1995 and 1999. I owe much gratitude to the people I represent. I represent one of the larger constituencies in geographic size in the Northwest Territories. I represent the southwestern corner of the Territories and I want to thank the people from Jean Marie River, Trout Lake, Fort Liard, Nahanni Butte, Wrigley and Fort Simpson, for placing their trust in me over the last 12 years. As the largest constituency in the Northwest Territories, Nahendeh will continue to face many challenges and opportunities. I trust I responded in a timely manner to the concerns and brought forward the suggestions they have made directly to me in my many visits in their communities. I am proud to be from Nahendeh and it has been an honour to serve the people through this Legislative Assembly.

I will continue to lend my support and assistance to whoever gains your trust in the upcoming election and that will take the role as the MLA for Nahendeh. I had the privilege to work with the aboriginal community leaders from across the Northwest Territories as the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and I want to thank all of my aboriginal colleagues from the North to the South for their cooperation and guidance that they have provided me over the years. The First Nations, Inuvialuit and Metis are the original custodians of our land. We have learned to share this responsibility with other Northerners and together we have proven that we can all improve the quality of life for our people by working together.

My elders encouraged me to work with everyone for the benefit of everyone. I trust the spirit of cooperation will continue as we face future challenges together. I have always been fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with political and business leaders across Canada and internationally on issues and initiatives impacting us here in the Northwest Territories. The Northwest Territories is now clearly on the international radar screen, not only as a growing diamond mining and hydro carbon reduction economy, but it is an evolving political jurisdiction which is balancing the collective rights of aboriginal people with the individual rights of Canadian citizenry. This acknowledgement is particularly rewarding for the MLA for Sahtu and myself, and many other NWT aboriginal leaders who have long sought a more meaningful role for aboriginal people in the decisions related to our land.

I feel more than ever that we're moving forward together as Northerners. New businesses to the NWT are learning to work within our unique framework. We demand, expect and are prepared to work hard to ensure that Northerners benefit directly and meaningfully on the development of our natural resources.

Now it is up to the Government of Canada to turn over control and benefits of development of the North to the people of the

North where it has always belonged. We are contributing increasingly to Canada's prosperity, and deserve access to fiscal resources required to build a healthy future for our future generations.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my staff who have supported and advised me over the years. I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that I have had very good staff in my political office as a Minister's office. I just want to mention currently my executive secretary is Bernie Mandeville who is very energetic and has been very helpful. I want to mention Sue Fleck who is very thorough in all her work. Edith Mack has helped me since 1995 in different roles. I want to mention Pietro Debastiani who has also been my EA in the past. Phil Mercredi worked with me for a while. Rosa Wright also helped me very well. I was fortunate to have excellent support staff at the Legislative Assembly, as well. Especially the advice of the long-standing Clerk -- whose last day was yesterday -- Mr. David Hamilton, and the staff who work with him who have supported me as an MLA first when I was an ordinary MLA and the chair of the Standing Committee on Finance.

I have also been fortunate to have great support from my staff in my constituency office in Fort Simpson that took care of my affairs in my constituency. I have to mention Pearl Norwegian who is no longer with me, but she really helped me out in the last few years. Now Derek Erasmus will be helping me until the end of my term. So with the excellence of great support of staff in my ministerial office and in the departments for which I have had the opportunity...Over the years I have held many responsibilities besides my principal duty as MLA for Nahendeh.

I wish to express heartfelt thanks to the past and present staff in the following departments: Safety and Public Services, which no longer exists but of which I was a Minister; Transportation; Public Works and Services; Executive; Justice; Municipal and Community Affairs; and now Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and Aboriginal Affairs. I want to especially recognize the two deputy ministers. Bob McLeod, deputy minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, who I have had the opportunity to work with for the last couple of years in this department and he has been an excellent, hard worker; and all the staff who work in RWED. It's a huge department with many responsibilities. I just want to say that as a Minister we go to federal/provincial/territorial meetings with our counterparts, and there are 11 of the FPTs. So I could be travelling every day of every week of the whole year if I really wanted to, but we have to prioritize and our duties up here come first. So I attend many meetings and they've done excellent work.

Aboriginal Affairs; of course, Rick Bargery, deputy minister, and all the staff in the department, especially the negotiations who have done excellent, hard work over the last few years that I'm aware of. I'd like to thank them all for their support and working with me. I want to say to them that you're all consummate professionals, and the people of the North are well served by your dedication to your work.

Mr. Speaker, I have always believed that the role of government is to get things done. Right from the beginning as a Minister, I told my staff I want to get things done. I don't want to talk about it anymore; I think there are places where we discuss and do reviews, but our job is to get things done. Not identify things that should be done or talk about it, but I wanted to get things done. Sometimes it has been very frustrating if we couldn't get things done.

The government is here to effectively provide programs and services. In my travels across the Northwest Territories I am constantly reassured to see our own people striving to deliver services. The regions and communities are the clients we serve and we must never forget that. Although many decisions are made in the capital here in Yellowknife, the intention is to support the delivery of programs and services outside of the capital region. Public works in our regions and communities require our support and encouragement in delivering essential services often in very difficult circumstances. I would like to thank them all again for their dedication and commitment to the jobs that they're doing very well.

In closing, I want to thank once again all the people in Nahendeh for their continued support, advice and encouragement, and their prayers through my 12 years as MLA and the last eight years as a Cabinet Minister in this government.

I really want to thank all the people in Nahendeh, in the North, even in Yellowknife who have been trying to encourage me to run again. But my decision is pretty solid. I think I've done the best I could in the circumstances. I've done 12 years and the only promise I ever made to my constituents is that I will try the best I can. I didn't promise them buildings or anything, I just said I would try the best I can. That's all anybody can do in the circumstances.

When I first agreed to seek this office representing the people of Nahendeh, my family backed me up 100 percent, and they have adjusted their lives over the past 12 years to meet my hectic and often unpredictable schedule. I look forward to spending more time now with my family to keep up with the personal development of my children: Denezeh, Melaw, Sachey and Tumbah and to share the joys of life with my daughter-in-law Heather and my grandson K'a. Our family is now patiently awaiting the birth of Denezeh's and Heather's second child.

Mr. Speaker, I'm confident that we are building a strong future for our children and grandchildren. I encourage the next government to keep in mind who they are serving, and to respect all points of views, to make good things happen, and to not only dress smartly but also comfortably, and most of all you have to be leaders. The people in the North look to us and will look to you to be leaders, to make decisions, and to sometimes make bold decisions that you know have to be right.

I just want to say that it has been a real honour to work with all the past and present Members of this House. We have to keep moving on and forward. I will be watching your progress with interest and it is time for me to return home and spend more time with my family and to visit the places where we should be. Actually, right now we should all be moose hunting or something, but we're here. But that sort of stuff I will be doing next fall.

Nahendeh is a very special place and I look forward to returning home. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. With that, I would like to wish you all the best wherever your journey takes you. I'm sure we'll see you around. Item 9, replies to Opening Address. Member for Great Slave, Mr. Bill Braden.

Mr. Braden's Reply

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Four years ago I asked for this job because I believed I could make a contribution to running a government and maybe I could even make a difference. I asked for this job because I believed my community was heading into an era of huge, new opportunities. We would be challenged not only by how we managed these opportunities themselves, but also how we managed the impacts on our way of life. I believe that our system of governing, as we fondly call it this consensus system, was not serving us well. I wanted to see what I could do to advance the issues of accountability, responsiveness and confidence in government. I believed, Mr. Speaker, that the new NWT -- and it was only a few months old then, back in 1999 -- could really break through. We could really be a have territory, we could be moving mountains on the land claim and self-government front, and we could be turning the corner on a shameful litany of social ills, abuse and crime.

Our performance after four years has predictably been a mix of highs and lows on all fronts. I won't go into an inventory of all those issues and what we did, that's all a matter of record, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to engaging in these issues with my constituents in the days ahead. Rather, I'd like to address the areas of economy, of leadership and community. These are the three planks that I ran on four years ago and I would like to take this time to account for what has happened since December of 1999. More important, I believe, is that I want to look forward to see how we can manage these issues ahead.

Opportunities must be seized where they occur, and I believe that is what Yellowknife has done. We have seen our government, through the leadership of the Premier and the Ministers, set terms on diamond allocations that has stimulated well over \$10 million in sorting and cutting plant investment and 100 new jobs in Yellowknife. In the next few years, Mr. Speaker, we can see this double and we can see it move into other NWT communities, as well, and we should be looking for other ways of capitalizing on the diamond boom and add to the diversity of this amazing gift of nature.

Mr. Speaker, we're in the midst of a long-anticipated sunset of Yellowknife's gold mining industry. This brings with it disruption to jobs, to families and, of course, to our economy. But it also brings the responsibility to manage it properly in human terms and for the environment, and this includes the enormous task and the investment required in cleaning up two of Canada's oldest producing mines.

Our city has enjoyed the prosperity of unprecedented growth in stores and services and business, it's brought new competition and benefits to consumers, and we've seen our volunteer sector grow, Mr. Speaker. We've seen added new activities and sports and cultural venues grow in the city, and I believe we are a larger, stronger, more stable and more diverse community.

The latest in a series of achievements in land claims and self-government is before us. It is coming into force with the Tlicho government over the next decade with four neighbouring communities to Yellowknife. We'll have the tools to become the unified nation they have worked so hard for. This can only be a new opportunity for this community, as well, for I believe our joint prosperity is linked. And look, Mr. Speaker, we're finally going to get that road finished and we're actually going to get a bridge built; finally.

We've seen remarkable growth in housing in this community. The private sector has responded vigorously to the need, but we're still faced with the enormous challenge of affordability. It is crushing for many of our families and workers in low and middle-income brackets, and if we are to sustain our growth and success we've got to put housing at the front of our agenda.

Housing, Mr. Speaker, is only one of the problem consequences of the boom. There are many others. We see a disturbing upwards spiral in domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, family neglect and crime. Careless and risky behaviour especially among our youth is epidemic. We find ourselves telling our children and visitors to the city to stay away from the downtown area after 10:00. We all share a sense of shame and frustration at this, Mr. Speaker. What can we do to take back our town? Several dozen, I think perhaps a couple hundred of us, walked one evening just a few weeks ago in the Take Back the Night march led by the NWT Status of Women Council. We can also look forward to actions like that of the Yellowknife Homelessness Coalition, the coalition for community wellness, new work by the RCMP as ways that can make a difference. As a community we must realize that we have to take ownership of this crisis if we are to solve it.

Our government in this area has to catch up with its own record of neglect, Mr. Speaker. For too many years we have denied our communities across the NWT the investment and hard work that should have gone into the prevention and treatment and follow-up programs to tackle the issues of abuse and violence. My constituents have told me absolutely clearly the social agenda is the priority for the next government.

Mr. Speaker, when we go to the polls on November 24th we'll be electing the territorial decision-makers for the next four years. These MLAs will be using what we call the consensus government system as their way to make those decisions. One of the reasons I ran four years ago was because I felt this system wasn't up to its fullest potential, it was sluggish, it was bogged down with having to make too many compromises and trying to accommodate too many agendas to be responsive and agile in our fast-moving territory. If we were to take a poll to test the level of confidence and trust that our people have in us, I think we'd find, Mr. Speaker, that we're losing a lot of ground; in fact, we might well find that we're underground. Indeed, I see voter turnout slipping steadily over the past several years, and that alone is a significant measure of how much we count.

We've seen other signals that pass judgment on our consensus system. The NDP, the New Democratic Party, have twice floated the scenario of bringing party politics in to advance their agenda through a slate of candidates. More recently, a business-based coalition has tested the party process as a way of getting us to pay attention to what is seen as a fundamental weakness, a lack of accountability. We should not dismiss either of these, Mr. Speaker. They are strong messages from voters trying to tell us that we're not delivering on their expectations of due government.

So what do we do about it? I suggest two approaches. One is to look in our own backyard, Mr. Speaker, and address the way we manage governance with our own boards and agencies and departments. I look with dismay at how we blew up two of our most senior boards -- the Power Corporation and the Stanton Territorial Hospital -- and I believe this is a result of our failure to govern properly on our part. If we are to really see some progress, we have to take aggressive measures, Mr. Speaker, we have to cut back and streamline the number of boards and agencies we've created. We should not be hesitant about

realigning and redistributing our own departments to suit our changing needs. We need to address capacity, communication, monitoring and compliance, and reset our directions. After all, we've been building this government, basically from scratch, for the last 30 years. Some of it isn't working. The status quo is not an option. Let's rebuild.

Here in this legislature, we need to rethink the way we do business, Mr. Speaker. The past four years, I believe, have seen walls and barriers developed between our Cabinet, our Caucus and the committees. We've seen too many arbitrary decisions and reactions, and a breakdown in collaboration way outside the sphere of intended consensus. We have hobbled ourselves. We can do better through a new approach to governance.

Mr. Speaker, my second approach is to give the voters of the Northwest Territories more of a say in who the leadership would be for the Northwest Territories. One aspect of our election system is that the voter has little on which to pin his or her expectations, other than the track record and the reputation of the candidates in their riding. We can't make pledges, we can't make promises as individual candidates, Mr. Speaker, we can't pledge accountability when things don't go our way. We're only one of 19 Members who will be in this House. What can we do to give the voter more to go on when they go to the polls? My approach is to focus on the gap that exists between the voter and how our leadership is chosen.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, when I look at a newly-elected provincial government it's with a little bit of envy, that's because the day they get elected and voted into office, they have a mandate from a majority of their people on what to do. They can start on day one to fulfill their promises, with a leadership regime that's already tested and together.

Our consensus approach in reality is the reverse of this. We form an Assembly after the election as a group more or less of strangers. We select our Premier and Cabinet almost entirely on good faith, with a regional mix for geopolitical reasons thrown in and, Mr. Speaker, we do this almost entirely in secret. These MLAs then become the government. They then try to assemble together with all the MLAs to present a collective vision and a mandate for the next four years. In short, Mr. Speaker, in an Assembly we wander in the woods for about three months before we can really sit down to the task of governing with a direction that we can have some agreement on, and all of this time the voter has had no say or influence in who these people are going to be in government or what the vision and the objective is going to be. It's no wonder that they challenge our accountability.

What are the remedies? There are many options to look at. Indeed, Members of the 12th Assembly back in 1994 looked at these very issues, and couldn't break through or at least not without tricky challenges to election law and practice and convention.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to offer some sweeping new revelation or some enormous bold new move. I think things like this have to be taken in measured, careful steps.

A solution in this is to issue a challenge to any would-be Premier to declare their interest in the office now. Don't wait until after the election and our secret process here. Don't hide in the midst of that process that we have used in the past. I challenge those candidates to say now that they want the job and what they plan to do in the job. I want to know their priorities, their values and their ideas, and so do the voters, Mr.

Speaker. They deserve to know this in the full openness of an election campaign, so that when I go door to door and seek my constituents' views, we will have something new and exciting to talk about: who the next leader could be. It's the kind of discussion that we've never been able to have at the door or in our meetings before in the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker, and I believe it's time we do. It will enable me to bring the voice of the voter into the ballot box that will be sitting on this floor in December.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a difficult step. It requires no changes in rules or new convention, no consensus of opinion. The hard part is for those candidates who believe they can and could be the next Premier, to step outside of that comfort zone, that secret zone that we've created here, and take their ideas to the door.

Mr. Speaker, I've talked about this idea a lot in the past few months. Some people who have listened to it have called it the start of party politics. It's a slippery slope that we want to avoid, and indeed I do not want party politics. But you know, I think there's another aspect to it. I think we could look at it as something that we already know and that we're already very familiar with here in the NWT and across Canada, because this is the way, isn't it, that we elect our mayors and our chiefs in our towns and villages and cities, the way we elect our band councils and the leaders of our First Nations. The voter deserves a chance to say who the leader is going to be. I think this is a way that we could advance that in our next election.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that this is a job I truly like. I like getting up in the morning and coming to work here, or maybe somewhere else in the city or in another community in the NWT or Canada, and seeing what's new. Believe me, there's always something new. The satisfaction from being involved in the teamwork and seeing results. Most gratifying is when a constituent facing an issue asks for help and I can make a difference, and I've had that satisfaction many, many times.

Mr. Speaker, these results aren't gained by working alone. We're well served by a staff of professionals. Living a life by political rules, public law is not to be taken lightly, and here again we have our clerks and administration backup to see us through. We've been ably served by our Conflict of Interest Commissioner, the Honourable Ted Hughes, and I thank him for his respectful, steady guidance.

Many of our issues involve some level of bureaucracy in working with staff, and I thank those people especially for their patience, and sometimes their tolerance, of a rookie MLA who was trying perhaps a bit too hard to get something done. I've learned a lot about teamwork and some of those lessons haven't been easy in the give and take of debates, discourse here among 19 politicians.

On more than one issue I've often thought to myself how can someone be so stupid about something, and then I realized they probably think exactly the same of me and I feel better or at least perhaps I feel human.

I salute those Members, Mr. Speaker, who are retiring from the political arena: Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Ootes, and yourself, Mr. Speaker, for my appreciation, my admiration and my expectation that somewhere, sometime we will be seeing each other again in some avenue of public service.

I am especially grateful to my constituency assistant for four years, John Argue. John came to me with almost 30 years of

experience in the territorial civil service, and with a volunteer record and a familiarity with this city that I doubt could be matched by anyone. John, you helped me shine in the good days and you polished me up on the not so good ones. I value your loyalty above all. Thank you.

It's to my family that I owe my greatest appreciation and affection. My wife Val and my daughters Rae and Carmen tolerated, comforted and gave me their unflagging confidence. I am especially indebted to my daughters, because if ever I started to sound pompous or fake or, heaven forbid, political about anything, they tackled me hard. I'm blessed to have an extended family here, Mr. Speaker, my mother, three brothers and their families, all of whom accepted my ambitions and the risk that it involved.

It's a great time to be in the NWT and to have the trust of the people in the riding of Great Slave to represent them in this Assembly for the last four years. I hope to return for the next four. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 9, replies to Opening Address. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Ms. Lee's Reply

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been an honour to serve as MLA for Range Lake for the last four years. This being the last day, I would like to just offer some personal comments.

It's hard to believe this is the last day since we stepped into this building, and myself as a Member. I remember making my first statement. It was called Voices of People, and I was trying to express my desire and need to make sure that the voices of my constituents were heard in this House through me, but also expressing my commitment to hear the needs and voices of people that my colleagues represent in this House. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, no other statement has gone through five or six drafts since, because we usually haven't had time to do that since then.

Mr. Speaker, I've done a lot of things in my life, I believe; really interesting things. I've had great jobs that paid pretty good money and gave me lots of responsibility. But usually after about three years I'm ready to go into different things and look for new challenges. There's always something that was just missing in whatever I was doing, so I usually changed jobs or went back to school for something new. But in this job I've been here for more than three-and-a-half years, and I can really feel that I can say that I've just begun to flatten out the learning curve maybe about a year ago. I've made a point of thinking about this job...I guess you think about this job all the time, but more so in the last few days because it is time for reflection and so on. As I'm making this statement I hope that the people will just be patient and listen to some of the statements here.

I think what's really challenging about this job is there is a lot to know in this job. We all walk in here as generalists and not specialized in politics or not specialized in any area. I don't think the special knowledge of any one area is required or expected, but there is certainly a lot to know, a lot of people to get to know, lots of issues, not just in Yellowknife but all of the Territories and lots of history behind the issues, conflicting

agendas. So there is a lot to learn there, there's no question about that.

What is most interesting about this is that you need to know what you don't know. You need to know what you can do and what you can't do, what brick walls you can climb, what brick walls that you want to bang your head against and which ones to ignore or just blast away with everything you have and which ones you want to climb up. I think that's what is so challenging about this job.

Mr. Speaker, I think what I have found in this job that's making me want to use what I have learned the last few years and will continue to do so and I will be seeking re-election and support from my constituents and should I be lucky enough to come back and have support from my constituency, I do believe I would be able to use this experience. What's really special about this job is it not only allows you, but it demands that everyone put everything that we have into this job. It's not a job, it's really a way of life and it's a real commitment to do something. It really asks all of us of everything, everything in our head, everything in our heart and, on top of that, almost all of our time. What I mean by this job asking us to use everything in our head is what we know, whether we get it from formal education through schooling or we get it from our work experience or by doing things and having people teach us, but I do believe what's in our hearts that this job demands of us is what we learn from our life experiences. That doesn't come with a degree in this or a diploma in that. It really is about being called upon to use our compassion and asking us to connect with the people that we are here to serve. It's asking us for the ability to put ourselves within the shoes of everyone. It's about asking us to empower others to do things for them and to help them to do what we need to do.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know you've seen a lot in this House and we certainly have had down moments. It's hard to remember those because we are on the last day and we have to remember all the good things, but there is no question we've had some very tough issues, very dark moments in and out of this House. I know that no matter what was happening in this House, what kept me going really was the ability to make a difference in one person's life on a very small scale, on a very small thing and probably for somebody who doesn't even vote or somebody who doesn't really know what it is that I do or someone who isn't aware of all the political issues. They come to you because you are their MLA or they have heard your name somewhere and they tell you their problems and if you could do anything to help them, then you know you've made a difference, you've done your job and you've used your power of the office to make a difference. You use whatever you can find in your head and your heart to look at an issue, to look at a person's problems and help in some way.

In many ways, Mr. Speaker, this job reminds me a lot of being a lawyer and that's one thing I can think of because that's what I was doing beforehand, but I have said this to a lot of people, this job is a lot like being a lawyer, except I don't have to send a bill at the end and people don't get upset with you.

There is only one non-personal statement I want to make today because I don't want to have a whole list of things that I have done or not done or good things because I believe we will be soon enough on the campaign trail and we will be able to go to the people and have discussions and have them judge our actions and words and our performances here.

A lot of what I have said and done is on my Web site and I am told the latest stats on it are about 800,000 hits. I am creating

a new site for my campaign and I have been advised that I have saved about 62 megabytes in my existing site and I am not sure what that means because I am not very computer inclined, but an average CD has about two megabytes, so I have enough stuff to fill about 60 CDs. So if anyone wants to read it, everything I have done and said is in there.

Mr. Speaker, back to what I wanted to say, one political statement I want to make is I hope to see more women coming into this Assembly in the next or future assemblies. I would like to see a day when it's not an issue that I am a woman MLA because I don't believe any of my colleagues that come to my house as an MLA ever get asked what is it like to be a man in an Assembly.

This must be election time because I am getting lots of calls from people and media asking what do we do to get more women in and how do we help them out. I don't really have the answer to that, but I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I have never been anywhere where there are less women as equal colleagues than in this place. I come from a family of very strong women. I was brought up by a single mom with two daughters and the three of us are very strong, very disciplined and strong-headed. I had the guidance and support of a grandma and very strong aunt. So I was very used to having very strong women in my life. All throughout school, I went through business, politics and law which might be considered non-feminine areas of study, but I never felt out of place in being a woman.

In my work experiences in government offices, I never felt out of place being a woman even though I worked in a number of non-traditional areas. I remember being in a court one day, Mr. Speaker...I must say my second year of law school at Dalhousie was the first year where there were more women students than men students. I know that the med school that year had a lot more women students. The doctors in town, a lot of them are women. When I was practicing law, I do remember distinctly being in court where I looked around the court chamber and I noticed that the Supreme Court judge was a woman, both lawyers in the chamber were women, the court clerk was a woman and there was another staff member in the chamber. Almost every player in the room were women and I remember feeling very natural about that.

I remember also feeling like what would it be like for me to sit here as a woman lawyer if everyone in the room was a man or that I was treated any differently because I was a woman.

Mr. Speaker, I have no answer as to whether or not we would improve the House if we had more women, but I do know it would make a difference and it would be a different House. When I first got here and went to a meeting of all the MLAs, there were 11 of us because I belonged to a non-Cabinet committee and my woman colleague from Hay River South was sitting in Cabinet at the time, so she was not part of the 11. I was the only one and I looked around and I had never gone to a meeting like that where there were 10 men. I felt a bit out of place, I must say. I remember a male colleague saying to me you don't really think we would treat you differently because you are a woman. Probably not. But I said to him how would you feel like it if you came to work everyday as an MLA and you were sitting there with 10 other women? His face kind of brightened up and he said I can see your point there.

I do believe people want to vote for women. They want to have a choice to vote for women with all things being equal. We can't get more women in here unless more women run for the jobs. I would like to really encourage women to run and stand

for the office because I believe women have everything they need to do this job and gender is an important component of the way we define ourselves. I have said this many times in this House, I have a little bit of history in this place where I have sat in this Assembly for over 20 years and there were times when aboriginal rights and aboriginal issues were represented by non-aboriginal people. No matter how sympathetic non-aboriginal people might be to aboriginal issues, we don't do that anymore. We expect that aboriginal people have the rights and the place to advance their own agenda and to speak on their own behalf. I do believe it's only by having more women in this House that we can have the diversity of women's issues and we can have public policy and public laws being made in a way that represents the entire society that we are here to represent. I would really like to encourage women to run and people to help women win.

Mr. Speaker, that is about the only political statement I want to make. I want to spend the remaining time thanking and recognizing the people that I have had the privilege spending time with over the last four years.

I would really like to thank the staff at the Legislative Assembly. I think in one of the speeches, I think it was by the Law Clerk to David Hamilton, Katherine Peterson made an analogy that this Chamber reminds her of a restaurant where everybody is sitting around enjoying a quiet dinner, but in the backroom there is the chaos of trying to put the meals together. I have not heard anything better describing the situation here. I think when people look at this House and look at us, they see us being very orderly and organized. There are a lot of systems in place to make sure the meetings go well, but that's certainly not the case. There are lots in the back and lots of people who support us and give us advice. I really want to thank all the staff in the Legislative Assembly. We have already made a statement to thank Mr. Hamilton. I don't think we realize how changed a place this is going to be when we come back. He's not here now, but we will learn to live without him, I am sure, because we have to.

I would like to thank a number of personal staff I have had, and I have had lots of them. I first had the help from Jean Wallace who helped me my first year. I had Marilyn Pirker. There was Steve Dunbar, Ryan Chenke, Tammy Slaven, Darren Campbell, Brett Talbot and Vivian Squires.

Mr. Speaker, I am just wondering if I could say a few things about my personal way of doing work here. I have a little bit of a personal policy of not socializing too much with the people I work with. I find this to be a very serious job and I often wonder what the Members of this House think of the way I do things. We get along just fine, but I want them to know that I look at every one of them and I find them very, very interesting. Years down the road when our political issues are done away with, I think we will make very good friends. We are friends now, but I don't think there's anything as intense and complicated as the relationships we are expected to have in this House. I want to thank all the Members for giving me support and the time that we were able to spend together. Also I think I want to say the same about the staff. I am not one who has lots of personal chats and personal socialization with the staff, but I want them to know that I really respect the work that all of them do in helping us to do our job.

Mr. Speaker, I am trying hard not to get too emotional because I must say to you I have not seen so many men cry as I have in the last few weeks saying good-bye in this House. I know this is a very emotional place. Deciding to run for political office is one of the hardest decisions I have ever made and having

been here for awhile, I can see that deciding to leave politics might even be harder to do. It's such an unusual thing putting your name out there to run for political office and then to know when you want to leave office.

I just want to specially recognize the four people who are leaving us. Not only will there be a huge hole put in the middle of this Chamber with Mr. Hamilton leaving, but the departure of Mr. Ootes and Mr. Antoine, Mr. Kakfwi and yourself, Mr. Speaker, I think we will feel the impact in the next Assembly, should I be so fortunate to be back.

Mr. Speaker, for Mr. Ootes, I didn't really know him that well before I came here. I do remember a brief encounter with him when he was running a magazine. He really is an old-fashioned gentle soul. He came here with the government over 30 years ago. I know that I am really going to miss his presence here. Someone said to me they wanted to compliment the good work Mr. Ootes did. They said to me, I know you don't like him, but I think he did a really good job. I got really alarmed because I do not want anybody to think that I do not like Mr. Ootes. If I was ever hard on Mr. Ootes in this House, that was to pursue my work, but it wasn't anything personal or that I didn't like him. I was just taking my job too seriously sometimes. I have to give Mr. Ootes credit for managing to keep his head down and keep moving in all of the storms that have swirled around us in the last few years. I want to give Mr. Ootes credit for always giving me a fair hearing. Whenever I go into his office and I want to talk to him about an issue for my constituent or a change in one of the millions of things I have asked for, he always has time to listen to you and give you a fair hearing. That's really important. More importantly, being a senior Yellowknife Member, I have really relied on him to go and talk to him about the highs and lows of being a Yellowknife Member and talking about issues and getting history from him. I really appreciate that. I want to wish Jake and Marg a very happy semi-retirement and a great next hurrah. I hope he's near here and I just want to thank him.

The next people I want to recognize is Mr. Antoine and Mr. Kakfwi, who are going to leave us after today. These two leaders, I believe, have been an enormous model of aboriginal leadership in this House for a very long time. I remember many days when I would be sitting across from these gentlemen and I would be looking at them. They remind me of warriors and it's interesting that Mr. Kakfwi mentioned that in one of his statements. I hope that even though they are departing us, they will watch over us and they will pray for us and help the next Assembly.

I remember when I first met Mr. Antoine. He came in as a new Member in his jeans and shirts and I remember that he didn't have a suit to wear. I remember him walking into my office asking for something because I used to work for the Members. He was young and brash and he had a full head of hair. I was working in another capacity and I had a chance to travel with him and we spent time in a sweat lodge at the Navajo First Nations. It's sad for me personally to see the experience he's gained over the past 12 years, that he will be leaving that behind and I know it's been a difficult decision for him and it's his own to make and I will certainly miss his presence. If there was anything that Mr. Antoine taught me it's the power of a handshake and a smile. He walks into a room and he never, ever forgets to shake the hand of everybody in the room. That right away breaks the ice and creates an environment for dialogue. I think that sort of represents his style and his way of leadership. I will miss that very much. I have heard a lot from him. He's a constant diplomat. He likes to build consensus and he really knows how to keep his feelings under control.

Goodness knows, in many meetings we've had, we've had some heated debates.

I know he was offered a part in North of 60 one time, Mr. Speaker, and I realize that show is not anymore, but we've seen actors turning into politicians, so maybe politicians turning into an actor might be a career he might consider in his homeland of Nahendeh.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kakfwi I want to recognize. I don't think I can say anymore about what's been said in the local and national media. I remember hearing his statement in the House. It was a little bit of a surprise statement because I didn't know that that was coming. I went home and turned on the national media and there it was in the headline that he wouldn't be seeking re-election.

So I am not going to do the whole profile, but it's often said that he's a misunderstood leader in the North, but I am confident that history will judge him as a leader of vision and conviction and one who made a real difference for the Northwest Territories. He's been a pillar of leadership in this House for the last 16 years. For me, for almost all of my adult life here, he has been in this Assembly. I think that everyone should recognize that you couldn't turn the heads of large multinational organizations or the federal government or work on major issues that he has and make a difference unless he had the conviction and power to do that. Mr. Kakfwi has that. He has shown us that and I do hope that he'll be in our presence in the future to give us the benefit of that guidance and leadership.

Often, Mr. Speaker, in this job, I don't think that achievements that you make in this House or outside of this House or as a leader are really felt until five, 10 or 15 years down the road. I think what we do here is important, what difference you make here in one day is important, but a lot of how we are judged will depend on how our issues are judged, five, 10 or 15 years down the road.

I would like to personally thank Mr. Kakfwi for giving me personal advice and guidance over the three-and-a-half years. We've had very calm and collected talks and we've had lots of other heated debates. I have argued with him, I have certainly let him know about lots of my views on things, but throughout it all, he's always had an open mind and wanted to understand where I was coming from. I have really relied on that and wanted to thank him very much. At the beginning, I got so excited about every single issue, whether it was in this House or in his office, I would go and rant and rave to him about one issue or another. I felt like he was looking at me as a kid trying to tell me what to do, but over the years of working, he's come to understand my passion and conviction about the issues I am working on and I have really learned to understand the sensitivity he has for the underdogs and the sensitivity he has for women leaders. He's one who knows who can see the big picture while you are mired in the small issues of the day. I want him to know that I've really appreciated his leadership over the three years. I've learned a lot. I was there when he was going through some really tough times. We've been served well. He's just a young man. I know he's been here for 16 years, but he has a lot more to go. It's our loss, but I know there will be lots of other opportunities for him to serve and I look forward to seeing him and working with him in that other area, whatever that might be I have no idea.

Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to end my statement by saying something about you. Since you announced you were not going to seek re-election I have thought about this a lot, but

every time I try to put it down it sounded like a eulogy and I didn't want to do that because nobody is dying here. I don't think the end of political life is death. In fact, I think the end of political life is probably just a new beginning, and a great beginning, I'm sure.

So I don't really know how to do it when talking about you, but maybe I should just start by saying you are one truly special human being. I'm sure when I say that, I say that on behalf of everybody in Yellowknife and all of the Territories.

I don't think I'd be out of place to say that you are one person who has been given special gifts from God. For that, you are a gift to us. Your gift is your unbelievable ability to connect with anyone from any background, in any setting. I don't know another person who has this kind of connection. I know your assuring presence in this House will be missed and it's a loss for the new Members who will come into the House or the existing Members. I don't want to make an error in that. I have to be careful about that.

Mr. Speaker, Yellowknife and the NWT is a community of diverse culture and background. No matter who I talk to, whether it's in Yellowknife or the many places in the NWT where I've been with you or in my travels, they all feel that they know you. They know that you are one of them. They know that you're their friend and you have especially been a strong friend of the visible minority communities in Yellowknife, whether they be the Filipino community or Vietnamese community or the African community. I know you have friends from everywhere -- in Fort Smith all the way to Tuktoyaktuk and Sachs Harbour. I don't think I could go anywhere in the Northwest Territories where somebody doesn't know you and like you and love you and know that you're a special person.

Another gift that I must say about you is that I don't know anybody else who has done more varied things. I think in your resume it's recorded that you're a social worker; you've worked in government; I've already said that you do weddings and funerals; you've been a coroner; you're an auctioneer. I always thought that people are gifted in certain ways. We're supposed to be better off using one side of the brain than the other. For example, I'm not good at math. I think I'm better at English than math. But you're a gifted person in that you seem to be able to work on all sides of your brain.

I know that before you became a social worker you must have had another life or something because, as you know, I've had the opportunity to work with you way before I came here. I need to thank you for giving me the opportunity when I was 25 to work as assistant to you as the Minister. That was quite a job and I remember not being able to sleep, worried about whether I could do this job or not. In those years we travelled. I had the opportunity to travel with you to many places. I'll never forget driving to Fort Providence and you telling me a story about every telephone pole and every rock and every highway you built and the colours of the different roads. The road to Fort Providence has never been the same since I had that conversation with you because I have to notice everything on the way.

I remember driving back from Fort Providence when I became a Member and we were coming back from our Caucus meeting and a lot of Members flew back, but we decided to drive back. It was 10:00 at night, pitch black outside, and there were at least 10 northern lights in the sky. I remember you saying that the red lights on those northern lights is a special light and you should feel very lucky about it.

I remember being in Inuvik and you were telling me that you built the corridors for the utilidor in Inuvik. I'm thinking you built houses in Fort Smith, roads in Yellowknife, corridors in Inuvik. You really are a man of the NWT with very special gifts and...

AN HON. MEMBER: He built the North.

MS. LEE: Well, I know you're going to get four more years if you decide to run again. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I probably couldn't do you justice for all you are and all that you gave and all the appreciation that people have for you. I just made a little attempt at it. I do want to wish you much success. I know a lot of good things will come to you because there are a lot of people who are wishing you well. You have that special gift and I know you have a lot to give and that there will be opportunity for you to do so. I hope that's okay that I will end it here.

I just want to end my statement by thanking special people in my life. My mother, Tae Jeong Lee, whose second language is English, can't always understand exactly what's going on in this House and what I do and say. She's proud of me nonetheless and cheers for me all the time and makes sure that I'm fed and taken care of. I want to thank my mother for giving me the opportunity and love to be everything I am. I'd also like to thank my partner, Dave. As everybody has said, this is a very tough job and you need the support and love of everyone. I've certainly been given that. I want to thank my family. I want to thank all the Members, all the staff and thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Unfortunately, recall only recalls people out of the House, not back into the House, you see.

---Laughter

Item 9, replies to Opening Address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 106-14(6): Letter From President Of Kapami Cooperative Regarding Power Rates In Colville Lake

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a letter from the president of Kapami Cooperative in Colville Lake, Barbara Blanco. It's a letter regarding the difficulties of dealing with the extremely high power rates in Colville Lake.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Motion 21-14(6), Censure of the Minister of Health and Social Services.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 21-14(6): Censure Of The Minister Of Health And Social Services, Defeated

MR. KRUTKO: WHEREAS the stated mission of the Department of Health and Social Services "is to promote, protect and provide for the health and well-being of the people of the Northwest Territories;"

AND WHEREAS residents in small communities do not have access to the same level of health and social services programs as residents in large communities;

AND WHEREAS services vary between health authorities meaning that some residents are being better served than other residents by virtue of where they live;

AND WHEREAS services available in small communities can be restricted to emergencies only or withdrawn completely with very short notice due to staff shortages;

AND WHEREAS some of those staff shortages are related to vacancies or training and can be anticipated and planned for;

AND WHEREAS only providing emergency medical services has serious health consequences for the very young and the very old who need access to preventative health programs;

AND WHEREAS preventative health programs such as diabetes clinics, well baby clinics and other preventative programs are essential to the continued health and well-being of a community;

AND WHEREAS many smaller communities do not have access to such core programs as mental health and alcohol and drug workers and cannot begin their road to recovery without such assistance;

AND WHEREAS one of the foundations of the Canadian health care system is universality and the Department of Health and Social Services and its subordinate health authorities are choosing to ignore this principle;

AND WHEREAS the Minister and the Department of Health and Social Services are ultimately responsible for the provision of these services to the Northwest Territories residents;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that this Assembly hereby censures the conduct of the Honourable J. Michael Miltenberger, Minister of Health and Social Services, for the lack of attention paid to the residents of small communities in the delivery of health care programs and services and in particular for inaction and failing to address the inadequate delivery of services in many smaller communities.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't make this motion lightly. Right now, Mr. Speaker, we have communities where basically only emergency services are being offered. In this day and age of technology and also having the ability to find large amounts of money that we put into delivery of health care by way of buying equipment and operational budgets that come forth from the cost of administering health boards, we are still finding emergencies in our small communities. Core programs aren't even being provided.

In a lot of our small communities, we have high rates of cancer. A lot of our patients want to come back home and be with their loved ones for the remaining days that they have. Because of lack of programs which are offered in large communities, such as palliative care programs and having assistants to help people cope with these illnesses, it is an essential program that should be delivered in all communities.

I've raised many issues over the last week in this House dealing with alcohol and drug workers, closures of our health centres and also looking in particular at the standards that this government sets. In this House, we just went through a supplementary appropriation. We approved an expenditure of over \$2 million to 13 specialists. For me, nothing's been done to deal with the problem we know has been there year after year after year; closures of our health centres, especially during the summer season when a lot of nurses go on holidays. For some reason, we still have this crisis. I called Aklavik yesterday and I called Fort McPherson today and apparently they're still on emergency service watch where you phone the health centre and get a recording.

I think we as a government, as the Minister responsible for dealing with health care in the Northwest Territories, he's ultimately responsible to ensure that those dollars that are expended or given to health boards are spent in the areas that they were addressed to be spent on. I raised the issue of alcohol and drug programs in communities which have been vacant going on two years. Yet when the community asks where that money is, they're told sorry, the money's been spent and you don't have those resources at your disposal because someone else spent it on your behalf.

I feel it's critical that our communities have the health centres operated like any other central service in our communities, like our schools, like our municipal offices. We have a lot of people that I know of that have approached me and also during the Minister's visits, who have broken down in tears because of finding out after the fact that they now have cancer and they know their days are numbered and they knew months, if not a year ago, that there was something wrong. They continued to go into our health centre and were told that they either have a case of arthritis or they give you some other argument without any second opinions being offered by specialists.

I feel that this government has to deal with this problem as every other emergency. We had an emergency here in Yellowknife because 13 specialists threatened us to quit if we didn't pay them the 38 percent increase that they asked for, to the tune of \$2.8 million. Yet we swallowed that.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what happens if we post this poster in Yellowknife and mention to the residents in the larger centres that, sorry, for the next two months you're only going to receive emergency services and if you want services you have to call a 1-800 number, but we're only going to deal with emergencies. We're not offering any clinical services or basic care services for our elders. I think it's important as a government that we take the time to realize we have a problem here.

For us to basically continue to fund millions of dollars to health authorities that have not lived up to their obligations under the Canadian Health Act, lead our universality problems right across Canada. Anywhere you go in Canada you can have access to these programs. Yet these dollars are not making their way into our communities.

I think that, probably being the last act of this government by way of this motion, that we don't ignore the problem whether it be defeated or not. This problem will not go away. This problem is out there and it has to be dealt with, either by this Minister or the next Minister, this government or the next government. But this problem has to be dealt with by this House.

My colleagues in this House, I'd like to ask you to seriously consider how you vote on this matter because I think this also affects the care in other communities. We've heard from my colleague from Hay River with the problem of trying to get medical services there. Medical services are being eliminated and moved elsewhere without very much thought of what that affect does to your communities besides the small communities.

I feel that we as a legislature have to take note that the amount of money that we spend on health care in the Northwest Territories, with the notion that it's improving, yet we have health centres that are basically closed to emergency services only. I feel that we as a government have to do something on this matter and deal with it forthright. It's not only affecting my riding, it's affecting every other community in the Northwest Territories. Core programs are essential to community health and well-being.

I'd just like to, in closing, ask my colleagues to seriously think of the consequences of not doing anything on this matter and continuing to ignore a very serious problem that we have in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also stand to support the motion. I also have reasons to support the motion to at least make a point to this government that although they say they've done a lot of good things, they've failed in some areas. That area is in health. There are other areas, it's just that we didn't have enough time in this House to put more censures out there. We could pretty easily censure the whole Cabinet, but it's the last day of the House.

This government here has been throwing money out towards diamonds, oil and gas. We're also funding large communities for parks, boat launches, marinas, you know? Who in the Northwest Territories except the largest centres can afford to have a marina for boats over 30 feet? If they can have a boat over 30 feet, they should be able to afford their own boat launch or boat marina. Yet we throw money into it. This government is doing that.

We don't have any health centres in some of the communities in the Northwest Territories. We don't have any addiction centres in the North Slave. The only addiction centre in Hay River is in dispute with its staff and there's going to be nobody helping the North one day. These are the things that are happening. We have communities that have laypersons working there. They can't deal with emergencies. Emergency situations have to be phoned into Yellowknife. Sometimes when you phone Yellowknife to see if you can get a medevac they say, well, you have to go to your authority. When they go to the authority, the authority says you have to go to Yellowknife. They get the run around and sometimes there's an emergency situation that nobody can help them with. A Member tries to intervene, but then he can only go to the Minister. The Ministers turn their cell phones and phones off at midnight, I think, because they don't answer the phones when you phone them.

I'd like to say this is a good motion. I think my colleagues in one way or another have already run through some of the issues. Maybe not health, but they can see this government is throwing a lot of money out there for economic development and, as you know, economic development creates social problems. We are not putting any money into that area. Sure,

we have these conferences, we have the social agenda, we have all these things going on, all these meetings, but if you can't give somebody a place where they can help themselves then it's sort of worthless.

I know some people we hear are trying to help people in shopping carts. They've got all their materials in shopping carts going room to room in their offices. In this time and day of technology and all the money we're throwing around, I'm sure we could throw a little bit towards promoting health.

Another area that is a great concern of mine, we've gone through family acts and we've gone through the child and welfare acts where we're trying to promote healthy families. We see the frontline workers out there are apprehending children without trying to help the families stay together. We put the act in and then the employees at the frontline are just going against the act. They're sending our children south without telling us. I'm sure glad this self-government act is coming in now. At least we have control over the people that we are governing.

Because of this and because of all the negative things that are happening and we're just throwing money towards...How do you put it? Take from the poor, give it to the rich. That's what we've been doing the last few years. Sure, it looks when you stand up and say, well, we're putting this much money into Yellowknife, this much money into Yellowknife, this much money into Yellowknife. It's repetitive. We see that. We leave this House and we're hoping the Minister will make a statement that there's going to be a new addiction centre in the North Slave to help the people north of the lake. It still hasn't happened. But we see money is being spent. Millions of dollars in supplementaries go into other areas, but what are we doing for the families out there? We are not doing anything.

So because of the lack of help for the small communities and the poor management that we have, I'm supporting this motion and I hope my colleagues can at least support this motion because one day they might be in the same situation. Then they're going to want support from this side of the House from the smaller communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Lafferty. To the motion. To the motion. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, will be supporting this motion. I support it for the very simple reason that universality of health care delivery is important and we don't have universality in the Northwest Territories. We need to standardize all our health centres. We don't have that. We had four years and the Minister of Health and Social Services has been very good at public campaigns and putting out commercials telling people to stop smoking.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not arguing the fact that smoking does cause health problems. Mr. Speaker, that's not the only reason why people have health problems in the Northwest Territories. It seems, since the Minister got elected to the position, that's been the core message coming out of the department. You clean up your own act before we'll help you, seems to be the message.

Mr. Speaker, I, as a representative of the people who elected me, don't agree with that message and only that message. I know we put a lot of money into the Department of Health and Social Services. That budget has risen by a considerable amount since we got elected to this House, but the standard of delivery hasn't seemed to improve. We put a lot of money into

the administration, but we're not putting nearly enough into the programs and services and frontline delivery systems.

For that reason I'll support this motion because I want to send a message not only to the Minister, but the whole department. Over the next four years they have to clean up their act. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. To the motion. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand here at the pleasure of the House as the Minister of Health and Social Services. I have the political responsibility to answer to this House on concerns about the system and I accept that responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have made many sweeping generalizations and general condemnation of the health and social services system. They say there's no attention and that we're ignoring the problems. Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge that we do have problems with the health and social services system; that it is a very complex issue affecting every one of the people we represent.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister, I want to speak in defense of the people who work at the community level in all the communities that provide service in very difficult circumstances and under tremendous pressure. I want to speak in defense of the people at the regional level; of the authorities comprised of local people charged with the responsibility of administering many services, life through death, to the people of the regions that they represent. A representation, Mr. Speaker, that up until a few years ago was not there. I want to speak in defense of the Health and Social Services department and staff who work at this level to provide the service to do the legislation to provide the support to all the people that work down the chain, to the communities, to the frontline workers.

Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility when we stand in this House. We have the right to say what we will. But making sweeping generalizations and general condemnations is not appropriate and is not accurate and is not fair. Mr. Speaker, in the last two years alone the budget of Health and Social Services has gone up \$49 million. The clear majority of that money has gone to the communities. We've added doctors, nurses, mid-wives, long-term care workers, mental health workers and, Mr. Speaker, the plan is to continue that support.

The clear reality is, Mr. Speaker, as a government we know we have far more problems than we have resources, but that does not stop the people in the system that work night and day for their lives and their professions to provide the service to the people. We should always recognize that and keep it in mind. We are victims, as well, of shortages clear across Canada, North America and Europe of doctors, nurses and other allied health professionals. That's a reality. We have to pay dearly for some of the services, I acknowledge that, but they are services that we have no choice but to pay for because we need them for the health of the people.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is, as well, if they doubled the budget of Health and Social Services, the way we're going, within two or three years that would be gone. You cannot escape the issue of personal responsibility and it's not just smoking which drives our costs. Mr. Speaker, as a territory and as a population, we drink too much, we smoke too much, we eat the wrong kind of foods, we don't exercise enough and we tend to be, as a result, overweight. Mr. Speaker, those basic facts,

hard as they may be for some people to accept, drive the cost of this health care system to a significant degree. Those are all based on personal choice.

Mr. Speaker, the one most telling example I would like to use is FASD. If we could just convince pregnant mothers not to drink then we could have our children born healthy. That alone would be a tremendous success. We can't stop the efforts to educate the people, to encourage them to make the right personal choices. We can stand in this House today and say we have to keep fixing things after they are broken and we can try to do that, but clearly the system is under tremendous stress and we don't have the resources.

So, Mr. Speaker, the motion is there and I can tell this House that the people in the system worked long and hard and I take this job very seriously and I, as well, worked long and hard trying to do the best that we can in the system to make sure we have the services for the people. We have many things to do and lots of work yet to do. We're going to continue to do that. I stand before this House charged with the serious issue of misconduct and I'd await the direction of the House. Thank you.

---Applause

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

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a few comments to speak against the motion. I, too, think we should just let people in the communities and all try to do that. I think it's important to know that every Premier across this country, including the federal government, acknowledge that we will never be able to find the money and resources to address the difficulties of health across this country because we simply cannot cover the cost. That is just the cost of most Canadians who need basic health services. The costs are rising and will continue to rise.

In our case, because of our remote situations and because of the rising health conditions of aboriginal people, we have the very difficult situation to address. As the Minister said, I think one thing we can all agree here, if our people stop drinking, if they stop smoking, if they stop committing acts of violence, if they stop breaking the law, this government would be a very healthy government. We would have a lot of money to put to use where we should. The fact is we don't. Because too many of our people smoke too much, they drink too much, there's too many of them in jail, there's too many of them going to court, there's too many of them abandoning, neglecting and abusing children and somehow we have to take responsibility for that. All of us have to take some responsibility for that. It isn't just the Minister. It isn't just the Ministers. It is not just the Cabinet. It's all of us.

To say at the closing days of government that somehow you want to single out a Minister for all the ills that we're suffering is, I think, not acceptable on my part. I don't accept that. We will never be able to take care of people who are not willing or unable to take care of themselves. You can take care of the people who are willing to help, who are willing to take some responsibility. I know we can do that. These problems that I've said before are not that far away. I'm not talking about people who are hundreds of miles away. A lot of us have family members who are suffering from alcoholism or cancer or because of difficulties arising out of smoking. Families who neglect their children. We're not talking about people in far-off

communities. We're talking about our own families and we're acutely aware of that.

I ask Members to reject this motion because I don't think it's acceptable. I think we should all take some responsibility for it and realize there are a lot of people out there as well who are willing to do something or taking responsibility for their lives and seeking healthy alternatives. Our people are getting stronger and they can get stronger still. Negative messages like this do not help at all. Thank you.

---Applause

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting this motion. Mr. Speaker, we know from around the Territories the serious condition our health care services are in. As a Member for a larger community in the Northwest Territories I know that, for example, the Inuvik Regional Hospital is under a serious situation of having not enough nurses to do things. They've had to cut back on services. We know that, for example, last year there were many centres across the North, some in the Sahtu, some in the Delta, some in Nunakput, I believe one of the communities, had to go on emergency services.

Unfortunately, we find ourselves in that situation. I must applaud the Premier for saying what he said in this forum. Until we as individuals in the Northwest Territories start to take control of what happens to us in our own bodies, we will continually be in a situation of having to go to a government source and request funding or help in that situation.

It is our duty as Members in this House to support the initiatives that would help our residents in the Northwest Territories. As we've just heard, there's been over \$49 million put into the system and I, myself, question sometimes where that money goes; if it's just to administration or into actual programs and services. I guess we can show examples of where we're actually putting frontline workers in there and actually increasing the wages of some of those people who are in drug and alcohol facilities.

Now, we, unfortunately, had to deal with in the 13th Assembly, removing some of those services. We used to have in the whole Northwest Territories, when Nunavut was part of this government, five drug and alcohol facilities. We are down to one. So I would say that we must send a message to the next government that they have to look at that seriously. Because as Members stated in this House, there are many problems that revolve around alcoholism in the Northwest Territories.

As the Premier said, we don't have to look very far. I, as well, know the ravages of alcoholism in a family. I've suffered from that myself. If it wasn't for the support of my own family and myself to say I cannot live this way anymore, I would still be where I was before, if I'd be lucky enough to be alive, Mr. Speaker.

This we shouldn't take lightly. I've had the responsibility in the past government to be Minister of Health and Social Services. It is not an easy task to try to balance all the needs across the spectrum that are demanded upon the system. It is not just hospitals and health centres, nurses and doctors. It is everything from foster care to dentists to eye glasses to teeth to funeral services.

Mr. Speaker, it's not an easy task. We stand in this House and try to make government responsive to our communities, especially the smallest ones. I have a lot of relatives in the smallest communities across the North. I hear them. I have right now, for example, an aunt that's having problems with her heart and she lives in Tuktoyaktuk, but she's in Inuvik hospital having to stay there because they're not sure of her condition. I've heard of other people who have had cancer and unfortunately been diagnosed later on. Do we go to the Minister and say he's not doing his job? Do we go to a laboratory facility and say why wasn't this caught in a blood test? Why wasn't a certain test ordered?

Mr. Speaker, some of these things we cannot control ourselves. Even as individuals, we can live the healthiest lives, we can eat the best foods and the finest wines -- or the cheapest wines, if we want -- but, Mr. Speaker, we take control of what enters into our bodies, at least to the direct things of what we eat, drink or smoke. We can't control some of the environmental hazards.

Mr. Speaker, I know as an Inuvialuit and one that's lived off the land to a certain degree, especially with my father and mother, that we now know that some of our own natural foods are contaminated with some chemicals and so on that are not healthy for the human body. We have studies telling us now that northern mothers breastfeeding their children may not be the best thing because of the contaminants in the system that's entered their bodies.

What are we going to do, Mr. Speaker? That's something we have to ask ourselves as a whole. Are we going to direct our government to take the next steps to go forward, or are we going to stand by and fire across at each other continually?

I understand where the Members from the smaller communities are coming from because, yes, they have smaller health centres. They're on reduced services. Nurses can't fill the positions. It comes to how our community deals with these situations, how we invite some of our professionals in the community or how we uninvited them. Sometimes, as much as we deal with these individuals, how we deal with them makes them uncomfortable and they don't feel safe in those communities.

We have children now at a younger age involved in drug and alcohol activities more than ever before in the Northwest Territories. What do we do? Well, sometimes we call Social Services. Sometimes we call the RCMP. Sometimes we call a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, as a parent, I know that if my children start to run into problems, I better start looking at myself and dealing with my family first because I know I don't want Social Services involved with my family. I've seen what happens to families that become involved. Unfortunately, it seems to be a very adversarial situation.

So although the Members here mean well, and I do believe they mean well by putting this motion out, I think it is unfortunate that we are dealing with it in this manner. Members felt that they've addressed this time and again with the Minister and, unfortunately, yes, we're in the dying days of this government. That's probably not the best way of putting it, but we are in fact in a situation where some of them are riding off into the sunset. Some are seeking a new life and rebirth into the 15th Assembly. We will still have these problems. If some of us are not fortunate enough to return here, the next Members will still have to deal with those problems. We know that the next government is not in a very good financial situation to be

dealing with these situations to continue to try to find more money.

We have to ask ourselves, if we're going to support this motion or those that are going to support this, what do we really want to do and what areas are we going to move it from? We do have that authority. Where do we move the money of this government? Unfortunately, this is our last day, so we can't keep any more pressure up on government to say make some changes.

Based on that, Mr. Speaker, maybe I've said too much, but I felt that knowing the situations and how I might be from one of the larger communities, but I have relatives in smaller communities. Inuvik wasn't so big many years ago. I've lived through the mud and grime of a small community where you burned your garbage in the front of your driveway.

We've come so far, yet we have such a long distance to go. We've made many advances, but there's still much journey to make and it's going to be difficult. We're going to have to, I think, instead of doing this, call on the next government to say we have to set some priorities. How are we going to deal with these situations? Are we going to put an absolute minimum, as we heard, about universality? Yes, if we look at the acts of this government and the establishments of some of these departments, some of those things are going to have to change.

We heard some Members say that's the reason the land claims groups and aboriginal groups are looking for self-government, because they think they can do it better than the Northwest Territories government. Maybe they can. The Government of the Northwest Territories hasn't been a perfect instrument and it will continue to have its growing pains. I must say that we have to look at it from a different perspective than what this motion would present. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. To the motion. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak briefly to this motion as well. I cannot support this motion. I want to say that I do understand the frustration of the Members who have raised this motion with the problems that they see existing in their communities. It isn't just the small communities that are faced with these problems, it's also other communities. We've had similar problems ongoing from generation to generation in communities like Hay River.

It's been brought out that we have to take personal responsibility for some of these problems. Not only in our own lives, Mr. Speaker, but I'd like to take that one step further. There is no amount of money in this world big enough to solve some of the problems that we face that seem insurmountable here in the North.

I'd like to suggest to the people who have overcome difficulties and, by the grace of God, live healthy lives in this territory, we not only have a responsibility to our own family and the ones that we love, but we also have a responsibility to those in our communities who we see are in need, where it's within our power to step into that need and to assist them and to help them.

I think this came up at a constituency meeting of mine the other day. There are not enough programs, there are not enough services, there's not enough money, the government is not spending enough money. Mr. Speaker, there will never be

enough programs, services and money, but each one of us has it in our power the ability to help people we see around us. It doesn't take a lot of extra time out of your day to make a phone call to check on people, to see how they're doing, to encourage people, to take them into your home for a meal, to show hospitality, to share your own life's experience with people.

I would like to suggest that each one of us, I'm not talking about just the Members of this House, but each one of us who call ourselves a member of any community of any society, have an obligation to help people who are in need on a personal basis. Over the years, somehow we've gone from helping our neighbours to saying it's the government's problem and the government will solve it all.

It's not an easy task, I recognize, for the Minister. I've been in that same position and it's not an easy task to try and spread the resources and address all of the problems, but I think each one of us needs to do our part not only for our own lives, but for those we see in need around us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a brief few words against this motion. I personally could not stand here and support this motion. I have to think back over the last week or so in what's been happening in the House and as a Member of this government, the territorial government, I am very concerned about what we are doing to our government. I, for one, would not like to see this government be reduced to any less than what it should be: a full, strong public government that we're working collectively to the benefit of all the people of the Northwest Territories.

I don't agree with everything that is happening around here. I agree with the Members from the small communities that there are lots of issues that they have and want to address. Not only in Health and Social Services, in every department. It is a concern. It is a concern for everybody. It was a concern of mine when I was growing up in a small community in Nova Scotia. The same problems existed. The small communities, the rural communities, how do you get the same services in the small communities that you get in a big city? I don't know how you do that.

We can all work together to try and find solutions and bring those issues to a resolution, but for me to stand and point the finger at one individual, I just can't do that, Mr. Speaker. If I wanted to find a reason to support a motion of censure against the honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, I could probably find reasons over the last four years that would help me to make a decision to maybe do that. But when we're dealing with how we address the people of the Northwest Territories and how we bring them good services, I agree with a lot of the comments that were made about what problems we have and what causes those problems. I, as well as the Members from the small communities, have stood in this House and said how frustrating it is to have our mothers have to travel outside of Hay River to come to Yellowknife or Edmonton to give birth.

The reality is we can only do so much. It is a problem. Not just in the North, not just in the small communities, it's a problem right across the country. As we hear on TV and see in the newspapers, the Ministers of Health gather together and collectively they are trying to find solutions to these problems. But they are not easy problems to deal with.

I think that collectively I am looking for another four years in this government. I certainly want to be thinking that I'm coming back to a government that is effective for the Territories and that is a strong government. If we can't do it collectively as a strong government, we are certainly not going to do it by pointing the finger at individuals when everything goes wrong.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting this motion and I hope that Members take that seriously when they decide to vote on this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. To the motion. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to make a short comment and to say that I will not be supporting this motion. Mr. Speaker, like I said in my statement earlier, when Members in this House go at it very strongly against a Minister or are pushing a Minister, I think people out there might think that some of us have something personally against a Minister. A lot of that has been said about me because I know that I've had my matches with Mr. Miltenberger and I've been often asked by media or anybody who listens to us if I'm going to ask for his head, and so on.

Mr. Miltenberger came and talked to me about this motion. Mr. Speaker, I oppose this motion for many reasons. One is that...I should just finish that thought. I am willing to go hard on the Minister to ask him to do his job. But asking for his resignation or censuring him is not an answer. I do believe, Mr. Speaker, seeing myself from Yellowknife, I do believe he has pushed really hard to meet the needs of small communities. There's no question that there's a lot that we have not been able to do.

I can understand that people in the communities are thinking that their services are not improving or maybe even deteriorating, but I do believe it is a responsibility of all of us. It's really a question that I think the next Assembly needs to look at seriously. It is the emergence of the disparity or difference of services and programs being provided to Yellowknife versus small communities.

Any Yellowknife Members here can tell you that we get calls from our people who are saying that it seems like Yellowknife, with the biggest population and as the capital city that it is, is not getting the attention from this government. So we seem to have sort of discontent on both sides. People cannot understand why Yellowknife, with the size that it is, only has two ice pads. Or with the taxes they're paying, why are their programs less than such?

I know that I've travelled across the Territories and I can totally appreciate how the people in the communities feel that they are not getting the basic services they need or they should get a lot more than what they have. Certainly it's a task for all of us.

I don't think censuring a Minister on the last day and putting everything on his shoulders is really being responsible, frankly. I do respect the Members here to make a statement and the Members especially from small communities to show their frustration at the lack of action. But I don't believe the motion is the way to go.

I agree totally with what the Minister said about individual responsibility. There's a lot of room there for us to improve on. But there's no question, as a government and as an Assembly, we have not moved as far as we can on the social agenda. I know the Minister has been working very hard on a health care plan. We have had so many studies in the last three years,

once again, I think we might have studied more on issues than acted upon.

I do believe and I know that it's the eve of the election, but I am not afraid of taking my share of the responsibility for the stuff that we have not been able to achieve for the people. We have had lots of agendas, but there's no question in my mind that if there ever was a Minister that really worked hard to take things away from Yellowknife and put it into communities, that is Mr. Miltenberger.

---Laughter

I'll give you that. Much of my fight had to do with stopping him because that would be my job to do it.

So I hope I'm making myself clear. I think it's a question about small communities versus big communities. It's a challenge for many governments to come to address. It's about how much of the total budget we had that we spent on health and social services and our social problems that we have.

The increasing money that's flowing in Yellowknife is considered to be one of the causes for lots of social problems that we are having in the city, and the residents are getting more engaged in that debate. So I believe that this is an issue much bigger than the Minister himself...

---Laughter

...so, for that reason...

---Laughter

...bigger than the Minister's power. So I'm not going to support this motion, but I do respect the arguments being put forward by the Members for North Slave and Mackenzie Delta. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the motion. The honourable for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, from my experience of being Cabinet Minister and also having served on the other side of the House, it's my opinion that the most difficult department to run in this government is the Department of Health and Social Services. There are lots and lots and lots of challenges out there for us to address, and I appreciate what the Members are saying. There's no question that we have to tackle them. But you know, Mr. Speaker, the issues out there, we need to do more than just be a government addressing these issues. We need community governments to address this, we need community leaders to address this issue. Because the issues out there, the expenditures are being made in many areas, such as have been referenced because of smoking, because of alcohol. We've got children raising children, and obesity and people not exercising. Those are the issues, Mr. Speaker, and there needs to be more and more debate.

You know in my eight years in this House, I can probably check Hansard and count maybe two or three times when we've seriously discussed this issue, the issue of social lifestyles. That's what's at the bottom of this. How do we address the expenditure that's being made in the whole area of health? Because it's getting out of control, Mr. Speaker, and it always will until we change our lifestyles and address that whole area.

The system is, no doubt, under stress. We know we have a large territory with many, many communities, and that's

expensive to operate. Therefore, it's hard to place proper facilities in each community to the extent that's being requested. That creates a tremendous difficulty, Mr. Speaker. This is the largest government for dollars, however, Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate what the Members are saying who moved this motion, I feel the condemnation of the Minister and his department are totally misdirected in this. But for the grace of God, there go I. It could be any one of us here if that attitude is taken at the moment that something isn't provided, okay, put a motion before the House of non-confidence in the Minister. I understand the frustrations and I compliment the Members for at least saying that they're frustrated, but I don't think condemning the Minister is the answer for that, Mr. Speaker, and I will definitely vote against it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. To the motion. There are no other Members speaking to the motion. Mr. Krutko, you may close the debate.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as you can see from the presentations we heard around the table, it's pretty clear that the have and have not communities don't realize what it's like to have a community where you can't have access to your health centre, you don't have access to service providers like alcohol and drug counsellors or mental health workers. You guys can all sit on that side of the House and just say quit smoking, quit drinking, snap your fingers, it will go away. It will not happen.

The problem we have in our small communities is economically and socially stimulated because we don't have an economic base, not like the luxury of large centres where this government basically runs those communities. I think it's important without these programs and services, you will not have healthy communities, you will not have healthy people to cope with the stresses of the day-to-day things in small communities and being in some cases homeless and in most cases unemployed, living on income support, living in social housing. That's the stem of the problem of this Government of the Northwest Territories. Yet the bureaucracy of this government continues to grow.

Since we got here four years ago, the only thing that has grown in this government's budget is the bureaucracy. I think as responsible Members on both sides of this House, we have to take some responsibilities as ordinary Members, too. We have brought up supplementary appropriations where we rant and rave and question it going through the House, but at the end of the day we vote them out.

Mr. Speaker, my motion is clear. My motion is directed in regard to programs and services delivered in small communities which at this time are nil in some communities. We have emergency services only being provided in some communities right now. We have people who basically are being diagnosed at the regional hospital because they took it on their own to get to the regional hospital, later to be diagnosed and medevaced to Edmonton at a cost which could have been a lot less if that person was diagnosed in the community before they had to make it on their own to a regional hospital. Those are the costs that you keep talking about. Health care costs will continue to go up. Yes, they'll continue to go up because in small communities a large portion of that cost is medevacs out of our communities because we don't have the basic programs to diagnose and assess these problems before they become so-called medical emergencies. That's where the costs of this government are going.

For the Minister to put the onus on the so-called frontline workers, it's not the frontline workers that are ultimately responsible to ensure that those programs and services are being delivered in the communities. He has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the standards and the mission of this government is being carried out, to promote, protect and provide health and well-being programs to people in the Northwest Territories. That's your responsibility as a Minister. When you have closures in our communities every summer going on for four or five years and it continues to go on, you are responsible.

Mr. Speaker, as we can see from the motion around the table and the comments that were made, this is definitely a situation that we in small communities find ourselves frustrated because we know nothing is going to change in this government. So maybe it is good we're going to the polls for an election, so we can maybe get some new Ministers in there and new people in this House that really understand the problems in our small communities. Because in large communities you don't have to cope with the frustration of having your children taken away by social services and not having an appeal process to go to, or not having the ability to take your family and your children to counselling because you don't have counsellors in our communities. You have people in our communities who have diabetes and other health problems that aren't able to access the programs that are being offered in other communities. You have nutritional programs for people in the regional centre, nutritional services are being provided in regional centres where you can talk to a nutritionist, you have programs in regard to family counselling. In Yellowknife you can walk down the street and walk into somebody's office and have that service provided. If you want a dentist you basically go down the street and make an appointment. If you want to go see a doctor, you phone one of the clinics here in Yellowknife or in the other centres and you can go see a doctor. In our communities that luxury does not apply. You're lucky to see a doctor once a month, if that, if you're able to get on the list. With the dentist, you're lucky to see him twice a year and you're limited on what they can do once they get there.

So I think that what the comments were from the Members on the opposite side saying that everything is hunky-dory and don't worry, everything is taken care of, I can't agree with. I feel that this government has a responsibility to ensure that programs and services that are being provided are universally provided across the board.

If we have programs that aren't filled, every effort should be made to get those positions out there and advertise and ensure that those people are in place.

I would just like to refer to a comment that was made with regard to not being responsible by making this motion. For me, not making this motion basically tells me I'm just going to bow to the normal process and not say anything and just let it continue. I can't do that. I personally cannot stand here and say that everything is rosy out there, because it isn't. The Minister knows it from the comments I made in the last week and from the correspondence that I've been sending back and forth to the Minister's office, that this problem is there, it is affecting people's health and well-being, and in most cases has caused grief to a lot of families. I think as a government we are responsible.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it clear that knowing this motion will not be passed with the numbers that are out there, but this will not go away. I hope for those people who are running in this next election and running in those small

communities, that this be one of their top priorities coming into this House in the 15th Legislative Assembly. The comments we hear around this table and for people who don't have to deal with closures, it's not a problem. But for people that do, it's definitely a problem. That's the frustrating part of the have and have not society we live in.

At least when we were part of the 13th Assembly where we had the whole Northwest Territories, we could relate to all the other communities because we had a majority in this House. Now basically because of the division of the Northwest Territories, we are definitely feeling the effects of that division on our small communities being fairly treated by the Government of the Northwest Territories and other larger centres in the Northwest Territories.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for a recorded vote and thank those Members for supporting the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. This ends debate on the motion. Is the House ready for the question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

Recorded Vote

MR. SPEAKER: A recorded vote has been requested. Mr. Clerk, a recorded vote. All those in favour, please rise.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Nitah.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. All those opposed to the motion, please rise.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Delorey, Ms. Lee, Mr. Roland, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Steen, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Allen, Mr. Ootes.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. All those abstaining from the vote, please rise. Thank you. The results of the vote on the motion: those in favour, three; those opposed, 14; those abstaining, zero. Therefore, Motion 21-14(6) has been defeated.

---Defeated

Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 34, Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement Act, and Minister's Statement 89-14(6): Infrastructure Canada Commits \$65 Million to NWT Resource Highways, with Mr. Delorey in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I will call Committee of the Whole to order. We have two items to consider in Committee of the Whole. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe committee Members would like to continue consideration of Bill 34.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Bill 34, Tlicho Land Claims And Self-Government Agreement Act

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the Minister wish to bring in any witnesses? Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses in, please.

Mr. Minister, could you introduce your witnesses for the record, please.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, I have to my right Rick Bargery, deputy minister of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, and to his right is Mark Aitken with the Department of Justice, and to my left is Martin Goldney, legal counsel with the Department of Justice. Thank you.

Clause By Clause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. We left off yesterday on page 3 of Bill 34, clause 4. I will call clause 4 again, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since clause 4 deals with the Tlicho agreement in its entirety, I just have some questions about that agreement that I would like to ask the Minister. As I understand it, I'm pretty sure that this has already been confirmed in the House but I'd just like to have it on the record again, there's no way that this agreement can be changed by the Legislative Assembly, is there?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: No, this agreement cannot be changed by the Legislative Assembly.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I referred to this in my opening comments so I think I know the answer, but I would like to have it confirmed by the Minister. Is it also right that this is a new approach? Many similar agreements are entirely bilateral between aboriginal governments and the federal government, and the Tlicho probably could have insisted on a strictly bilateral agreement with the federal government. So a deal could have been made between the Tlicho and the federal government, without the Government of the Northwest Territories at the table. Is that correct?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Technically that bilateral arrangement could have been an approach that was taken to make this happen. Thank you.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think also we've seen that our tenure at these tables is not very strong. If I'm not mistaken, when the Government of the Northwest Territories wasn't prepared to sign agreements with the Saskatchewan Denesuline and the Manitoba Denesuline, those two parties went to the feds and got agreements signed on a bilateral

basis, and we weren't involved in the signing even though we had been at the table. Is that not correct?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, the court case and the arrangement of the federal government are interim measures agreements, IMAs, and that's what is being currently worked on. Thank you.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really wanted to just get it on the record that the Assembly can't change the agreement and that this does represent a new approach, and that the Tlicho have agreed to have the Government of the Northwest Territories at the table, and I think we welcome that approach. I would have welcomed an opportunity, as I said earlier, to be able to, during public hearings, make sure that my constituents were aware of these provisions.

Another question about one of the clauses in the agreement, clause 2.10.1(b) in the agreement itself outlines the process for an amending agreement, and that it involves that all three parties have to agree. As I understand it, this is similar to First Nations Yukon Self-Government Act, but that provides that any amendment that the government agrees to must be tabled within the Legislative Assembly within 15 days, along with a Cabinet order giving approval to the amendment. There's no such provision in the act we're looking at today that we would see that happen, is there?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: No, the Member is right, it cannot happen. Thank you.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, could the Minister advise whether the Department of Justice has provided a legal analysis of the constitutional validity of providing that future amendments to the agreement become law without consideration by this Legislative Assembly?

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can advise that the Department of Justice has reviewed the agreement quite thoroughly and is confident in its constitutionality and such matters were considered. Thank you.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In that case, I guess what I'm looking for then is a political commitment and a public commitment from the Minister that in the future that if there are amendments to this that are agreed to by Cabinet, that Cabinet agree to table those in the House so that the public and Members are aware of those changes. I seek that from the Minister, please.

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we can table amendments in the House as they are made. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Clause 4. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, part of clause 4(2), "For greater certainty, any person or body may exercise the powers, rights, privileges and benefits conferred on the person or body by the Tlicho agreement and shall perform the duties and is subject to the liabilities imposed on the person or body by the Tlicho agreement." Can the Minister inform us as to how that would impact on citizens who are non-Tlicho?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, briefly this confirms that persons may exercise rights and liabilities contained within the Tlicho agreement, and binds the people and the bodies to follow all the obligations applied to them in the Tlicho agreement. Thank you.

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A number of other questions that were asked yesterday in a couple of the other clauses were reflecting those that were non-Tlicho citizens. There was talk that, for example, the Tlicho government being a regional body, not the community government but at the top end would not make laws affecting non-Tlicho citizens, or would not impact them in that way. Can I get an explanation from that end? We had information provided yesterday to how that would be impacted, if there is an impact.

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Tlicho government, just as point of clarification, will have jurisdiction over Tlicho citizens and Tlicho lands. Primarily as an aboriginal government, it will concern itself with matters directly affecting Tlicho citizens and the Tlicho lands that it holds in something akin to the fee simple. There will be instances where Tlicho laws will affect non-Tlicho citizens when they make laws, for example, regarding the management of their own Tlicho lands. So I think that might bring some clarification to the question. How it ties in with subsection 4.2 of the claim agreement just makes it certain that all peoples with liabilities and rights under that agreement are bound by them.

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Further in clause 4(3), "For great certainty, the Tlicho agreement is binding on, and can be relied on, by persons and bodies that are not parties to it." Again, in reference to some of the questions and answers yesterday and taking into account what Mr. Goldney has just stated about making laws and so on on lands, I can understand that because we have land claims in place that already have those provisions in place. I'm wondering beyond sort of lands or access to lands or who can go on lands, because again that's a familiar territory, but on the self-government side what does it mean for citizens, and this talks about third parties. Can we get some more detail on what that means?

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are several third-party obligations that were negotiated. The provision of the bill 4.7(3) confirms that third parties are bound by those obligations and that they can rely on the provisions within the Tlicho agreement. Some examples of third-party obligations in the Tlicho agreement are non-Tlicho residents of Tlicho communities are bound by Tlicho laws that abide all residents. For example, harvesting of fish, use of waters on Tlicho lands and setting of harvesting limits on any species or stock of fish by any person. This is something that's new in the Tlicho government; the ability for an aboriginal self-government to set these laws. Previous agreements have seen renewable resources boards established to help set these things, but the Tlicho agreement is unique in that it will establish a formal Tlicho government with law-making powers.

Also, all people, whether or not they were party to the Tlicho agreement, have access to certain rights. For example, the right to access information under the registrar of Tlicho laws. So this merely captures all those instances where people have rights under the agreement and are bound by the terms of the agreement.

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With these being in place, again I'll just ask a question for the record. Does it meet the requirements of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms? Thank you.

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is the Department of Justice's view that it does, and I think we should also note that the constitution of the Tlicho government is required to meet or exceed the protections of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It's something the Tlicho constitution, the Tlicho have adopted the Charter of Rights and Freedoms wholly. So when their laws are being applied, they are measured against the same yardstick of individual rights and protections as this government's.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Clause 4. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to perhaps get a bit more beyond the strict range than is covered by clause 4, Mr. Chairman. Let me know if I'm straying a bit too far. The issue that I've been asked to get some understanding on is the extent to which clause 4, in effect, is also the approval process for the subsequent bills that we will be asked to pass. The Minister, in his opening statement, said that two other pieces of legislation are to be considered by the next Assembly, the Tlicho Community Government Act and the Community Services Agency Act. But by saying in clause 4 that the Tlicho agreement is approved, given effect and declared valid and have the force of law, why then should the next Assembly expect to go through the normal approval process for these subsequent acts? What's the difference going to be? Thank you.

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, there are two other pieces of legislation that are currently being drafted. They are close to completion; stage one is more complete than the

other. They are the Tlicho Community Government Act, as well as the Tlicho Community Service Agency Act. These two acts we're anticipating will go to the 15th Legislative Assembly early on, whenever the next sitting is, probably sometime in February or March, and they would be ready to be introduced in the House. These two pieces of legislation will go through the regular process.

I know there has been concern raised by almost all the Members that Bill 34, Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Act, is something that should have gone out to the public, but these other two pieces would give that opportunity to the public to view the whole Tlicho Land Claim and Self-Government Act because the two pieces are contingent and part of Bill 34, as well. So there will be an opportunity at that time to do the proper work that the MLAs are known to carry out. Thank you.

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

MR. BRADEN: Thank you. Perhaps what I'll do is repeat a question, that I believe Mr. Dent just asked a little while ago, and it will relate to the two subsequent pieces of legislation. If you'll give me that latitude, Mr. Chairman. To the upcoming Community Government Act and Community Services Agency Act, will an amendment or change be permitted within our regular consultation process? Then the 15th Assembly undertakes those, or are those two bills going to be, like this one, closed to any further amendment by this Assembly?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, I think there will be opportunity to do some amendments in terms of structure. I think the main content of what is being agreed will probably be there and how we get it done. I think those types of amendments will probably be permissible, but we have to consult with our counterparts and get it done. Thank you.

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

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate those answers, and they're very much the way I understood the process to be. I fully recognize and I think most people across the NWT have recognized the way these laws, these acts are being built, the way they're being negotiated and designed is different from the process that's usually undertaken. It just does not permit the usual flexibility that we're used to in approving that. But I wanted to get that information out, because I want to understand very clearly then when these two acts do come before the next Assembly, there will be validity in the public hearing process that this is something that we will, I believe, undertake. We are not simply going to be going through a process of rubberstamping or automatically approving the subsequent acts.

I'll come back to clause 4 again. It's a very powerful, two-line sentence. "The Tlicho agreement is approved, given effect and declared valid, and has the force of law." So this really is the dilemma here where we recognize that this is the right thing to do, absolutely; but are we expecting too much or are we expecting the wrong things of our system if we say we can take this body of work, create it, build it, negotiate it, write it through a different set of circumstances, yet anticipate our routine access to it? It's probably not realistic. So I'm wondering -- and this is a question, it's a wonder for the next 15th Assembly

to look at -- should we be considering some other approach to the approval of this kind of law.

We're going to be seeing more of this, Mr. Chairman. There are other self-government and land claim tables going on under negotiation. We have devolution under negotiation. Earlier today in this House we talked about the creation of the Wildlife Act. From my understanding, that is being negotiated and almost written again in a much broader consultative process than we normally undertake. So we have, I think, a host of upcoming legislation that subsequent assemblies are going to have to deal with. From the signals and the messages we're getting here, I think we need to be looking at a different way of handling it. I think these pressures are the kinds of pressures that we're experiencing, or that I'm experiencing, to accept this, to back it, to get behind it, are at odds with the kind of beliefs and rules and expectations that I think people have of us when we make laws.

So I guess this is where I'm trying to lay the ground here for a question that would try to examine the validity of a new approach to Legislative Assembly approval for this kind of document. Could I ask the Minister then, is this something that the next Assembly should be looking at, or is our normal process what we should be maintaining? Which way do we go? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. We maybe strayed a bit from the intent of the bill here, but I'll give the Minister an opportunity to respond. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, the Tlicho agreement requires the Government of the Northwest Territories to get the consent of the Tlicho government before introducing a bill to amend community government legislation. The two different pieces of legislation that are forthcoming in the next Assembly, which are the Tlicho Community Government Act and the Tlicho Community Service Agency Act, these two packages reflect what has been negotiated in a lot of detail. So in order to do the work that the next Assembly is going to do in the standing committee in reviewing the bill, it will probably require a new approach, like you say, to look at this Tlicho legislation, because it's totally different and unique from other normal government developed legislation. So there will probably need to be a set of directions on what could be done. The substantial elements of these two pieces of legislation are more or less already agreed upon by the three parties. But this obligation probably applies to the Executive of our government first. But once the bill is introduced then, of course, all Members are entitled to know how they want to vote, and their authority to do this is not fettered at all.

So while we must obtain the consent for the introduction of any amendments, they do require Tlicho consent to make changes to amend bills once they're introduced. So it's different than our previous approach, so certainly there has to be a careful look at how the committees will probably have to view this bill the next time around. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The chair will recognize Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my question first has to do with the section in the agreement dealing with the judicial proceedings, which is under section 7.6. It states in 7.6.4 and 7.6.6, Mr. Chairman, the capacity of the Tlicho government to act as a prosecutor in dealing with Tlicho laws or prosecuting Tlicho laws in the court of the Northwest Territories. As well, 7.6.6 deals with how those who

are prosecuted under Tlicho law in NWT courts are how those convictions or whatever might come that way are enforced. I hope I'm clear about my question here. It certainly deals with how the laws of Tlicho and laws of the NWT will interact. So I would like to seek clarification from the Minister about what the meaning of this section is, first of all, and how would that work in practice. How would it work for the Tlicho laws to be enforced or prosecuted in the courts of the NWT? Am I correct to read that those are just for specific laws of Tlicho, as specified here? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member is correct, these provisions deal with Tlicho laws, and where it provides for Tlicho prosecution of those laws it will be Tlicho laws that they're prosecuting and not territorial laws. Perhaps the best way to illustrate how it works is it would work much the same way as the territorial government has the ability to prosecute its own laws in a court, and the federal government has its ability to prosecute. This just sets out the same ability for the Tlicho to prosecute their own laws. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I get information for the general public as to what are the major areas of Tlicho law that will be prosecuted under in this context? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The law-making powers of the Tlicho government are set out in the agreement and they include, for example, laws over Tlicho citizens in Tlicho lands; laws governing the enforcement of those laws; laws relating to the use and management and protection of Tlicho lands and the renewable and non-renewable resources on lands, including fish, wills, intestacy and the administration of the estates of Tlicho citizens; protection and promotion of Tlicho language, culture and heritage; social assistance; child and family services; adoption; education; pre-schooling; taxation and training by Tlicho government to Tlicho citizens. The agreement also provides for law-making authorities that apply to all residents in Tlicho communities on Tlicho lands and include laws related to Tlicho government structure and internal managements; management over wildlife, trees and plants; renewable and non-renewable resources; land use plans for Tlicho lands; aspects of fish harvesting; use of waters on Tlicho lands; heritage resources on Tlicho lands or in Tlicho communities.

So I think you can see from the list and the jurisdiction set out in the agreement, that it's primarily jurisdictions over Tlicho citizens and Tlicho lands. The expectation is that the Tlicho government will, as governments do, make laws under these jurisdictions, and when they do, they'll be able to prosecute those laws. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that those are wide and broad areas, but at the same time they are specified and the Tlicho government does not have power to pass laws about everything. This agreement has sections that speak about the areas that the Tlicho government cannot enact laws about. At the same time, I'm still not clear as to how this will work. Are we envisioning two different judicial processes? Are we envisioning two different court systems, or is this agreement envisioning that while the Tlicho government has

the power to enact laws and prosecute those who violate them, but that they will use the NWT court system to enact those laws? Am I correct in that understanding? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I believe the Member is correct in that understanding.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Then I'd like to move on to the next section in the same topic area, where it states under section 7.6.6, it says that the GNWT is responsible for enforcing any fines or imprisonment order for violation of Tlicho law. So in reaching that and reading that with what has been stated here so far, I'm understanding that the Tlicho government will enact laws in certain specified areas, and that they would prosecute any violators under that law in the GNWT courts, and that the GNWT will be responsible for enforcing it. I read from that that the Tlicho citizens, if they are found to be in violation of the law and they are prosecuted, will end up in the GNWT correctional system. So I'm just wondering why this is the way it is. Is it a question of lack of resources, or is that the intention of the Tlicho government, and further what sort of agreement is there with the GNWT Department of Justice or the court system as to how to implement this in practice? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the intention there is partly it's resources, and that's why you see the GNWT enforcing laws, but it's also in recognition that the Tlicho agreement doesn't establish a separate court system, doesn't drastically alter the administration of justice in the Northwest Territories which falls to the Government of the Northwest Territories to enforce laws. That's why you have it that way. In practice, to expect that the GNWT will be enforcing laws of the Tlicho government in the same way it enforces its own laws and, in some circumstances, federal laws.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: I hope I'm not wrong in that, but I think the federal prosecution also prosecutes NWT laws where it's appropriate. Maybe the Law Clerk could advise on that.

I have a question on the next section dealing with conflict of laws. It says in 7.7.2 that if there is a conflict between Tlicho laws and the laws of Canada, the laws of Canada set the rules. But if there's a conflict between Tlicho laws and the GNWT law, Tlicho law sets the rules. So the way I read it, Canadian laws would trump Tlicho, but Tlicho would trump GNWT law. So now I need to know if that's the correct understanding.

Secondly, I believe that those trumping or the overriding of the powers of Tlicho laws over GNWT in certain circumstances would only be limited to the areas once again specified in this agreement. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the Member is correct. The paramountcy provided is a general rule; except where otherwise provided, Tlicho government laws will prevail over territorial laws. The Member is also correct that Tlicho government laws are restricted to where they have jurisdiction. If the Tlicho government enacts a law that it's found it has

exceeded its jurisdiction, then like territorial or federal laws, those laws are ultra vires and have no force and effect. So it is quite limited to the jurisdictions that are set out in the agreement.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Clause 4. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question has to do with coordination of program and service delivery. Under section 7.9.1. in the agreement it says that the Tlicho -- and I'm reading from the plain speak -- it says that the Tlicho government, Canada and the GNWT will fund new and existing programs and services and they will work together to make sure programs and services are delivered properly. This is a pretty broad, general statement and I'd like to ask the Minister how this would translate in practice. Are there going to be formal agreements in place for that and, if so, the agreement that we're going to have before us, is that speaking to this specific provision? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, this is setting up something unique with the Tlicho government and the territorial government providing programs and services. So the government and the Tlicho government will exercise their own powers to the extent practical in a manner where they will be coordinating the delivery of programs and services to the citizens in the Tlicho and, of course, to all residents of the Northwest Territories. So where there's a serious disruption in the delivery of programs or services on Tlicho lands or in the Tlicho communities, they will enter into discussions to reach agreement on how to deal with this disruption. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: So are these agreements going to be negotiated once the law comes into place, or are they being negotiated already, or were they negotiated while this agreement was being negotiated, at the same time? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, I think what the Member is talking about is that there is a 10-year agreement on the intergovernmental services that we have entered with the Tlicho as part of this agreement. So the current programs and services that the GNWT is providing plus others, there's an agreement through the negotiations that GNWT will continue to provide these programs and services for the 10 years. So there are other programs in there that if need be, will be negotiated. The intention here is that the Tlicho will have 10 years to build a capacity to run the programs themselves. So it's in the agreement and it will be dealt with through the other Tlicho community service agency legislation that will be coming forth. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If other Members have questions to ask, I will just stand down my time until later. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. The chair will recognize Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of areas, and I'm going to bounce back and forth a little bit here. In chapter 7, section 7.9.1. refers to the government and the

Tlicho government shall exercise their respective powers to the extent practical in a manner that coordinates the delivery of programs and service provided to the Tlicho citizens of the Northwest Territories. Now in the plain speak model they have a little note that says the Tlicho government, Canada and the GNWT will fund new and existing programs and services, they will work together to make sure programs and services are delivered properly. I'm seeking some clarification. Who would initiate the new program or new funding for new programs than those existing already for program and delivery services in the Northwest Territories?

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

MR. BARGERY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The clause that the Member refers to is in there primarily because there are some concurrent law-making jurisdictions that may result in program and service delivery. The clause is in there to ensure that there's a coordination of programs and services that would be delivered. The agreement itself doesn't speak to new program areas, other than what's delivered. So if there is a new program area, I guess that would be up to the government responsible to fund, if that was the question, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, under chapter 26, the economic measures section, 26.4.1, "It is intended that this chapter be implemented through programs and policies which are in place and from time to time without imposing any additional financial obligation on government." Can we get some clarity of that section?

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

MR. BARGERY: I think this clause is an important clause to ensure that there isn't any financial obligation, but some of the programs and policies in place, for example in the GNWT would be the business incentive policy, one of economic incentive-type program that would be intended through this particular clause. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the deputy for that response. One other question, and it comes under chapter 7, 7.4.4(n) solemnization of marriages on Tlicho lands. How would the Charter of Rights and Freedoms apply in this area? Knowing that the laws of Canada are changing in that area, will that allow for same sex marriages and so on?

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The provision referred to is one of the jurisdictions set out by the Tlicho governments, and again the Tlicho constitution provides that the Tlicho government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, so the same laws that it applies are in the same way that our laws are bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. If a court was to ultimately rule on the issue of same sex marriages was a discriminatory practice that wasn't justified under the Charter, that same ruling would apply to Tlicho laws.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Clause 4. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question on the intergovernmental services agreement. I'm just reading through this plain speak, which is actually quite helpful because it does say very clearly what the agreements are agreed on. It says here under section 7.10.3 that under the intergovernmental services agreement, Canada and the GNWT will continue to pay for and manage programs like health, education, welfare family and social services. I see that this is in line with the jurisdiction that the Tlicho government is taking over, because I believe that's parallel to I think it's section 7.4 where it speaks about the areas that the Tlicho government is going to cover. It's one of the areas that the government is going to take over. I think this is the kind of area that people want to know more about. I know certainly the people who I represent want to know what sort of implication and impact this agreement would have on the GNWT, and the money question is a big issue. So I'd like to know from the Minister, seeing as he's the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs but he's still a Minister of the territorial government, a public government, and I'd like to know what sort of implication, to his understanding, does this have to the financial status of the GNWT. Is it understood that this money that will be going to the Tlicho government to deliver these programs, will it come out of the GNWT budget, or is there an understanding that there is going to be new monies coming from the Government of Canada for the Tlicho government? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, the Tlicho community service agreement will deliver services to all residents; education and social services in the Tlicho communities, much like the Dogrib Community Services Board does now and it will be established under our legislation. The current cost to the GNWT to provide that will still be there, so the funding will be coming from the GNWT for that. We're saying that it will minimize any incremental costs to the GNWT. So there will be a very small extra cost other than what we're currently providing to provide that service. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I must confess I'm still not clear as to how this is going to work. I understand that we're looking at a time quite a few years down the road, because I understand that the Tlicho government has set aside 10 years to have the opportunity to build capacity. Understandably the government and its people are going to be asked to do a lot and there are a lot of things to take care of in terms of training its people and getting their human resources up to capacity and such. So I understand this. But in the end, five or 10 years down the road, are we envisioning a situation where we'll get the transfer payment from the federal government, the pot of money that we do now, but that in the simplest terms, if I could just put it in a simple way, we're sort of agreeing on a formula financing with the Tlicho government where the Tlicho government will tell us that they will be serving 2000 people and provide programs A, B, C, D, E for 2000 people or whatever, because usually it's per capita, and we would expect to have this X dollar amount. Is that a simple but a correct way of looking at how the Tlicho government will be funded? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Bargery.

MR. BARGERY: Mr. Chairman, under the agreement, as has been noted, the Tlicho gain certain law-making authorities and can deliver programming to Tlicho people. What they've agreed to through the intergovernmental services agency, as the Minister noted, is to deliver those larger social envelope programming to all residents through an agency established through our legislation. For the first 10-year period things will operate in that respect, much the same way as they do today through the Dogrib Community Services Board. The Tlicho have the ability to make laws, deliver programs for Tlicho people in future. The funding of those programs in future, I guess it's unknown at this point. One option would be the GNWT could vacate the education dollars, for example, for Tlicho citizens and the Tlicho could take those over. There's no obligation to doing that, but that's one that could be envisioned could flow through us. I hope that answers the Member's question, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bargery. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: I understand this is very complex and I understand there are the 10 years, sort of the gap years, of Tlicho and GNWT to get ready for that, so there's a 10-year preparation period. But I'm trying to see what this agreement means, and specifically this financing section of this agreement for years down the road when everything is sort of implemented the way it is envisioned in this legislation. The way I see it, the Tlicho government will take over the jurisdiction of those social envelopes, whether they be education, health, adoption, custody, all the items that are outlined in section 7.4. I also understand that the Tlicho government will provide these services to not only Tlicho residents but anybody who lives in that area, that they will take over that responsibility. So logically then I have to deduce from that that the GNWT will be out of that. I don't think we're going to see the GNWT and Tlicho government both providing the same services to the same people there. In order for the Tlicho government to do that, they are going to ask for that money from the GNWT to be transferred, and we may even see a time when the money will go straight from the federal government to the Tlicho government. I don't think any judgment should be made there. I think that people want to know what the agreements mean. Is that what it means? Am I seeing the scenario down the road correctly? That's my question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, the intergovernmental service agreement will be put in place before this agreement comes into effect. The ISA, as it is called, was negotiated and agreed upon. The initial term is for 10 years and it can be renewed as long as all parties agree. So this ISA requires this Tlicho community service agency to be established by our legislation in the territorial government, so the next term, 15th Assembly, will have this legislation in front of them to thoroughly examine it.

We are currently drafting a proposal on this one. What I indicated earlier said education and social services are going to be delivered to all residents, similar to what the Dogrib Community Services Board is delivering. So the funding and the way they've been doing the work is similar, it's just switching over from one agency to the other, and we anticipate the incremental cost to be minimal.

The legislation will have a list of programs and services that this agency will deliver, and these services must be delivered as a priority over other services. If there's an amendment, then it has to be done by the Tlicho government and GNWT. If

there are additional programs and services to be delivered, then we must have consent on that, and the funding for additional programs have to be sought. If the additional programs and services are proposed by the Tlicho or Canada, then we have to look for the funding for these additional programs. As the Government of the Northwest Territories we must consult with the Tlicho government and Government of Canada before assigning additional programs and services for the agency to delivery. So, yes, there may be other programs and services that may be added to the duties of the Tlicho community service agency in the future, other than what is currently being provided in the Dogrib Community Services Board, but there is a process outlined on how that is to be done. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The chair will recognize Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister, maybe just tell us whose land claim is this anyway that we're talking about here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. That may be straying from clause 4, but, Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this is a Tlicho land claims and self-government agreement. It defines the rights of the Tlicho. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on 4.2, rights and obligations; does this agreement apply to Yellowknife or the Delta? Will those people be affected by this agreement? Will they be able to get rights and benefits out of this agreement living in Yellowknife or living in the Delta?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: This agreement establishes a Tlicho government in the Tlicho area, and it defines the Tlicho rights. So does it affect people in Yellowknife and the Delta or other places directly? No.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that's exactly my point. I think everybody is assuming that everybody has to be a part of this agreement. I don't think as an MLA from the Delta that I have influence on what goes on in Yellowknife and vice versa. But as we can see, these land claim agreements are for those geographical areas that have claims settled in those areas. What goes on in the Inuvialuit land claim area is the Inuvialuit's responsibility. What goes on in the Gwich'in settlement area is the Gwich'in responsibility. The same thing applies to the Sahtu, and now it applies to the Tlicho. I don't think that we as legislators that sit here and try to make it look like we have influence on what's going to happen here, because technically the agreement has been concluded, it has been signed off by the Prime Minister of Canada, now it's just a matter of it getting Royal Assent. In order for this agreement to take effect, it has to receive Royal Assent through the Parliament of Canada. In order for those rights and obligations to be implemented, what goes on here is just a formality, it isn't going to have a...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Krutko, do you have a question on section 4, clause 4? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, I did touch on clause 4.2, and that's the section I'm talking about with regard to rights and obligations. I think I've heard people speak on different sections of the agreement which were way off in left field compared to clause 4. So I would just like to make reference to 4.2, rights and obligations.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Do you have a question, Mr. Krutko?

MR. KRUTKO: Well, I was working on it but I was cut off, so maybe I'll try it again. My point is that this agreement in regard to the rights and obligation applies to people in the Tlicho agreement and the federal government by way of establishing legislation which will give it Royal Assent when it passes through Parliament. So in regard to what we're hearing here about how this government seems to think it has some influence on what goes on in this agreement, that will happen when the legislation comes forth to be able to establish the Tlicho governance act and other acts that apply to the Northwest Territories. Those acts are not going to be in the legislature until the 15th Assembly, which will happen sometime in the spring. So I think it's more of a formality that we're going through here with regard to what's in this act. So I would just like to ask the Minister exactly what's the intent of this procedure in light of knowing that the final decision will be made by the Parliament of Canada?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, my understanding of clause 4 and the intent of this is that we are the binding effect on persons is I understand a standard clause that is viewed in all land claims settlement legislation with the federal government involved. What we're doing here today is part of the ratification process to move the Tlicho land claims and self-government forward. The intention is to ratify this part of it. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the agreement and the rights that apply from this agreement, those rights only apply to the Tlicho citizens who reside in the Tlicho area. I would like to note for the record that's who this agreement is going to affect. It isn't going to affect people living in Yellowknife or anywhere else outside of the Tlicho area. This agreement is their agreement. For us to sit here and go on and on and on and try to be lawyers and professors like we think we're doing justice, I think we're doing an injustice to this without proceeding. So I'd just like to ask the Minister exactly how many people is this agreement going to affect directly?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, it will affect all the Dogrib, the Tlicho citizens. I don't know exactly what the numbers are. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: So, Mr. Chairman, with some 94 percent of the people that did go to vote with a large majority of people voting in favour, their ratification should mean something in the sense that they ratified their agreement with a large number of the population saying that this is what they can live with through the ratification process. So with that, as a government what can we do to basically change that process? It has already been ratified. Can this government change the process after it has been ratified?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, from the previous question, there are other non-Tlicho residents in the Tlicho area as well, and I should add that to be clear.

To this question specifically, the Tlicho have already ratified their agreement through their vote this summer, so their part is done. Our part is not done. We're doing it now, part of it, there are two other pieces that still have to be done in the next government, but this is the main one that will eventually be the first to give effect.

The federal government still has to introduce their legislation. We understand it's going to happen in December, and they'll go through the House of Commons and Senate to ratify it. So this is part of our ratification process. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: I was just going to ask a question of the Minister with regard to the land claims expenses that have been incurred. Is this government going to pay any of the \$28 million that the Tlicho people will have to pay for those negotiations? Is the Government of the Northwest Territories picking up any of that tab?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Krutko, I don't think finances are included in clause 4. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Well, the way I understand the agreement, this is part and parcel of the Tlicho agreement, and this is a clause that applies to the general...(inaudible)...of the agreement, and there is a payback provision in the agreement which talks about monies that have to be paid back for negotiations, as part of the payback division. So it is a part of the Tlicho agreement. So if I can't ask that question, I think you should stick to your rules and apply them to everybody.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Krutko, could you say which part of the agreement you're referring to?

MR. KRUTKO: It does apply to 4.1, the effect of the Tlicho agreement. The Tlicho agreement is the overall agreement. In that agreement there is a section that talks about a payback where Tlicho people would have to pay back some \$28 million for the negotiations that have occurred to date. So they are part of not only the cash settlement, but they will also have to pay back those negotiated loans. It is part of the Tlicho agreement.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Krutko, could you define what part of the Tlicho agreement you're referring to so I can refer to the Minister? Mr. Krutko.

Maybe I'll ask the Minister if he is aware of the section that Mr. Krutko is referring to. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, in regard to the financial payments. The funding of this claims process was done through a program that the federal government has in their comprehensive claims policy, where they advance funding to the claimant groups that will eventually come out of the overall compensation of their claim. So it's an advance on their claim through the federal program. So the GNWT doesn't provide any assistance in that area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The chair will recognize Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as the Minister stated, we are going through our territorial ratification process, and he stated yesterday that by giving effect to clause 4 and ratifying it in this House, it sets a huge trend to the rest of the Northwest Territories. Although I am asking questions more for the public record on this process, I think it is good for the rest of the citizens of the North and those people I represent, because self-governments are happening all over the rest of the Northwest Territories and this could impact them and the services available if the funding situation gets difficult. I know for the government right now, for example, we're paying in the area of millions of dollars for our staff to take part in the negotiations, which is a good thing we've done.

But based on that, there's one other question, Mr. Chairman, that I'd like to know. By giving effect to this agreement in clause 4, are we tying our hands as the Government of the Northwest Territories to any further agreements with Canada in the area of devolution?

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a general statement first and then reply just to put it in context. Whenever there's a claim negotiated, in this case the Tlicho agreement, there are a set of rules that are set out in the agreement. This clause wants to ensure that everybody who is going to be involved, like the boards and others, abide by these rules. In this way it's focused on the Tlicho and whoever is involved close to their area. The Tlicho are involved in the whole devolution and resource revenue sharing as a separate type of a process, and at this stage we don't anticipate any negative repercussions because of ratifying this Tlicho claim. Thank you.

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That concludes the areas I had particular comments or questions that I wanted to get out for the record for my constituents and that deals with the areas that I have for clause 4. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 5. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 6. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 7. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one question in the area of clause 7 and it refers to this government and I believe the appropriations this Assembly makes. Can the Minister inform us as to what is referenced there as to such sums that are required to be paid out of monies appropriated from the consolidated revenue fund? Is that process going to take part as we are accustomed to through budget planning and main estimate reviews? Thank you.

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: That is correct, Mr. Chairman. No money from the Government of the Northwest Territories can be paid without legislative authority for appropriation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Clause 7. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister give some information as to the criteria that is used to determine the monetary obligations as the clause states? What are the criteria that are used to determine those obligations? Thank you.

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

MR. BARGERY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In this clause there may be some minimal financial obligations, examples of those and the reasons for this clause in there, under the dispute resolution mechanisms in the agreement we would have to pay our own costs to participate in those. Another cost that is envisioned, the GNWT would pay one-third of the cost for the cultural coordinator, about \$60,000 on an annual basis. Those are two of the types of costs but there aren't many direct costs to the GNWT resulting from this agreement that aren't funded through an incremental funding agreement with the Government of Canada.

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

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So the kind of expenditures that are anticipated here are really quite nominal then, Mr. Chairman. We are not talking about any program dollars or capital dollars that these are really, I get the sense, quite nominal, quite small and so are the parts of the agreement. Have I got that right? Thank you.

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. This will allow the Government of the Northwest Territories to meet our minimal financial obligation under this Tlicho agreement. It is similar to the statutory supplementary budget appropriation but it is very minimal. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Clause 7. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, I was wondering if I could just follow up on that. How long does the agreement go with Canada, is it sort of a never-ending agreement for incremental costs or does it have a time limit?

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

MR. BARGERY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The agreement with Canada is a 10-year agreement, \$8 million over that 10-year period, and then renegotiation, and that is a similar type of agreement then that we have with existing land claims, which are also renegotiated financing agreements.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If in 10 years the Government of the Northwest Territories wasn't successful in negotiating a similar agreement with Canada, let's say for some reason they absolutely refuse to provide the funding, would that allow the Government of the Northwest Territories, Legislative Assembly then not to approve the funds if there was no flow through?

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

MR. BARGERY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The way the money will work for the \$8 million over the 10 years, it would come into the GNWT and go through our budgetary process much like other land claim incremental funding agreements. There is about four or five through the main estimates. If there isn't a financing agreement at the end of that period for our ongoing costs to meet our obligations, I don't know of any other way that they could be done other than the ordinary appropriation process. I should add that we have been able to renegotiate agreements at the other tables, so we don't anticipate that problem. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. DENT: I think that this was actually answered earlier. There is no way that this government would necessarily or they would be stuck for monies that didn't get voted by the Assembly, so I think the question has been answered but I just wanted some more detail. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 8. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question on clause 8 in regard to the Tlicho tax treatment agreement and I know that this was mentioned already yesterday, but I still have some clarifications that I want to get and I do believe that this might be my last chance to do this. If I may, Mr. Chairman, I just want to express the need and the reason why some of these questions should be asked. I know that we have people in the gallery. I understand that I ask them not to take these questions as any criticism or anything like that, I hope that they understand that this is the ratification process. I hope they understand that we have not had a chance to do a wide level of consultation on this bill and this is a way to get the information out to the residents of the Territories about the work that they have done. I notice that there are negotiators in the gallery as well, and this is something that they have been working on for a very long time and it is quite complex and we need to have the information out there. My purpose in asking questions is simply that for me to understand and for me to be able to tell the people I represent about what this means. I believe that this agreement has pretty specified provisions so I think often when we don't know what is in it, there are more alarms and questions than knowing what is in it and so far it is quite straightforward.

I just want to ask a question on section 8, Mr. Chairman. Let's just go back to the Tlicho tax treatment agreement, which I understand had to be signed before the actual agreement could be initialled. It had to be done because it was required by another federal law section here and you can't help but be a little bit legalese here because we are talking about a legal document. I understand that the Tlicho government will have power to tax Tlicho citizens. Does that include people who live on the Tlicho land who might not be Tlicho citizens? Do they have the power to tax those people? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Bargery.

MR. BARGERY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Tlicho government has direct taxation authority for Tlicho citizens who live on Tlicho land or in Tlicho communities, but it is limited to Tlicho citizens.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bargery. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Could I ask what is the difference between tax sharing or coordination agreement versus the tax treatment agreement that the Tlicho government has with the Government of Canada?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Bargery.

MR. BARGERY: I will take a stab at it, Mr. Chairman. Tax sharing would be when a government, for example, the Government of Canada decides to share some of their tax revenues with the Tlicho government and they can do that through the Tlicho agreement by agreement only. Tax coordination would be things like the harmonization of rates and the collection of those taxes. For example, if the Government of Canada chose to share some of its taxes with the Tlicho government, things would happen much the same way the Canadian Customs and Revenue Agency would collect those taxes through a tax coordination agreement, I believe. I think that answers the Member's question, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bargery. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So far from what I am reading, I understand that the Tlicho government as a government, and being a government like any other government, will be exempt from paying taxes, but that it is not looking at, for lack of a better word, the government is not asking for exemption from GST, for example, or fuel tax or any of the consumption tax or the tax regimes that are imposed by the federal government or territorial government, or tobacco tax or payroll tax. So the citizens of Tlicho would continue to pay that tax and there is no change in that. Am I correct in that understanding? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Bargery.

MR. BARGERY: I apologize, Mr. Chairman, I wasn't sure of what the Member was asking about the Tlicho government of which the tax treatment agreement is intended to address or whether Tlicho citizens would continue to pay taxes. If I could get that clarification, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bargery. Ms. Lee, could you clarify that question?

MS. LEE: Thank you. This is why this tax question gets so complicated. I thought I had it pretty straight there in the beginning. I am trying to understand what this tax treatment agreement means and I have a briefing note in front of me and I am trying to verify what it is saying there. As far as I can see,

it says here that the Tlicho government will be exempt from paying taxes like any other government. For example the GNWT does not pay GST and/or any taxes like that when they purchase things, so I understand that that is the same privilege that the Tlicho government will have. I guess I am seeking confirmation on that and then maybe I will ask the second question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to say that on this tax treatment agreement, Canada's practice when they enter into these tax treatment agreements with aboriginal governments, they have been doing that rather than amending the Income Tax Act every time a self-government agreement is negotiated. So in this case, the Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement Act gives this tax treatment agreement the force of law and this is needed to provide the legal framework for recognition of the Tlicho government and its corporation under the Income Tax Act. I just wanted to say that first, so it is a way that they do it to have this in place. For income tax purposes, the Tlicho government will be treated as a public body, as a government, performing a function of government so that it will not pay taxes on income generated from performing their function as a government. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. One aspect of this agreement is the government is a tax paying agent but the other thing has to do with the Tlicho government as a government, and like any other government it is going to have taxing powers on the citizens. As well, the Tlicho government is in a negotiation with the Canadian government to do some sort of tax sharing or getting some of its tax shares so that they could have the money to run their government. So I want to know what is the picture down the road under this agreement? Is the Tlicho government looking at asking for some of the GST money or income tax money that is coming out of the GNWT or the NWT or any consumption taxes that the GNWT is collecting or the Canadian government is collecting and is the Tlicho government going to be looking for their share of that tax revenue? So I guess that is a pretty straightforward question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Bargery.

MR. BARGERY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said yesterday, the agreement is permissive in allowing for tax sharing agreements with either the Government of the Northwest Territories or the Government of Canada. We are not in negotiations with the Tlicho at this time for the sharing of taxes. We understand that the Government of Canada is with respect to income tax and perhaps GST. I don't know and I can't say today if the Tlicho will ask in the future, but they can. The agreement allows for that, but for such an agreement it does not obligate it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bargery. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. Under this agreement does the power for the Tlicho government to get into tax sharing or a tax sharing agreement with the federal government, do they have to make the NWT government a part of negotiating a partnership or could that agreement be negotiated and agreed upon just between the Tlicho government and the Government of Canada?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Bargery.

MR. BARGERY: With respect to a tax sharing agreement that could be a bilateral agreement to do with federal taxes, Mr. Chairman, I believe that is the discussion that is underway, it is a bilateral discussion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bargery. Clause 8. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 9. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 10. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 11. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 12. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 13. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, yesterday in asking the questions about this government's authority to deal with this act, the Minister gave me information that in fact right now as a government we don't have the authority to deal with this piece of legislation until the federal act is put in. There is also, and I think it was Mr. Goldney, you referred to ultra vires or something of that nature, that in fact it can sit in there until the federal government has that ability. For clarity sake, the legislation we are passing will sort of sit out there until the federal government deals with their legislation and then it comes into force, correct?

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The federal settlement legislation will address something of an uncertainty with respect to the GNWT's jurisdiction over Indians and lands reserved for Indians. There is some question as to whether or not the GNWT has the legislative authority to enact legislation such as a settlement legislation that deals with Indians as Indians. With that said, it is not certain that the GNWT doesn't because this is much more than an act dealing with Indians as Indians, this is an act to ratify a solemn treaty that is aimed at the reconciliation of the imposition of Canadian sovereignty on the aboriginal peoples. It was also noted yesterday that previous jurisdictions have introduced settlement legislation, the Yukon territory and also recently, and the legislature of British Columbia passed the Nishga'a Settlement Act.

However, to deal with that question, the Government of Canada has agreed to make amendments to the NWT Act to make it absolutely clear that there is legislative authority and while retroactively less if need be, should someone challenge the authority of this legislature to enact this legislation.

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank Mr. Goldney for that response. When I look at clause 13, it is very open, it is a very common one that we do as legislators and as

government. But based on the responses from the Minister and his staff, I have considered that to ensure for our government's sake that we don't put something in place that someone can just throw a challenge at. I figure we can tighten it up as far as we can as the Government of the Northwest Territories by making that clause a little more clear to the fact it specifies to the federal legislation. So on that, Mr. Chairman, I do have a motion to amend clause 13, that would reflect the response that we received from the Minister and his staff on this area and I would be prepared to move it at this time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Roland, you have a motion to introduce. Mr. Roland.

Committee Motion 144-14(6) To Amend Clause 13 Of Bill 34, Carried

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill 34, be amended by deleting Clause 13 and by substituting the following:

13. This Act comes into force on the day that federal settlement legislation comes into force pursuant to 4.3.3 of chapter 4 of the Tlicho agreement. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. The motion is being circulated. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Clause 13, as amended. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will go back to preamble. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I apologize that I was absolutely unavoidably absent from the House yesterday and I was not able to speak to this bill under general comments and I would like to make a few remarks on this just at this juncture if I could.

Mr. Chairman, this is a very unique piece of legislation that comes to us for approval very late in our mandate. However, the Government of the Northwest Territories has been at the table and involved with the interests and positions of our government being put forward on a consistent basis. This is just one of three pieces of legislation that our government will need to deal with as part of the ratification process for the future agreement.

We do have a process for taking legislation such as this out to public consultation and I believe the these public hearings are sometimes as much about creating awareness as they are about receiving feedback. Many times legislation is complex and it would be unreasonable to expect the average person to have the resources at their disposal to consider it in great detail. It would be more likely to receive support or non-support for the principle and the intention of the legislation.

I am here in this Legislative Assembly first and foremost to represent the interest of my constituents in Hay River South and I was able to speak to several of them about this particular

piece of legislation, but as Members a large part of our work calls upon us to look at decisions and legislation that affects our people on a territorial basis. So it is important, while having a focus on our own constituency, to also view our decisions through the lens of a territorial-wide perspective.

I fundamentally believe that a treaty such as the one signed by the Tlicho was an agreement between the federal government and the Tlicho people. Although the outcomes of meeting the obligations of the treaty may have an impact on our government and how we will do things in the future, we are essentially not a direct party to the agreement. We are being called upon to pass legislation which says that this government recognizes, affirms, validates and understands and agrees to the way in which this agreement will consequentially affect us. In this way, it is not a typical piece of legislation drafted, crafted and brought forward by our government. It is more amply described as a response to a federal government making good on a long-outstanding commitment as outlined in a treaty, and as much as it impacts us, I believe it has been good that we have been afforded representation at the negotiating table throughout the process.

With respect to the issue being raised by the North Slave Metis Alliance, there are many outstanding issues of rights and land and self-government which will be negotiated and signed in the future, and I am not comfortable with our government being put in a position of having to referee or being put in the middle of disputes as to whether one agreement infringes on another group's right. I believe that this is a case that needs to be taken up with the federal government and I am not in a position to make a judgment on those complexities. The North Slave Metis are asking for time. The ratification legislation required to be passed by the federal government hasn't progressed yet so I think that there is time to put their case forward.

So, Mr. Chairman, our government does have a process of taking legislation to public hearings, I respect that process and the commitment of Members who have spoken to that process. Everyone has agreed, however, that after 12 years and \$28 million invested in negotiations, it isn't likely that this legislation is going to be significantly altered. This is just one of three pieces of legislation our government is going to need to pass. I would like to suggest that in preparation for public consultation that will occur on the next two subsequent pieces of legislation, that perhaps the territory-wide information and awareness initiative be undertaken by our government to inform anyone who is interested as to the substance and implications of the Tlicho agreement or any other land claims and self-government impacts generally for that matter.

Mr. Chairman, I do not believe that there is a great deal of risk for the Tlicho people if this legislation were deferred. However, I do believe that the passage of it today is as much symbolic as anything else, and it sends a message of support for this and many other aboriginal government partners that our central public government will work with it in the future as claims and self-government commitments made by our federal government are acted upon.

So for all of these reasons, Mr. Chairman, I have tried to express here today, I wanted to say that I won't be supporting third reading of Bill 34 today. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of points I would like to make as we finish this up. Mr. Chairman, first of all we've been inundated with many media requests to speak to this process in the last few days and so much paper you can't believe it, but I think one of the main concerns that has been expressed by the North Slave Metis on behalf of Metis people, and I believe that they are raising some legitimate concerns, but I believe these concerns are more correctly put to the federal government. I would hope that both the GNWT and indeed the Aboriginal Summit if they see fit, would work with the Metis people and take their case to the federal government. I believe they do need to be recognized, their rights need to be recognized and I hope the federal government can see the light.

Mr. Chairman, my main concerns throughout this have been about process, and the Premier the other day in speaking to the bill asked us to use our best judgment and asked us to take a leap of faith. Well, I have to say, for me, Mr. Chairman, this is not about a leap of faith. I certainly support the agreement, I support self-government and I believe that it will be better for the Northwest Territories. I also support the devolution of authority to the GNWT from the federal government for very similar reasons, and I think that this agreement will do more good for the people of the Northwest Territories to have it passed than to not have it passed. But, Mr. Chairman, my concern has always been with the process.

As we saw today, committee just proposed an amendment to this bill and it was one that passed in the House. So to suggest that a public process and public consultation would have no affect since this agreement has already been signed, I don't believe that that is the case. I recognize there would be no changes made to this agreement, but to suggest that there could be no changes made to the legislation, to suggest that it is inconceivable that anybody out there in the public might have had ways to improve this bill, I don't think that's fair, Mr. Chairman. I don't know how many drafts this legislation went through, but I am guessing it was in the neighbourhood of 20 or more. Do we assume that the content and the text were identical through 20 drafts? Obviously that's not the case. Obviously there were changes, there were improvements made. It's important I think to have a sober second thought. If there is anything we can do to improve this agreement, I think the amendment strengthens and improves this legislation and I think that's the kind of thing that the public process affords us. So now having made my concerns known about process and accepting that a committee heard my case and you don't always carry the day at committee, I recognize that and I appreciate that. Having raised my process concerns, I am not left with the question of whether voting in favour of this legislation or voting opposed to the legislation, what would be better for the people of the Northwest Territories. Is more good likely to come from passing this agreement now and moving past this having made my concerns known about the process? Mr. Chairman, I believe that's the case and that's why I will be supporting this agreement.

--Applause

But I certainly hope we recognize that this is not the way constitutional development should take place. In the life of the next government, if they don't recognize the need to involve all citizens and Members of this House in developing all pieces of legislation, I think that would be truly a shame. There was a way to do this properly. There was a way to make sure that regular Members and all people in the Northwest Territories were more involved throughout the process. I believe we need to strive to ensure that that is the case for the next pieces of

legislation we see. We did nothing but raise the concerns and fears of people when, in our last days in government, we move quickly to subvert a public process and jam something through the legislature. Even where there is nothing to be legitimately concerned about, we raised concerns. To me, that seems absolutely the wrong way to go about building the very types of partnerships that the Premier spoke passionately about the other day.

Mr. Chairman, as I said, I have to support this legislation because I think more good will come of my support than otherwise. Thank you.

---Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): General comments to the preamble, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make a few comments on the preamble. Mr. Chairman, as you can see, the clauses in the preamble are a very clear and loud announcement of constitutional law. It is a very broad statement. It is a legislative statement about the rights and powers of the Tlicho people to have their own government that is recognized under the Constitution. Like all laws, and especially constitutional law, Mr. Chairman, it is a living document. It's something that's expected to have life put into it by the people. I believe the Constitution, and I have said this many times before, the Constitution isn't just about laws, clauses and words. Constitution is about relationships. It's about relationships between the people and the government that governs them or the people they elect, the government that people elect. It's about, in this case, a new relationship between Tlicho people and the people they come into contact with in the Territories. I believe very fundamentally that this agreement will force us to work closer and have a closer relationship than before. It asks us to work closely for the benefit of all the people who live here.

I believe this is a good agreement fundamentally. It will give us stability and certainty, not only for the Tlicho people but for Yellowknife. I don't accept for one second that this has no implications other than to the people who live in the Tlicho territory. In fact, this has deep meaning for everybody in the Territories. This government has a role to play and it will continue to have a role to play in terms of giving meaning to the words that are in this document in front of us.

I believe there was a flaw in the consultation process and that has been pointed out many a time and there are many reasons why that was the case. I don't believe it's too late for us to continue to have a conversation about different relationships that are being formed and are being grown out of here. I believe the NWT government, the Minister and the Premier and the next Assembly have very important roles to continue to play. It's not about whether this government is done now, and then you go away. I don't think anything about the relationship between different peoples works that way. There has to be a role for the GNWT to inform the citizens and to incorporate people's views into this document because it's really about how we, as a very small population of people, 40,000 people in a vast land with very distinct aboriginal people in different areas determining their own future and what they want to do with their land with their people and their priorities. We have to respect that, but we also, as a public government, have to be the mediator and facilitator and to provide leadership for the rest of the territory, as well as providing coordination. I believe in going through the clauses in this agreement, it makes it abundantly clear there will be a continued role for the GNWT to

play in making sure that there are agreements to address, coordination and standardization and even administration of law and funding arrangements and such. I know there are lots of concerns out there that this was not given a due process and I don't believe this is the end. There is lots of opportunity yet to be had for us to discuss this and make this work.

I just wanted to make that comment. After what Mr. Bell said, after all is said and done, we could talk about process, but in the end people remember whether we supported this or not and I said on many occasions, I don't want to see a situation where all Yellowknife MLAs oppose a constitutional document in a new working relationship, a new living agreement, that the GNWT has entered into with the Tlicho government. I understand from the Premier stating that the Tlicho government did not have to come to the GNWT for ratification. It was a choice that they made. I do believe there are people out there who are aware that these negotiations have been going on and this means in a new relationship. People want to know and we have a role to play in that. I do want to use the power and the privilege I have here to say and send a positive message that this is a good day. This is a good agreement. It's calling upon all of us to work together and to work out the details. For that reason, I will be supporting the third reading of this legislation and I will do my part to talk to the people and to explain what I know about this information and work to get more information where it's needed. I do believe this is just the start of a new relationship. Things aren't going to change drastically tomorrow, it just means we have to work much closer together. I just wanted to add that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I still have to drive home tonight. I wish I was counting how many times people in this Assembly have repeated themselves with the same message over and over. So I am not going to bother repeating what I said yesterday. I want to make some reference to some of the correspondence. Yesterday I mentioned some correspondence I received from the Tlicho, the North Slave Metis Alliance and the Fort Providence Metis Council. Today, I want to add, for the record, that we have a letter of support from the Deh Cho First Nations signed by Herb Norwegian urging all the Members to pass the necessary legislation. I do want to pose a question because I haven't heard anybody ask the Minister regarding any assistance or commitment that he could provide for the North Slave Metis Alliance to work some of these issues out. I am not sure I can ask questions at this period, but those are the two items I wanted to raise. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. I think the question was outside this bill. The Minister may want to answer, but it's up to him.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the North Slave Metis Alliance members are probably in a very tough situation here. This Tlicho land claims and self-government agreement is defining the rights of the Tlicho and they say they are not defining anybody else's rights. However, we need to provide some assistance to the North Slave Metis Alliance in pursuing their rights. In this case, it's the federal government who has that obligation to recognize them and start a process with them. This has not happened ever since they have been formed. My staff have been in contact, talking and looking at the possibilities. Yes, we will commit here that we want to work with them in the remaining life as Minister of Aboriginal affairs to start political discussions with the federal government who has that obligation. So, yes, we will provide

whatever assistance we can to do that in the remaining life continuing as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): General comments on the preamble. Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I can relate to my colleague from the Deh Cho when he says he has to drive home tonight. I also am driving home after we are done here today at some point in time. I have a little bit more driving than he has to do.

I missed yesterday in the House. I hear it was a very exciting day but there was a tragedy that happened in Hay River that I had to attend. I did read Hansard from yesterday and I agree with Mr. McLeod that a lot of the statements that have been made are being repeated, but I don't think that's a bad thing. I do see that a lot of the comments that were made in comments yesterday were comments that I would have made as well, had I been here.

So I would like to make a few comments right now on this bill. First of all, Mr. Chairman, I know it's not my job to stop or to block or even to delay or slow down this Tlicho government, but it is quite apparent, Mr. Chairman, that apart from some of the concerns some of the Members have, there are also groups out there that do have some concerns about how this agreement will affect them and we do have a Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, which includes all the groups and everyone in the Territories actually. It is incumbent upon the Minister and upon this government to make sure the views of all parties are addressed and to give them some comfort in this. When I hear comments like if we pass this bill in the House, that the whole thing is going to be thrown into court and it could take awhile in court if that happens. Then what have we done? That would be very unfortunate both for the Tlicho and for everyone, I guess. So we could end up doing quite the opposite of what we are trying to do here and that's try to get the process moving in a speedy way and make sure that there are no roadblocks. I don't know that that will happen, but from what I am hearing, there is a possibility of that and if that happens, that would be very unfortunate.

To me, Mr. Chairman, it all started with leadership. It started with this bill coming before us at a very late date. Our Premier and our Minister of Aboriginal Affairs convinced Cabinet to move this to the House knowing full well that we had very little time to deal with it. I have heard comments that we may have to find a different type of process to deal with this type of legislation and with land claims or self-government agreements. That's fine, Mr. Chairman, if we do find a new process and our government agrees to that, but for the time being and for what I believe is a process in our government, we don't have a different process right now. As a Member of this government, I think it's incumbent upon us to try to get as much information to our constituents as we possibly can. I know that I have heard comments before from Ministers on the other side that they had some serious concerns about what's included in this type of legislation, yet they are supporting it now so maybe they got more information than I was able to get or something has happened that they've changed their minds. That's okay. I know the leaders who have been involved and the negotiators will be taking full credit, if this bill does get through the House and does get third reading, for their part in doing that.

Mr. Chairman, I would just throw a word of caution that if it turns out that this piece of legislation is to the detriment of any group in the Northwest Territories outside of the Tlicho. I am not saying that it's going to be, but if it is, then I am hoping the

leaders of our government and the negotiators and the leaders who have put it together will be prepared to take the blame for that. I feel a little bit sorry, Mr. Chairman, of the position our committee was put in. Our committee was put into a situation with very little time to deal with a bill of this magnitude. I do believe that it has a lot of magnitude. This is a large bill.

So I think as it goes to the public, there will be a lot of education yet and I know there will be a long implementation period and a lot of growing pains that are going to go along with this and I am not going to be the one to stand up and say that it's a bad piece of legislation.

Over the past few days, there has been lots of talks. There's been a lot of tactics used to get the support of everybody and I have even been assured by the grand chief, Joe Rabesca, that this Tlicho government is going to be great for Hay River. I intend to remind him of that if this goes through over the next while that he's made that comment. I am hoping that it is and I am hoping that it's good for not only Hay River, but for the Tlicho themselves and for the North as a whole. I look forward to how these 10 years of negotiations and what they've put together for self-government and lands claims is going to work for their people and I wish them all the success in the world. So when third reading does come up for this bill, Mr. Chairman, I am going to support the third reading of this bill.

I hope there is a good flow of communication into the future with the public and I would just like to say to all the Tlicho people here, I want to wish you all the best in your government and I hope it does all the things that you hope it will do. I guess if I could close with one comment, if this does go through, I hope you live happily ever after on Tlicho lands. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. Delorey. To the preamble, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this is an occasion for us to celebrate a long, drawn out process. This started back in 1921, almost 80 years ago, since the first treaties were signed, but it's taken the Canadian public to realize that aboriginal rights have never been recognized in the Canadian Constitution until 1982. Still today there are people out there who don't agree that First Nations people have rights, but it's entrenched in the Canadian Constitution which affirms, in section 35, that these rights apply.

I was in Rae in 1988 when the Prime Minister of Canada, back then Brian Mulroney, signed the Dene-Metis agreement-in-principle. Then I had the opportunity of being there August 25th for the signing with the Prime Minister of Canada for the Tlicho agreement. It has been a long, drawn out process which has taken a lot of time and effort. In the process, I have seen a lot of our leaders come and go. We have lost a lot of good people in this process who are no longer with us and who have dedicated their lives to seeing the day when their children and their grandchildren will have something that was started over 80 years ago with the first treaty of Canada which, back then, was classified as a friendship treaty. Today we have a modern treaty which includes self-government agreements and a land claims agreement.

For me, that's a step of recognizing and affirming those rights that First Nations people have in the Constitution of Canada. I feel that for the Tlicho people, this will only make your lives better and give you the responsibility of maintaining your own decision-making process by way of what's in the Tlicho

agreement and also the Tlicho government's act, which we will be dealing with again in the 15th Assembly.

I would like to congratulate the negotiations on both sides and especially the elders who have been here for the past couple of days. They have been waiting a long time to see this day come to be especially in the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

With that, I would like to make it clear that I fully support the Tlicho agreement and will continue to do so in the future.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the preamble, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: As I said earlier, I would have preferred to see a longer public process for consideration of this bill. It really is a vehicle for information for the public. For me, it's always been a process issue. I think that my colleagues have indicated where some of us are repeating each other around the table, I guess I don't need to do that. I think most of my colleagues have said most of what needs to be said. Mr. Bell in particular outlined things pretty close to the way I see them.

I would agree that the North Slave Metis Alliance has legitimate concerns, but since the Government of the Northwest Territories is not a necessary part of the agreement, I am not sure we are the ones to deal with the issue. It is going to have to be an issue that the North Slave Metis Alliance are going to have to deal with with the federal government.

The one thing I feel very strongly about is I hope the government in the 15th Assembly will make sure that there is an effort made so that all parties to these agreements understand and respect each other's processes or else establish upfront a new convention for how this government is going to deal with them.

I would point out that a couple of years ago, the standing committee suggested that a different approach be taken to dealing with claims agreements, so there was more involvement during the negotiation processes, so that committees were more prepared for legislation when it comes before us. That was rejected by the government at that time.

So I hope the 15th Assembly will reconsider that and look for ways to make sure that everybody is comfortable with how legislation is moved along and how this level of government ratifies agreements.

There is one other concern I would like to address and that is the allegation that there was a secret deal to pass this bill made in committee. Mr. Chairman, that may have come about perhaps because of the way we reported the bill. How I reported the bill in opening comments in yesterday's Hansard on page 3197. I started out by saying the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight has been considering Bill 34. I said further on that we passed a motion to report it back to the House for consideration. I would just like to clarify that there is no set single path for how committee's deal with bills. At the standing committee, all that was discussed was process, whether or not we were going to try to have a one-night public hearing, whether or not we were going to take a break and go out and try to do a week's worth of public hearings. Some even proposed that we extend the life of the Assembly until January and that would give us lots of time to go out and do public hearings. That was the sort of discussion that went on committee, not whether or not to try to pass the bill. It was to try to determine the process. Being part of a democratic process,

our issues are dealt with by way of motions, votes in committee. So it was accurate when I reported yesterday that the committee adopted a motion to report it back to the House for consideration. So there wasn't a consensus. It wasn't a unanimous vote, but the majority ruled. We had a majority who wanted to see it back in this House and you have to respect the rule of majority.

I personally wish we had had more time to deal with this bill. I respect the fact that the Tlicho invited us to the table, the Government of the Northwest Territories. I regret that perhaps I haven't had more time to ensure that my constituents are comfortable with what's in this bill. Based on what I have seen of it and my understanding of what has been happening over the years, I voted in favour of the bill at second reading. So I supported the principle of the bill and I will, too, be supporting the bill on third reading. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

---Applause

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

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I won't be very long on this. I have taken a fair bit of time over the last couple of days and I have to thank my colleagues for allowing me to do what I see as my role as a representative for my constituents of Inuvik Boot Lake. As we heard the Minister say, this is legislation that will change the beginnings of a major change of the Government of the Northwest Territories and aboriginal governments in the Northwest Territories. It's a natural evolution to the way things have gone. My father right now is happy he has the right to vote. That's one of the things I guess I was looking at and question to ensure that as residents of the Northwest Territories, we ensure we are doing what's right for all people. I did say when we started off on this Committee of the Whole process, I told the Minister I had some specific questions and how he responded to my questions would either sway me to go for or against. I must thank the Minister and his staff for responding to my questions with clear responses and answers. By doing that and satisfying the specific concerns I had that I think my constituents would have, because as the Minister stated this will be a template that other self-government groups will use in the future, somewhat different maybe, but it is a template.

I do take my role here in this Assembly very seriously, Mr. Chairman, about the responsibility I have when I took the oath as a Member of this government. I know some Members were a little concerned that my questions were of other tactics, so I tell them right now that's not the case. I had some specific concerns. The Minister and his staff have answered them clear enough that I can tell the Minister at this time that I will be supporting third reading of this bill. I know I can go back to my constituents based on the questions I asked and the answers I got from the Minister that I think I can satisfy the concerns I had about this piece of legislation.

I would like to thank again those who did come to this Assembly because so many times when we look up in the gallery, we see empty seats. So we know those who have taken the time to come and visit us and see how this process works had something they were concerned about and wanted to see. Like Mr. Delorey, I would wish them the best. Hopefully as their government takes hold and they elect people to represent them in those positions of power in the new government, that they would have people who would be as diligent, I hope, as I think I am in representing my people, that they would represent their people in that way holding their government accountable and responsible to their people and

the rules and laws they make. I would congratulate them on their work and effort and the Minister and his department's effort in taking this to where we are today. I congratulate you all and look forward to third reading. Thank you.

---Applause

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

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Chairman. I, too, will support third reading of this bill. I supported it throughout and my questions concerning the North Slave Metis and their opportunities to come to terms with the federal and territorial government with something similar to this satisfied my concern, the ability of the Deh Cho and Akaitcho to finalize their agreement with the federal and territorial governments in this area. It also satisfied my questions.

Mr. Chairman, this is truly an historic day. We are one more agreement realizing a new relationship between aboriginal and public governments in Canada. I look forward to working with the other aboriginal groups that are still negotiating, the Metis, the Akaitcho and the Deh Cho and finalizing their agreement, so we could create more certainty in the Northwest Territories.

Our economy, our political and socio-economic conditions are dependent upon those things. Mr. Chairman, I would like to congratulate the Tlicho people, their leaders for a job well done and look forward to the new partnership we have with them as governments. It's been a long day, Mr. Speaker, and we still have a ways to go, so I will keep my comments to that. Once again, I congratulate the Tlicho people on their new agreement. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also want to speak on this and support it. Also I would like to tell my constituents who are up there, from the day this legislation came in front of the committee, there was support from my colleagues right from day one. The only problem they had was the process. They suggested that we go through the regular process as a government or a territory. That is one of the things that they needed to do. As I mentioned in my statement yesterday, this wasn't a normal process. I am glad that they, at the end of the day, agreed with us and we dealt with it in the House as a legislature. Sometimes we have to make hard decisions. We've made a lot of decisions in this House. We made one today earlier. We must have pushed some buttons, but still that's the way it works in this House. We don't always agree on what one another does, but we do get over it sometimes. We as legislators sit around this table, people see us and hear us and they know we are doing it for the benefit of people out there. Today, it is for the Tlicho.

The next Assembly, it might be for the Deh Cho and the Akaitcho. We might have to sit around and say what is the normal procedure? That's the day we are going to decide are we going to go through it the way we did with the Tlicho or are we going the long process? This is an agreement that was made by three parties, so it doesn't matter what we said or what we did, there are some pieces of the agreement that we couldn't have changed anyway. Maybe some of the legislation at the end of the dates and times of the effective dates, we would probably have changed those. On one hand, public consultation is a great thing. They did go through that. They did go through 12 years. You have to congratulate all the people

who were part of it. We had Cabinet representatives for the last three or four assemblies that were part of it. It took that long to complete this agreement and they have to be congratulated. There are many departments involved. Those people have to be congratulated. The Dogrib negotiators have to be congratulated, as well as the chiefs who were out there. There were many chiefs. Some of the chiefs are not around who were part of it. Some of the elders who were involved in it are no longer around. So those people have to be thought about and congratulated. Their families should be congratulated. So I don't want to carry on and on.

I will just say that thanks to my colleagues for the support right from day one. Thank you.

---Applause

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

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, will try to avoid repeating myself and the remarks, the very well crafted and well said remarks of my colleagues that I will agree with. My position is clear on the difficulty I have with this bill. That is that the opportunity that the people of the Northwest Territories have come to expect and deserve, to be able to look and criticize and potentially amend our laws has been denied in this process. It has gone against some of the fundamental values that we've tried to adhere to in this Assembly, values like being inclusive and governing our affairs with some abeyance to the principles of consensus. These things are at the core of our values in the Assembly and admittedly and undeniably, we are denying people those values in this process.

Along with a number of my colleagues, I have tried to bring focus and significance to the responsibility we have in this institution to be consistent, to make sure that there are at least some stages in the way we govern that people can rely on. When we change our mind and change the direction and change the process by which we make these laws, I think we diminish our confidence, our trust and our credibility. You can't peel too many more layers off of our purpose for being here, Mr. Chairman. If we don't have the trust and the integrity, then we really don't have anything. I don't want to say where this layers the case, where we are putting it all on the line. It's not an emergency or a make or break degree, but we need to be very careful every time we say we can do something differently. Especially after the fact in this case, Mr. Speaker. We have taken some people by surprise and denied them an opportunity that they might have had earlier in the process.

In my objections, in my arguments, in my discussions with a lot of people, and my colleagues have said, we have been tremendously, vigorously lobbied on this one. I believe I have got a couple of things out on the table. One of them, in a discussion with some aboriginal leaders, with the Minister this afternoon, is an acknowledgment and an understanding, at least on my part, that because these laws – and there are going to be more of them – are created in a different process we are used to, then we need to look at our approval process as well. That is something that the next Assembly has to look at pretty early and look at very seriously. We are going to see the same kind of challenge again.

Mr. Chairman, I have also secured a confirmation from Chief Joe Rabesca that one of the first things I hope to do if I am returned as the Member for Great Slave is to invite Grand Chief Joe and his people into my constituency to meet face to face with my constituents and explore the consequences of this bill

and what I know are the benefits and at least take up some of what I think has been denied to the people of the NWT. I have not asked Mr. Antoine for that same commitment. He will not, of course, be returning to this Assembly, but it is something that I want to engage in with the next Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and take that back to my constituents as something I hope I can be held accountable for, that I have tried to deliver on this fundamental process that we have, unfortunately and very regrettably, Mr. Chairman, been compelled to forego.

I am going then to give qualified support to the third reading of this bill, Mr. Chairman. If I have heard my colleagues correctly, it seems that that will be a unanimous decision from this Assembly, from what I have heard so far. I believe that voice on that side is going to be a progressive one and that the qualification that I attach to it will help us see our way through this very new and very bold new step we will be taking in the development of the new Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

---Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the preamble.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): To the bill as a whole, as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree that Bill 34 is ready for third reading as amended?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill 34 is now ready for third reading, as amended.

---Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses for appearing. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): There is a motion on the floor. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

The chair will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will now come back to order. Item 20, report of Committee of the Whole. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 34, Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement Act and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted and that Bill 34 is ready for third reading as amended, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

---Applause

The chair only wishes there could be two seconds for it.

---Laughter

There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. Is the House ready for the question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried unanimously.

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nahendeh.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to proceed with third reading of Bill 34, Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement Act.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking consent to proceed with third reading of Bill 34. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may proceed with third reading of the bill.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 34: Tlicho Land Claims And Self-Government Agreement Act

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 34, Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, at this time I would request a recorded vote.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member requests a recorded vote. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

Recorded Vote

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Mr. Clerk, we shall proceed with a recorded vote. All those in favour of the motion, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Allen, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. Roland, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Bell, Mr. Nitah, Mr. Braden, Mr. Steen, Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. All those opposed, please stand. Thank you. All those abstaining, please stand. Thank you. Mr. Clerk, may we have the results of the vote? Those in favour, 17; opposed, zero; abstaining, zero. The motion is carried unanimously.

---Carried

---Applause

Bill 34 has had third reading. Colleagues, before we rise from this last sitting of the 14th Assembly, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to you for allowing me to serve as your Speaker for these last four years. It has been both an honour and the best experience of my career. As well, I especially want to thank my family, my mother, Amelia, my dear wife, Elaine, and the children, Warren, Blaire, Ian and my many friends and supporters whose love and confidence in me never diminished and made my work here possible and enjoyable. I have already announced that I will not be seeking re-election this November and, therefore, I wish to thank the constituents of Yellowknife South and Kam Lake ridings. I wish to thank the people of Yellowknife and the many people across the North for the privilege of serving in this Assembly as their representative.

These past 11 years for me have seen great changes and much good has come from our collective efforts. A lot has been done and I hope I have made a contribution to our North and our people in some way. There's still more to do and with our departure today, our challenge will be respectfully passed on to the next Assembly to those of you seeking election. I wish you good luck and best wishes.

I have also been asked to include at this time, on behalf of the many former Members who served in this House, a thank you to Mr. David Hamilton, our retiring Clerk for his 21 years of dedicated service to all the Members of this House. Without his skill, knowledge and commitment to our system of government and all Members and to me and my office, our job would have been more difficult. Thank you, David.

I wish to express my personal thanks and appreciation to all of the House officers, the Deputy Clerk, Mr. Schauerte; Clerks of Committees, Mr. Inch and Mr. Stewart; our Law Clerk, Ms. Peterson; and, Sergeant-at-Arms, Ms. Theede. I also wish to say thank you to my Board of Management whose excellent work on behalf of this Assembly and the elected Members is commendable and to the many young people who have served us as Pages over the years and made our Assembly a smooth, safe and efficient operation. I wish to personally acknowledge the contribution made and assistance given to me as the Speaker of the 14th Assembly by the Languages Commissioner, Ms. Fibbie Tatti; the Information and Privacy Commissioner, Mrs. Elaine Keenan-Bengts; and to the Conflict of Interest Commissioners, Mr. Ted Hughes and Ms. Carol Roberts.

Finally, a special thank you to my dedicated executive assistants over the past four years: Mrs. Barb Paquin, Sonia Golding and Sue Tkachuk. Their efficiency and organization has made my job this past term so professional, easy and the highlight of my career.

Thank you to all. Thank you. Merci.

Now, Mr. Clerk, I understand that his honour, the Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories is prepared to enter the Chamber to give assent to bills and to prorogue this session of the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Clerk, would you attend to and escort the Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories into the Chamber.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MAINS: Please be seated. Mr. Speaker, Premier and Members of the Legislative Assembly, it has been almost four years since you first gathered as the 14th

Legislative Assembly -- the first Assembly following division. It was a time to celebrate new beginnings and the start of a new identity for the Northwest Territories.

In your vision of a new Northwest Territories, I remember you identified and attempted to define "a better tomorrow" for all residents of the NWT.

A brighter, stronger future recognizable by its:

- vibrant and healthy communities;
- prosperous and diversified economy;
- strong and effective aboriginal and public governments; and,
- northern control of resources and resource revenues.

You set for yourselves an ambitious agenda to put in place the many elements on which this future would be built, then you rolled up your sleeves and went to work.

Your days in this Assembly were not without hurdles. Some of the issues you faced and addressed together were extremely difficult. But we all know that it is when challenges arise in the North that people and communities traditionally come together to seek strength in unity.

I believe that your at times frank and emotional discussions and debates regarding consensus government, accountability and openness have served to rebuild the integrity of government in the Northwest Territories and the confidence and trust of those who choose to serve in this legislature.

Your commitment to each other, to the people of the NWT and most importantly to the consensus on which this Assembly is based, has prevailed. As a result, you have been successful in achieving many of the elements of your original vision.

As you prepare to conclude your terms as elected leaders, I believe that you can look back collectively over this time of public service and see the cornerstones that you are leaving behind.

- You have established important partners -- with industry, with aboriginal and community governments and with new organizations such as the Intergovernmental Forum and the Aboriginal Summit.
- You have supported and encouraged the advancement or settlement of aboriginal land claim and self-government negotiations in almost every region of our territory.
- You have opened the door to development of our non-renewable resources. You have invested in our territory, our communities and our people to ensure that the benefits for this development will be fully realized.
- You have established the Northwest Territories in the national agenda as a very real leader in the future of Canada's economy.
- In recent months, talks with the federal government towards a deal on devolution and resource revenue sharing have also advanced.

There are a number of specific achievements that will no doubt serve as building blocks for future governments:

- the enactment of human rights legislation for the NWT;
- advancement of the Deh Cho Bridge project;
- the implementation of the protected areas strategy;
- the establishment of National Aboriginal Day as a territorial holiday;
- improvements to the territorial income tax system;
- the development of a social agenda;
- the certification of NWT diamonds and leadership in the development of a national diamond strategy;
- passage of legislation to allow midwives to practice in the NWT;
- contributions to the advancement of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline proposal;
- securing major investment dollars for infrastructure;
- passage of legislation to protect against family violence;
- a complete modernization of municipal governance legislation;
- passage of the Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement Act;
- legislation to establish territorial recycling programs; and,
- increased health care funding for the NWT.

Your time in this Assembly has been productive. It has challenged you to work together, to make strong decisions, to take tough stands and to set aside your differences and positions in the interest of the people that you represent.

Under your collective direction as its first Assembly, Canada's "new" Northwest Territories has, in the last four years, emerged strong and unified and ready to take its rightful place in the federation and international community.

For years we sat here in the North and monitored the debates of federal and provincial governments. We listened, read and watched the analysis of southern media outlets and observed, with mild interest, the activities of our American neighbours. Very rarely did any of them address the issues that immediately concerned us.

Today, south of 60, in fact south of 49 and around the world, they are talking about Canada's Northwest Territories. From Alberta to Ottawa, Washington to Alaska and from Tokyo to Shanghai they are discussing our diamonds, our oil and gas, our pipelines, our northern lights, our alternative energy sources and, most of all, our potential.

In four years, the Northwest Territories has become a model for the nation building often envisioned and talked about by our national government.

We have shown that our region is one in which the territorial government can work realistically in partnership with federal and aboriginal governments. A region in which economic partnerships can and will flourish between southern, northern and aboriginal companies; where natural riches and resources can still be safely invested in the future and well-being of our

people; and from which our nation as a whole will benefit. Your time in this legislature has created this momentum.

In a few weeks, many of you will be seeking a new mandate from your constituents; I wish you luck and thank you, on behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories, for your selfless offer to serve.

To you Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Whitford, Mr. Ootes and Mr. Antoine, who will be seeking other ways of serving the Northwest Territories, I thank each of you for your many years of service and commitment to the people of the NWT and wish you well.

Assent To Bills

Now, as Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bills:

- Bill 19, Write-off of Debts Act, 2003-2004
- Bill 20, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2003-2004
- Bill 21, Protection Against Family Violence Act
- Bill 22, Waste Reduction and Recovery Act
- Bill 23, An Act to Amend the Safety Act
- Bill 24, Midwifery Profession Act
- Bill 25, Municipal Statutes Replacement Act
- Bill 26, Youth Justice Act
- Bill 27, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Bill 31, An Act to Amend the Official Languages Act, No. 3
- Bill 32, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2003-2004
- Bill 33, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2002-2003
- Bill 34, Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement Act

As Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I hereby prorogue this Sixth Session of the 14th Legislation Assembly. Thank you.

---Applause

---Applause

---PROROGATION

The House prorogued at 5:40 p.m.