



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**16<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Friday, November 30, 2007**

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**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Friday, November 30, 2007****Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Krutko, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Hon. Norman Yakeleya

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey):** Good morning, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Ministers' statements. Honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 9-16(1): Remote Community Wind Energy Conference**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, for the past several years we have been measuring the strength and steadiness of the winds in Beaufort-Delta communities. This was done in collaboration with the Aurora Research Institute and the Government of Canada.

The data collected to date shows the feasibility of this technology. We must now work with communities to determine how best to proceed towards establishing wind generation in remote High Arctic communities. This topic, along with others, is being discussed in detail at the Wind Energy Conference in Tuktoyaktuk this week.

More than 100 delegates are attending the conference. About half the delegates are representing Beaufort-Delta communities, which are home to the most promising wind resources.

Delegates from Alaska and Atlantic Canada are sharing their experiences and successes integrating wind energy into diesel electric systems in several small communities.

Mr. Speaker, this remote wind conference provides a great opportunity to develop long-term strategies, synergies and partnerships. It is bringing together community and business leaders, government officials, and technical experts on wind-diesel systems.

The conference will assist in educating community decision-makers on wind energy opportunities and options, and in building a strong knowledge base about the potential of wind-diesel systems. It will assist in establishing Tuktoyaktuk as a hub to initiate the development of remote wind power and to gain the expertise and practical knowledge required to do this. Other Beaufort-Delta communities can benefit from the knowledge developed in Tuktoyaktuk as they move ahead with their own plan to incorporate wind power.

This conference has captured a lot of attention and media interest. A report will be developed on the results of the conference, which I will share with Members at our next session in February 2008.

Mr. Speaker, given the increasing price of conventional fuels and concerns about climate change, we need to be innovative and find new ways to use renewable resources. We are committed to this process, and this conference will help to move us in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank those who have contributed to making this conference a reality. While the list of participants and sponsors for this event is long, I would like, in particular, to thank the Territorial Wind Energy Committee as well as the hamlet, administration, and the entire community of Tuktoyaktuk. Thank you.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Minister's Statement 10-16(1): National Safe Driving Week / Drive Alive Initiative**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise in the House today to inform Members that next week, December 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>, is National Safe Driving Week across Canada. The first week of December is designated annually as a time to recognize and acknowledge the need to drive safely over the coming holiday season and throughout the entire year. It is also a time to reflect on the progress we have made on improving driver safety here in the Northwest Territories.

The Government of the Northwest Territories has accomplished much to improve the safety of the travelling public. These included the reconstruction of road surfaces, the Strategy to Reduce Impaired Driving Initiative and other awareness campaigns related to bison collisions and snowmobile safety, to name but a few. These have all contributed to dramatic reductions in collisions over the past few years. According to the 2006 Traffic Collision Facts Report, which will soon be released, collisions in 2006 were reduced by 16.8 percent over the previous year. Collisions involving alcohol were reduced by 15.7 percent and, as a result of factors such as the increased use of seatbelts and helmets, collisions resulting in injuries were reduced by 40.4 percent from the previous year.

However, Mr. Speaker, much more can, and must, be done to improve driver safety in the NWT. While collision numbers are down, many of the collisions that did occur could have been prevented. Everyone can take steps to reduce their risk of collision, injury, and death on the highways, trails and frozen waterways of the Northwest Territories.

To help improve driver safety, I am very proud to announce that the department is launching a new consolidated road safety campaign called Drive Alive!

This initiative will maximize the effectiveness of each driver safety program in the NWT by reinforcing common key safety messages. Drive Alive! will serve as a "brand" to reinforce the public information component of the Department of Transportation's road safety framework.

Drive Alive! aims to inform the public of ways in which they can improve their own safety through clear, coordinated, and concise safety messages which will help raise public awareness of road safety issues. The Drive Alive! initiative will promote partnerships and collaborations to increase the scope and effectiveness of road safety campaigns and to leverage additional resources.

Mr. Speaker, in a sparsely populated region such as the Northwest Territories, where distances are great and the environment is harsh, driver safety is an essential element for survival. While I'm confident that all the Members here today drive with caution, I'll use this opportunity to reinforce some of the key messages of Drive Alive!:

- Reduce speed, and drive according to conditions;
- Prepare for the unexpected;
- Maintain and use safety equipment, particularly helmets and seatbelts; and
- Driving deserves your full attention; do not drive while impaired, while talking on a cell phone and minimize driver distractions.

Mr. Speaker, I invite and encourage Members of this Assembly and the public to use this special week as an opportunity to learn more about safe driving. In the coming week, I will make some additional announcements to kick off Drive Alive! These will be the first of many planned throughout the year.

I wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. I encourage Members and all motorists to keep their hands on the wheel, their eyes on the road, and their minds on driving safely. Mahsi cho.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

#### **Minister's Statement 11-16(1): Ongoing Commitment To The Public Housing Rental Subsidy**

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise Members of ongoing work in the administration of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy Program, PHRS.

As Members are aware, the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly placed an emphasis on helping northerners to move forward on self-reliance. The income security policy framework was developed in 2005 to help us move in this direction and to provide a coordinated approach to the delivery of programs and services. As part of the larger income security reform project, in April 2006, administrative responsibilities for the Public Housing Rental Subsidy Program were transferred from the NWT Housing Corporation to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. The primary objective of placing all subsidies under one department was to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all residents, and increase

awareness of, and access to, the programs and services that support self-reliance.

Like any large-scale transfer of this magnitude, there have been some challenges for all parties involved. These challenges include establishing new relationships between tenants, ECE and local housing organizations, ensuring sufficient cash flows for local housing organizations, training staff for new responsibilities and helping clients adapt to new administrative procedures.

A number of actions were taken during and since the transfer of the PHRS to mitigate challenges. Tenants were provided with information on the change in administrative arrangements for the program, and income security officers adjusted their monthly schedule to meet with tenants applying for the subsidies and have adapted flexible schedules to accommodate the varying income levels of tenants throughout the year. Training has been provided for income security officers so they could effectively and efficiently administer the PHRS Program. A Public Housing Rental Subsidy Steering Committee made up of representatives from Education, Culture and Employment, the NWT Housing Corporation and the local housing organizations was formed to provide ongoing support and guidance on the administration of the program. Policies for the program inherited from the NWT Housing Corporation have been retained to help people with the transition. ECE also continues to cash flow the PHRS to the NWT Housing Corporation to help the LHOs meet their operating costs, and cash flow has been adjusted to address vacancy rates.

Since the transfer of the program, there have been a number of other actions taken. The assessment period for income was shortened from two months to one month; data collection processes have been developed to improve the monitoring and reporting of Public Housing Rental Subsidy information; and condition ratings of public housing units have been updated to allow eligible tenants to receive a reduction in rent based on the condition of their unit.

There are a number of challenges that require further work to ensure the program works smoothly for all parties, including clients, local housing organizations, the NWT Housing Corporation and ECE. For example, more work is needed to implement the government service centres that support the delivery of income security programs, including the PHRS Program, in a number of communities. Ongoing work is needed to develop and establish relationships between tenants and the income security officers so assessments can be completed in a timely basis to avoid tenants building up unnecessary arrears with the LHOs. Different clients have varying needs when they access income security programs from the government to fulfill their aspirations. As such, we need to ensure our program supports can be flexible to meet the needs of different client groups such as seniors who may need different support systems.

Where possible, we also need to identify ways to streamline procedures and systems for the program to operate smoothly.

To address the challenges that remain and to ensure quality service in this area, Education, Culture and Employment and the NWT Housing Corporation have initiated a review of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy Program. Regional consultations have begun with staff,

tenants and interested key stakeholders, and the program will be reviewed in light of the new income security model. Additional issues may be defined through this process that will need to be addressed.

I look forward to sharing the results of this review with you in the next sitting of the Legislative Assembly in February 2008 and the plan of action being taken to address the issues in our ongoing commitment to making improvements for the Public Housing Rental Subsidy. I also look forward to hearing from Members about how we can make improvements that support the needs of northerners, respecting their need for support and their desire for self-reliance.

In the meantime, we acknowledge that there are definite challenges that need to be overcome. I'm sure that with a collaborative approach between all parties involved, we can achieve a suitable and workable solution. This can only be achieved by using a team approach. I, therefore, look forward to working with all Members of this House to assist in improving the program, as it affects every community in the NWT. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

### ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Member's Statement On Day Care Issues In The NWT

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to comment on the state of day care in the NWT. During our discussions over the last few weeks, many Members have expressed concern about the lack of day care in our communities. Some communities are unfortunate enough to have absolutely none. There is a number of issues that plague our day cares in the NWT: low wages for workers, lack of funding for day cares, lack of adequate labour force, lack of affordable day care, staff recruitment and retention issues. The list could go on for a long time.

In the NWT, we do have programs to assist day cares either to help them get established or subsidies to help them stay in operation. Those programs are appreciated, Mr. Speaker, but they are not adequate and they do not provide the level and the quality of day care that our territory needs.

Recently, the Yellowknife Day Care closed its doors for a day due to extreme staff shortages. As a result, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment advised the day care that the number of children using the facility had to be reduced until staffing levels could be increased. The day care chose to implement a schedule denying children access to day care one day at a time on a rotating basis. That decision certainly makes sense from a safety point of view, but under the current ECE subsidy program, this creates a huge difficulty for the day care. The daily per child subsidy supplied by ECE is based on whether or not the child is in attendance. It has nothing to do with whether the child is a full or part-time subscriber. If the child is sick, stays home with Mom or Dad to get better and does not go to the day care for the day, the day care does not get the \$12 subsidy for that child.

It seems a rather cumbersome way to provide program funding and day cares must have great difficulty tracking and reporting child attendance, not to mention the cost to administer the system at the ECE end of things.

To quote a constituent regarding the recent YK closure: "On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, my son could not attend day care, along with 10 other children. There were other children every day of that week who could not attend and this process will continue until more staff are hired. On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, because those 11 children were not at the day care, the GNWT subsidy was reduced considerably." I see I'm running out of time, Mr. Speaker. May I have unanimous consent to conclude my statement?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. The GNWT subsidy was reduced considerably. Whether or not a child is sick, whether or not the children are away at Christmas visiting grandparents, the day care must still maintain their operation and the expenses that go with it: heat, power, water, building maintenance, staffing and so on. The way the subsidy is currently applied makes no sense and it hampers the effective operation of the day care. It seems to me, and to many parents who need to use the day care for their children, that ECE needs to change their subsidy program. A consistent level of funding is necessary to ensure consistent operation of day cares. I will be asking some questions of the Minister of ECE during question period. Thank you.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

#### Member's Statement On All-Weather Road In Nunakput

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the most important priorities facing this 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly is developing a plan to improve northern infrastructure. This plan should help facilitate our economy and improve mobility so we can improve the quality of life for a lower cost of living for our people. This is particularly true in the more isolated and remote communities, many of which currently lack year-round road access. For example, my home community of Tuktoyaktuk has no year-round road access but is served in the winter months by a 187-kilometre ice road constructed by the Department of Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, the construction of an all-weather link to Tuktoyaktuk has been talked about for as long as I can remember. It started far back in the 1960s by the federal government. This road is linked to the rest of Canada, the Arctic Ocean to connect the country from coast to coast. It was an important priority in previous transportation strategies prepared by the Government of the Northwest Territories, such as the road could form part of the system running down the Mackenzie Valley from Wrigley to Tuktoyaktuk. That would provide an all-weather road access for the communities to facilitate resource development in the Mackenzie Delta, the

Mackenzie Valley and the Delta. Mr. Speaker, this road would have many positive benefits for the people in the Northwest Territories. It would eliminate costly reliance on air transport, winter ice roads, barging, shipping of supplies and materials for development of projects and community resupply. It would provide more efficient, reliable transportation systems to explore and develop gas deposits in the Mackenzie Valley, the Sahtu and the Beaufort regions. It would dramatically increase tourism potential to the beautiful part of the country. The first phase...Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to proceed with my statement.

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

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I'm here today for my 22-kilometre access road to 177...

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Hear! Hear!

---Applause

**MR. JACOBSON:** ...stretched from gravel road to the community of Tuktoyaktuk and to gravel deposits, which is greatly needed. An important benefit of the access road to the people of Tuktoyaktuk is it would provide the community with year-round access to gravel, would open new land for the community as a backdoor for safety issues with regard to global warming, expansion would allow the new infrastructure developments to deal with existing issues such as access to land. I need a new graveyard for the community, which is full; water source; sewage lagoon; dumpsite. A great deal of work has been done for the community by the Department of Transportation, for which I'm very grateful, and others to update engineering, economic, environmental land issues associated with Tuktoyaktuk's access road. Now it is time for the government to show financial commitment to this project. Mr. Speaker, it costs \$15 million...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Jacobson, could I get you to wrap up your statement, please.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Later today I will have some questions concerning my access road for my people of Tuktoyaktuk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

#### **Member's Statement On Treatment Facilities In The North**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I begin, I wish to make special mention that today is Red Friday and I continue to wear red to honour our troops and the families, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, I spoke about the need to introduce and pass the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act in order to support the police and communities in getting rid of those drug dealers and bootleggers. Mr. Speaker, we need, of course, as many tools out there to clean up those streets for our families.

However, Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about the other side of the equation. I wish to talk about supporting those who are addicted to the alcohol that they consume and the drugs that they get from these people who sell these things through their illegal activities. I do not believe we are doing enough to support these people with addiction problems and the fact is we're not doing anything to help support families and youth.

Mr. Speaker, our current state of affairs in the Northwest Territories only has one treatment centre and it's located in Hay River. The reality is, though, the Hay River Reserve treatment centre specializes in traditional treatment for aboriginal people, Mr. Speaker, but we still need, again, we're lacking treatment for youth and families. There is nothing wrong with that approach, but where are we helping the other people that need help? I'm sure we're getting a lot of money sent down south by sending people to those southern placements, Mr. Speaker, but we must be getting to a point where we are able to reconstitute these people and start offering these programs here through detox and regular treatment.

Mr. Speaker, community-based treatment programs only help so much in the aftercare but, Mr. Speaker, we need, finally, dedicated strategic investment into treatment facilities in the North. The last Assembly passed, on this side of the House, a unanimous motion of saying we want a treatment program in Yellowknife and in Inuvik because we want to start to put an end to this problem. Mr. Speaker, residential treatment programs help people get back on their feet. I'd like to see this government start to realize that and show some action. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

#### **Member's Statement On Youth Leadership Development Initiatives**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to use my two and half minutes today as an opportunity to speak about the youth, and to the youth, of the Northwest Territories. We have some of the best programs as far as education goes and post-secondary education. I encourage the youth to take advantage of these opportunities. There's a whole world out there, that a lot of us didn't see when we were growing up, of opportunity and it's a chance for youth to get some education and contribute to the leadership of the Northwest Territories. I'd also like to see, in all the regions, youth camps, dedicated youth leadership camps. I would like this government to take not a lead role, but partner up with the aboriginal governments in supporting getting the youth out on the land. Take the elders with them, have them tell them about when they were growing up and all the hardships that they faced. Have a veteran go out with them and talk to the veterans about some of the sacrifices they made. A lot of veterans that didn't come back, Mr. Speaker, are younger than a lot of our youth today. Those would be the proper role models to have, Mr. Speaker.

If we use this as an opportunity to get the youth out in the camps and the leaderships camps, then it would give them an opportunity to stay out of town, stay away from TV. Too many times today the youth are using the wrong



people for role models and they're starting to imitate them and that's leading to a lot of the trouble that we face today with our youth. If they can go to the camps with elders, if they can talk to veterans and use them as their role models, use people who have overcome hardship as their role models and not people that they see on TV.

I think this government should undertake to support a lot of the regions that want to have camps, get the youth out on the land. I remember as a young man, as a kid, actually, we had, we called them opportunity for youth camps where you would go into the camps all summer and stay with the elders and just....It kept your summers occupied, Mr. Speaker. Then you would go back to school again in the fall. I think we have to have a look at supporting all these initiatives that are trying to come forward and I'm not saying take the lead from the whole thing, but we should, as a government and as MLAs, support any opportunities we can for our youth as possible. Thank you.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Before I go to the next Member, colleagues, I realize that it's Friday and it's the last day in the House, but I notice there's an extraordinary amount of sidebar conversations going on here this morning and I would like to... Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

#### **Member's Statement On Climate Change Issues Affecting The North**

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT has enjoyed the benefits of a pristine, natural, regulated environment as a sustained traditional lifestyle for centuries. A very large impact is about to make dramatic changes to the northern environment as we know it. This is climate change. The time frame for this change is very short.

Although the climate change issue has been in the public for some time, people are still unaware of the predicted consequences specifically for the NWT. Even if people worldwide were to stop pumping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere today, we face very serious changes in the North over the next 40 years. This is because greenhouse gases do not break down and remove themselves from the atmosphere for hundreds of years. Scientifically developed computer models indicate that by year 2050 Yellowknife would have a climate similar to Calgary. That means the plant and animal species now living here will not survive or will move to the far Arctic islands, including caribou.

A key concern is that the world has never, in a billion years of history, seen such a rapid pace of warming. The fast pace of change will not allow for movement of some species north, meaning that many species will become extinct. The climate here will be very dry in the summer with large amounts of precipitation in the winter, causing havoc to riverbeds and fish populations. The dry, hot summers will increase, the pressures from massive forest fires and invasive, destructive pests like the Pine Beetle, which has already crossed the Rocky Mountains into the Great Boreal Forest, and predictions for continued existings of our boreal forest is dire indeed.

We will be left with vast areas of barren rock and little vegetation to support wildlife. Even our parks and protected areas cannot survive the changes and will succumb to the destruction of fire and infestation. I want to emphasize that these are not Nostradamus-type dreams of some doomsayer. These are scientifically based predictions developed by many worlds predominance for science. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement On Territorial Agriculture Policy**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, agriculture is a renewable resource sector activity which needs this government's attention. Since 1995, the Territorial Farmers' Association has been asking this government to develop and adopt a comprehensive agriculture policy. Many things affecting agriculture fall within the mandate of the territorial government. It's fine to tell communities to take the initiative to develop their own policies, but the GNWT has the responsibility to create a policy as a framework within which municipal jurisdictions can operate.

Agriculture has met with relative indifference, lack of interest, and unapologetic ignorance for the most part. That's been made clear by some of the most absurd comments of Ministers past, like the infamous statement defining his understanding of agriculture from a certain Minister who said, "What's agriculture in the North? Some guy growing two potatoes in Fort Smith?"

The Territorial Farmers' Association has worked very hard to bring attention and awareness to the potential and challenges for agriculture in the North, but it seems like we still have a ways to go, as evidenced by a comment from one of my colleagues this morning when I shared the topic of my Member's statement who said, "What's that? Two farms in Hay River?" Interestingly, in fact, the membership of the TFA is from many communities, including as far away as Inuvik where they have a thriving greenhouse operation.

The benefits of producing agri-foods in the Northwest Territories are extensive. It creates economy in the renewable resource sector; it lends to our commitment to a diversified economy; it achieves a level import substitution and, consistent with environmental stewardship, reducing the cost of importing food as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with getting that food to us. Agriculture gives us control to ensure that we consume healthy food when we control its production. Agriculture is also a key component in our ability to be self-reliant and self-sustaining.

I look forward to working with our new Minister of ITI, who already has a considerable knowledge of this industry through his previous involvement as a deputy minister. I also feel encouraged to have Mr. Bromley as an ally in these efforts, who is such an advocate for measures which address responsible stewardship of our environment.

Three specific things that our government could do to support agriculture would be: developing a policy for farm

equipment to use our public highways without having to be licensed and insured under the Motor Vehicles Act; the revision of our Property Assessment and Taxation Act that would enable communities to tax properties which are used for agriculture and residential purposes at an affordable rate; and...Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. A third thing would be a program for a tax rebate for fuel purchased for agricultural pursuits. We have fertile tracts of land, long growing seasons, proponents willing to participate, and ready local markets for agricultural products. All we need now is the serious support of this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

#### **Member's Statement On Building Canada Fund Priorities**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to discuss an issue that I spoke of on Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, in which I was questioning the Minister of Transportation on the Building Canada Fund. During the last federal budget, an announcement was made of a \$33 billion infrastructure plan known as the Building Canada Fund. The Government of the Northwest Territories will certainly be able to subscribe to this fund over the coming years and will need to start identifying projects that qualify for this federal funding.

As returning Members will know, I have stood up in this House numerous times over the past four years questioning why the Government of the Northwest Territories was not moving forward with partnering with the City of Yellowknife to construct a secondary access or bypass road from Highway No. 3. With the construction of a combined services building and an expansion of the Yellowknife Airport, the government has a role to play in partnering with the city on the construction of this road.

Mr. Speaker, every day that passes, public safety of my constituents and those here in the city of Yellowknife is being compromised. There is only one route into Kam Lake Industrial Park. Given the nature of businesses located there, the potential exists for a spill or an accident at the top of Kam Lake Road that would cut the industrial park off, and those who reside there off, from necessary emergency services. Mr. Speaker, an accident at the Yellowknife Airport, as was evidenced with the dropping of a missile from an F-18 and another F-18 sliding off the runway, cuts emergency access for people from Highway No. 3. If there was an accident on Highway No. 3, emergency vehicles would not be able to get there. So obviously a secondary access to the capital is urgently required.

I asked the Minister of Transportation on Wednesday whether or not the bypass road was on a list of projects to the federal government. The response was that there was

no list. I told the Minister on Wednesday in question period that I didn't buy the fact that there wasn't a list. The Minister said he'd be working with Members to formalize a final list.

Mr. Speaker, I have some questions about how the Minister proposes to do this when it would appear that Cabinet is already making decisions in isolation of input from Regular Members. Every Member of this House has the right to have input on competing infrastructure priorities in this territory, especially when our projects -- and Mr. Jacobson spoke earlier of one in his riding -- mean so much to the people we represent.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions today at the appropriate time for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs on the Building Canada Fund. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

#### **Member's Statement On Elementary School Science Fair Winners In Fort Simpson**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to speak about a science fair that was held at our Bompas Elementary School in Fort Simpson. They had their science fair held on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007. They invited all parents in the community to view their display of knowledge and, I would venture to say, Mr. Speaker, to show us why it's hard to be smarter than a fifth grader.

---Laughter

I regret not being there and I was invited to judge, as I have had in the past, and this is an event that happens all across our great land. I have read, with great interest, the reports in the Deh Cho Drum and once again commend all participants and members of the community who attended and supported the efforts of our youth by showing up and speaking with the youth about their particular projects.

I can only give examples of a category and that is in Class 6. In first place was Alicia Norris, who researched quite extensively why we change our vehicle motor oil from summer to winter, and, second, Katrina Browning, who explored why plastering and drywalling needs reinforcement. They seem quite basic, but to young exploring minds, that is something that gives them a lot of learning for a lot of new things, Mr. Speaker. There were many categories and many winners. I congratulate them all and say, indeed, that all participants are winners in this event. I would also like to say a big thanks to teachers and educators for their interest in mentoring as well as their involvement in this initiative and continued encouragement of lifelong learning in our students. I would like to thank you, the parents, and keep up the good work. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

### **Member's Statement On Support For Northern Arts And Cultural Centre**

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the mandate of the Northern Arts and Cultural Centre is to expand its operations throughout the Northwest Territories. Annual core program funding from GNWT was established 25 years ago at \$30,000 and it has not changed a whit as of today. Today's board includes members from Inuvik and Hay River as it expands its programs.

We have an incredible body of artists in the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker. They contribute much towards healthy communities, but with a modicum of investment such as our neighbour, the Yukon, is doing quite progressively, this contribution could be so much greater. In September, Mr. Speaker, the previous Minister of ECE committed to finding additional core funding to NACC, part of which is to be directed to outreach programs. I urge this government to consider this additional support and confirm it as it is long overdue.

Arts programs such as those provided by NACC help create and empower healthy communities. They build community capacity and community leadership. The arts provide important and imaginative feedback on how our people are doing, what their concerns, difficulties and joys are. They contribute to quality of life, a key factor for retaining northern residents and professionals despite our high cost of living. They celebrate and strengthen diversity of our many northern cultures. The arts are an effective tool to engage youth in healthy and innovative ways.

Community identity and pride are enhanced by the arts and contribute to a collective northern voice. As an appreciator of the environment, I frequently see artists reuse waste materials and turn them back into useful and even stunning creations. Through all of these means and by capturing additional support from businesses and other entities, they contribute significantly to our local and territorial economies.

Mr. Speaker, over the years, I have watched as NACC and its many dedicated volunteers have provided inspiration, support and entertainment for all parts of our society. I have watched youth, elders and women bloom through NACC's programs, often going on to contribute to the North and even nationally in many ways.

Mr. Speaker, we know what has happened to operational costs over the last few years, let alone the last two or three decades. Let's give support where it is clearly due. Let's support the Northern Arts and Cultural Centre, its Outreach Program and the amazing services it provides to our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

### **Member's Statement On Economic Measures Agreement With Gwich'in Tribal Council**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement today is in regard to, from my understanding, an agreement that is in place between this

government and the Gwich'in Tribal Council and a similar agreement in the Sahtu. Mr. Speaker, there was a meeting over a week and a half ago in regard to the review of the MOU between this government and the Gwich'in Tribal Council's community leaders and business community. But yet, Mr. Speaker, there was very poor attendance by Ministers on the opposite side, deputy ministers and, more importantly, sending no senior staff to partake in those discussions.

Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General of Canada reported in the assessment of the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim a number of years ago which clearly identified the objectives of the land claims were not being met, the lives of the Gwich'in people were not being improved and the social conditions in regards to making self-sustainable people a reality. Mr. Speaker, within four months, this agreement will be up for renewal. Mr. Speaker, it is important that this government does an assessment, but also take into account the recommendations of the Auditor General of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, there is an evaluation of the MOU which has to be concluded by April of this year and which includes the MOU. We will look at the objectives of the agreement, looking at the targets that were set and try to meet those targets and look at what we have done to fill Gwich'in business capacity, providing benefits to Gwich'in beneficiaries and, more importantly, meeting with stakeholders to express their concerns and issues. Again, Mr. Speaker, like I stated, there was a meeting scheduled, but yet this government did not have any Ministers present.

I think it is riding on this government to ensure that we do have a system that government-to-government relationships continue to be explored, especially with the Gwich'in agreements, agreements we have with aboriginal groups, land claims and, more importantly, what are we, as government, doing to improve the lives of people in those land claim areas by way of these agreements.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we, as government, not only live up to the obligations, but do whatever we can to improve our agreements to make them workable. So, Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will have questions to the Minister of ITI in regards to the Gwich'in MOU and the evaluation that this government is undertaking. Thank you.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

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

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize my brother Harris and my niece Jolene Russell in the gallery today.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize in the gallery today a constituent, a friend, a board member for Sport North, Mr. Shannon Cumming.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize one of our fine staff members from the Department of Transportation, Mr. Harris Beaulieu.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Welcome everyone in the gallery today. I hope you are enjoying the proceedings. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

#### ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS

##### Question 72-16(1): Northern Addictions Treatment Centres

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement today, I talked about the need for residential treatment programs here in the Northwest Territories that focus on youth and family. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health and Social Services was on this side of the House last term, so she is well aware that a motion that went forward that supported the treatment centre built in Yellowknife and in Inuvik and, of course, underlying all of that, not only being the Minister now, she had the experience of being the chair of the Social Programs so she understands the need of these treatment centres. Can the Minister tell this House how many people this government is sending south for treatment, specifically to youth, families, etcetera? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

##### Return To Question 72-16(1): Northern Addictions Treatment Centres

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I listened to the statement very carefully, and I could not agree more with the Member on the things that he would like to work on as a Member and he would like the government to do. I would love to see all that he has mentioned there. I am hoping that he will be the champion for this cause on the other side of the floor to get this done, Mr. Speaker. As the House is aware, we are in the process of doing the strategic planning. I think the need to do some comprehensive strategy and more focussed resource and attention on this matter is very important. I look forward to working through that process and getting the help from the Member to achieve that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

##### Supplementary To Question 72-16(1): Northern Addictions Treatment Centres

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I wish the Minister would be the champion of this program as opposed to the Member having to be the champion of this program. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me how much money are we spending each year, every year, for the last several years sending people down south for treatment? I want to make sure we could maybe put this investment in the Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Lee.

##### Further Return To Question 72-16(1): Northern Addictions Treatment Centres

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Speaker, we do have a consensus government, and we need to work together to achieve this. Mr. Speaker, I don't have an exact dollar figure on the money that we spend down south for the treatment. I will be happy to get that specific information and get back to the Member. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

##### Supplementary To Question 72-16(1): Northern Addictions Treatment Centres

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Where is it on the departmental priority list, the internal priority list, Mr. Speaker, on establishing a treatment centre here in Yellowknife and in Inuvik? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Lee.

##### Further Return To Question 72-16(1): Northern Addictions Treatment Centres

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we had an exchange a couple of days ago, treatment programs, and to have as much as possible in as many areas as possible especially as well as having presence of services available in our small communities. So the coverage of locations is important. Having treatment centres are important. But it's also important to have enhanced programs in all spectrums dealing with addictions and mental health issues on prevention, on before care, aftercare, and treatment centre program is just part of that. So definitely we have to look at it from a comprehensive point of view, and this is absolutely a very important issue for me as a Minister and the department, and I'm hoping that for the Caucus, as well. Thank you.

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

##### Supplementary To Question 72-16(1): Northern Addictions Treatment Centres

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I heard about almost every priority in the world under that sort of umbrella of priorities. Mr. Speaker, I want to hear clearly where is the priority to build a treatment centre in Yellowknife and Inuvik, and can the Minister commit to bringing something clearly back to this House before February? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Lee.

**Further Return To Question 72-16(1): Northern Addictions Treatment Centres**

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the Member is well aware, and everybody here is well aware, that we have just gone through a three-day Caucus planning session. We are to conclude that by the conclusion of next week. Coming out of that we will make priorities, as a Legislature, as to where that sort of project will fit into our overall objectives. So it will be very premature on my part to speak about that specifically because it involves capital planning process, as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 73-16(1): Memorandum Of Understanding With Gwich'in Tribal Council**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for ITI. It's in regards to my Member's statement and the memorandum of understanding we have with the Gwich'in Tribal Council, and also the meeting that took place a week and a half ago in regards to the commitment that we have within those agreements to have ongoing meetings with the Gwich'in Tribal Council, its leadership, and its business community. Yet, Mr. Speaker, after talking to the president of the tribal council and a couple of the aboriginal leaders, there was very little by way of content at that meeting and information from this government to share in regards to the assessment that we have done over the years.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, knowing that this agreement expires March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008, which is four months down the road, and they have to come up with the renewal of a new agreement for April 1<sup>st</sup> this coming year, so I'd like to ask the Minister, has he received a report back in regards to this meeting and what are we doing to basically look at the evaluation of this agreement?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**Return To Question 73-16(1): Memorandum Of Understanding With Gwich'in Tribal Council**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was unfortunate that the meeting that the Member is referring to, that we were unable to attend because of a conflict in scheduling with some other commitments that we had here in Yellowknife. But we did rectify that by having the Premier and myself attend the meeting with all of the Gwich'in leadership and the president of the Gwich'in Tribal Council on Monday. We did have an opportunity to discuss the Gwich'in MOU, and I believe at the meeting all parties indicated they were very pleased with the performance of the MOU. There is a requirement for an evaluation of the MOU, which ends on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008. There are provisions for renewal. We have been working with the Gwich'in to finalize the evaluation requirements. We expect to have that evaluation done shortly. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 73-16(1): Memorandum Of Understanding With Gwich'in Tribal Council**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regards to the evaluation of the MOU, they're looking at five general areas. One is looking at meeting the MOU poses obligations. Two was meeting the MOU targets. Three is building Gwich'in business capacity. Four, providing benefits to Gwich'in beneficiaries. Five, meeting stakeholders' expectations. I'd just like to ask the Minister, is it possible that we also include a sixth item to look at the recommendations by the Auditor General of Canada to see what are we doing as government to meet obligations under those land claims in light of the Auditor General's report?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 73-16(1): Memorandum Of Understanding With Gwich'in Tribal Council**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to point out that the MOU and contracting wasn't set up as a requirement of the land claim, but it was set up as a policy decision by this government. Having said that, we are prepared to include those recommendations by the Auditor General and include it in the evaluation.

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

**Supplementary To Question 73-16(1): Memorandum Of Understanding With Gwich'in Tribal Council**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, is there a possibility of this government meeting again with the Gwich'in Tribal Council on the MOU prior to the expiry date, which is March 31<sup>st</sup>, to look at seeing exactly what the contents of the new agreement is going to look like, but, more importantly, ensuring they also are able to implement the agreements by way of the Auditor General report and other federal reports that have identified problems, especially in the implementation of land claim agreements?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 73-16(1): Memorandum Of Understanding With Gwich'in Tribal Council**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are prepared to meet with the Gwich'in leadership early in the new year to discuss the MOU. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 73-16(1): Memorandum Of Understanding With Gwich'in Tribal Council**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I heard the Minister mention that we don't have an obligation under the land claim agreements. I believe we do, as someone who negotiated that agreement. There's an economic measure which clearly identifies governments as an identity where they have to include aboriginal groups looking at the economic policies and procedures of this government and, more importantly, ensuring that we have access to economic opportunities. So I'd like to ask the Minister, are you open to going to the

negotiating table and look at the land claim obligations in light of the Auditor General report?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 73-16(1): Memorandum Of Understanding With Gwich'in Tribal Council**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have had that issue clarified in the past and have discussed it before. We are quite prepared to discuss it in light of the Auditor General's recommendations. Certainly I'm not looking at renegotiating the land claims agreement, but certainly we'll clarify the arrangements. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

**Question 74-16(1): Marine Positions Located In Fort Simpson**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask my question to the Minister of Transportation. Recently the operations in the marine operations, they hired a marine supervisor, but they had relocated that position from Fort Simpson to Hay River. So I'd just like to ask the Minister what is the timeline of getting this position moved back to Fort Simpson? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Return To Question 74-16(1): Marine Positions Located In Fort Simpson**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've been told that the former position of marine, head of marine operation in Fort Simpson had served two functions. He was also the director and also the superintendent at that time. Since today, my understanding is that the position has been moved to Hay River because 90 percent of our marine operations are out of the hub of the waterway transportation in the North and that there's an assistant director of marine operations in Fort Simpson. Unless I've been briefed on this, I haven't seen any indication as to when this position of director of marine services will be moving back to Fort Simpson.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**Supplementary To Question 74-16(1): Marine Positions Located In Fort Simpson**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. No, it's just that our government has a policy for keeping positions in the regions and the communities, and here's a classic case where a position was moved and I thought there were indications that it was a temporary move, that until they find accommodations in Fort Simpson. So I'd just like the Minister to follow up on when will that position be relocated back to Fort Simpson.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 74-16(1): Marine Positions Located In Fort Simpson**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll certainly check my records with the department in terms of what type of decisions were made on this issue here, and certainly look within this government here to see if there's any plans to move the position back into Fort Simpson. As the Member is well aware, there are other regions also that are looking at present areas in terms of where other regions are making positions and that affects other regions without any type of regional presence by our department.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**Supplementary To Question 74-16(1): Marine Positions Located In Fort Simpson**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, in many of our regions, it takes a long time to fight for the positions that we do have for those, and in some of the regions that's the only form of economic development, a \$140,000 job there, Mr. Speaker. So I'd like to press with the Minister that. I'd like see this position returned to Fort Simpson and I'd like the Minister to start working on that and give me some assurance that he will look at it, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 74-16(1): Marine Positions Located In Fort Simpson**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are marine positions in Fort Simpson right now, and Inuvik. I'd like to state clearly to this House here that when we have these type of requests, that we'll certainly look very closely with our department in terms of what makes good business sense in terms of having positions being moved to other regions in terms of serving the interests of people in the North. Again, to state clearly also that, Mr. Speaker, there are some regions right now in our department that are serving other regions without any type of presence in the North here.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

**Question 75-16(1): Transportation Infrastructure Priorities**

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a question concerning the identification of the transportation priorities. Previous governments and Assemblies have established the access road the priority transportation project. Can the Premier advise me whether the government remains committed to establishing access road 177 for the community of Tuktoyaktuk? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Return To Question 75-16(1): Transportation Infrastructure Priorities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area of the access road 177 in Tuktoyaktuk is something that has been discussed by a number of Assemblies. As we've heard -- Members are probably starting to get tired of hearing this -- as we set out our direction, as we look at our business planning process, we'll have to look at how we incorporate a number of these initiatives. This project would fall into that category of having to have a look at it and how it would fit within the overall plan of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 75-16(1): Transportation Infrastructure Priorities**

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier make it a priority for this 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly to get this access road done within the next four years? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 75-16(1): Transportation Infrastructure Priorities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it would, as an Assembly of the Northwest Territories to have our infrastructure built, a Mackenzie Valley highway, a highway right from coast to coast to coast, as we've said in a number of our plans, previous governments, like the number of documents put out there, that would be a goal of ours to try to continue. We need to sit down as the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly and reaffirm that, and that's the process I think we should be using in this case. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 75-16(1): Transportation Infrastructure Priorities**

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier commit to make this a priority, to work with me to make this a priority? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 75-16(1): Transportation Infrastructure Priorities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I definitely will work with the Member and try to move this project along and how we work together with ourselves as a government with the Inuvialuit, with companies. We've got to come up with some potential solutions of how we can proceed forward with this project. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

**Supplementary To Question 75-16(1): Transportation Infrastructure Priorities**

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier commit to meeting with me and the people, the councils in the Hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk and the community corp, as well? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 75-16(1): Transportation Infrastructure Priorities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would be prepared to try to arrange a meeting with the Member and his community leaders when we can find some time; probably early in the new year at some point, but I would be prepared to set some time up with the Member and go into his community. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

**Question 76-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, getting back to my Member's statement from earlier today, during the last federal budget, an announcement was made of a \$33 billion infrastructure program called the Building Canada Fund. I'd like to ask questions to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs about this fund. On Wednesday, I'd asked questions of the Minister of Transportation about whether a list existed from this government to the federal government in terms of what the priorities were. Here we are 48 hours later, less than 48 hours later and I'd like to ask the Minister of MACA, does a list exist and what's on it? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

**Return To Question 76-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have not provided any projects to the federal government at this point. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 76-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess that wasn't the answer to the question that I was looking for. Again, I'd like to ask the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs what is on the list and how did the government arrive at making those items that are on that list a priority? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 76-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member asked me what was on the list that we provided the federal government. Mr. Speaker, we have not provided a list to the federal government. Mr. Speaker, the list that the Member is referring to has not been compiled

yet. There are a couple of projects that we'd like to announce once we have our framework negotiations completed. The list that's being requested would be developed through the interim appropriations discussions and the capital planning and more than likely be targeted towards projects already in our business plan. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 76-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm wondering if the Minister can let the Regular Members of this House know how the government plans to consult with Regular Members when it comes to making things a priority of this government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 76-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you. I think, Mr. Speaker, we've done and taken the first step towards that by meeting with the committee and informing them of the process and the steps that we need to take. The first step, of course, is to sign a framework agreement. We hope to do that by sometime in December, and then we'd like to move forward with a funding agreement. We'll be sitting down with committee to address the priority areas and the areas that we would like to see investment in. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 76-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On this list, is there a regional balance in terms of projects that's going to the federal government? Can the Minister comment on that? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 76-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what list the Member is referring to, so I'd have to get him to clarify that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

**Question 77-16(1): Subsidies For Day Care Operations**

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my statement, I mentioned that the current subsidy program for day cares creates difficulties for them to manage their operation on a budget which is always changing. Does the Department of Education, Culture and Employment fund day cares...Sorry. Why does the department fund day cares based on a daily attendance subsidy?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**Return To Question 77-16(1): Subsidies For Day Care Operations**

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the funding is, most of the day cares in the Northwest Territories are based on the enrolment of the students. I'm sorry, the children and based on attendance. But there has been some, I would say, increase in the contribution in 2007 in the childcare facilities. So those are the things that we are looking at, that our department is planning on, depending on the priorities and planning that's coming out as a strategy. So if that fits into that, then we will certainly work with that. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

**Supplementary To Question 77-16(1): Subsidies For Day Care Operations**

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I heard the Minister say that there has been an increase to the funding, but if there is an increase to a daily subsidy which continues to be based on attendance of children, it really doesn't assist the day cares in maintaining a constant funding formula and be able to budget efficiently and manage their operation. So will the Minister clarify that and will the Minister agree that there needs to be a review of the application of this particular subsidy?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Lafferty.

**Further Return To Question 77-16(1): Subsidies For Day Care Operations**

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we first heard of the closure of this facility, it was a one day closure. Our department had been notified immediately. I met with my staff to deal with this issue and what kind of solutions and options that could be offered by working with the facility, working with the communities. Because it is not only one facility, it is across the board, Northwest Territories as a whole we have to look at. It is an ongoing discussion. I can commit to working with the colleague, Ms. Bisaro, to work on this solution. When there is a problem, there is always a solution. We need to move forward. I am committed to working with her. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

**Supplementary To Question 77-16(1): Subsidies For Day Care Operations**

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to hear the information from the Minister that they are looking at this particular situation. I totally agree with the Minister that this is not a problem that is limited to Yellowknife. It is definitely a problem for any day care anywhere in the Territories. I happen to be aware of an example in Yellowknife. So I ask the Minister, if there is a review underway, when can we expect to get some results from this review and a possible change to the current subsidy application? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Lafferty.



**Further Return To Question 77-16(1): Subsidies For Day Care Operations**

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated, there is discussion. They are taking place within my department and working with the day care facilities on identifying the needs of the day care facilities. This will be an ongoing discussion as we speak now. I am hoping that we can see a review document by early in the new year somewhat integrated through the strategy planning that we are strategizing for the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

**Question 78-16(1): Human Resource Issues In GNWT**

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, an unsettling number of employees suffer from what can be called a toxic workplace, one where workers literally live in fear of a tyrannical supervisor. These workers can be so scared and oppressed that they find themselves unable to securely and safely communicate their situation to those who can help, at least not without risk of severe repercussions. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents, I would like to ask the Minister of Human Resources how this department plans to detect and deal with these pockets of fear and oppression that exists now within our government departments.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister responsible for Human Resources, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**Return To Question 78-16(1): Human Resource Issues In GNWT**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for the question. The government has a workplace conflict resolution policy. That outlines how we would deal with those toxic environment situations that he described. Generally we depend on our management and the employees in question to report on those types of situations. We take them very seriously because the safety of our employees is our first priority. If we do become aware of any such situation, we take immediate action in a variety of different ways. If we feel that there is an immediate danger, we will take steps to remove the employees in question or send them home or take some action so that there is no possibility of something more serious occurring. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 78-16(1): Human Resource Issues In GNWT**

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure that answered my question of how those pockets will be detected without sort of endangering our employees to the wrath of their supervisors. I would like a little more detail on that. How can we be sure employees will be protected? There must be an element of confidentiality or something in that to ensure that either the supervisor is not directly involved or that there is very close oversight.

How will the department ensure that protection? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 78-16(1): Human Resource Issues In GNWT**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member right now is talking about a hypothetical situation. Employees that do find themselves in such a situation are encouraged to contact their senior management or to contact the department. We have invested a lot of time and effort to train investigators. We have a number of positions within the Department of Human Resources that have been trained to specifically deal with workplace conflict situations and also to conduct investigations into these types of situations. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 78-16(1): Human Resource Issues In GNWT**

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to assure you that there is absolutely nothing hypothetical about the situation I am presenting. I understand that the department initiated a review towards considering whistleblower protection. Has this review resulted in the intention to develop such legislation? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 78-16(1): Human Resource Issues In GNWT**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that the whistleblower initiative is geared to a much broader application whereby if individuals or employees see situations occurring which they feel is improper or that they can report on it. I think in this instance we are talking about specific situations on the job. In those cases, I would like to reassure the Member that we take them very seriously. The individuals in question, the information they provide, will be respected and their privacy will be accommodated. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 78-16(1): Human Resource Issues In GNWT**

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that assurance. It is a very serious subject with some of my constituents. The Government of Canada, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia all have whistleblower protection. I wasn't clear on the answer. Are we moving forward with developing legislation in the form of whistleblower protection? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 78-16(1): Human Resource Issues In GNWT**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This issue came up in the previous government. A discussion paper was enacted. I believe there were 69 responses to

the discussion paper. This is something that we will consider again as this government goes through establishing its priorities for the next four years. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

**Question 79-16(1): Cost Of Living Issues**

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the cost of living in Lutselk'e are very high due to freight costs, no all-season road, cost of transportation, flight costs, the cost of gas for boating and snowmobiling back and forth, all translates a very high cost for food, and power costs in Lutselk'e is also very high. I would like to ask the Premier today if he would consider looking at appointing a Minister to be the point Minister for the cost of living, similar to a Minister of Youth and Seniors. Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 79-16(1): Cost Of Living Issues**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area of cost of living is one that is important and affects communities in quite a number of ways through power generation, goods and services, and the high cost of housing. There are a whole number of areas that other departments do fall into. Part of their responsibility as we proceed, how they would address that, I am not sure if appointing a Minister responsible for that one that is across the boards. What I would offer up is a solution in the sense of Cabinet working together and a number of Ministers who may have more responsibility in those areas to sit down together and look at this initiative. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 79-16(1): Cost Of Living Issues**

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Premier then develop a mandate for Cabinet to report, and report the mandate on the cost of living back to this Assembly?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 79-16(1): Cost Of Living Issues**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the problems we find is we have to look at some of the avenues that have been used by previous governments and if they've actually produced a result. Our goal would be how can we deal with this. Right now each department would have to come forward and make the reports to committee at business plan stages as well as in this forum. We can work as a Cabinet to look at a number of initiatives that may help in the long term, or try to find some short-term solutions. A lot of the problems we find, and as the Member has raised, is the cost of living, for example, in the food area. How do we impact that as a government when the private sector is providing that? There are some avenues that we can look at, but

that's more longer term as the cost of energy and doing business. So that's something that we can work on. Developing a mandate and going forward may be more problematic as it would cover quite a broad spectrum in a number of departments. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 79-16(1): Cost Of Living Issues**

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Premier consider putting the cost of living as a standing item on the Cabinet's agenda?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 79-16(1): Cost Of Living Issues**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd be willing to look at doing that as we do from time to time. For example, if the Assembly highlights energy as a key piece -- we used to have that -- we can look at doing something of that nature, as well. As I said, I'm prepared to work as a committee, subcommittee structure to Cabinet on this issue, as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

**Supplementary To Question 79-16(1): Cost Of Living Issues**

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Premier also provide, should it become a standing item in Cabinet, can the Premier commit to providing regular updates to the Standing Committee on Social Programs on the cost of living? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 79-16(1): Cost Of Living Issues**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we have done in the past, or the process that we can use going forward is, for example, around the business plan areas, having a number of Ministers present to the committees. The Social Programs committee can be one of those when we talk about this initiative that affects a number of departments and look at doing in that area, as well if there's a request from any committee of any initiative that we would line up the appropriate Ministers or myself, as Premier, to make presentations with committees. So we'd be prepared to work out an arrangement. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Question 80-16(1): Development Of Territorial Agricultural Policy**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area of agriculture has a tremendous potential in the Northwest Territories. Sometimes people don't think it does and I'm not sure why, because actually we've gone backwards in the area of agriculture. Many

years ago a lot of the produce that was grown around Fort Simpson, Fort Providence, Hay River was actually shipped down the Mackenzie to a lot of other communities and it was quite a thriving activity and endeavour. Many years ago, and it seems like we've gone backwards since then. I'm not sure why, but I can't really say there's been a tremendous amount of support for this industry from this government. I don't understand why, because the potential is there; the people who are interested in it are there. We have been trying to get an agriculture policy from this government for the past 12 years. The first request came in 1995. I'd like to ask the new Minister for ITI if he can see any reason why we should not be able to develop and adopt a comprehensive agriculture policy for the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**Return To Question 80-16(1): Development Of Territorial Agricultural Policy**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think, as one of your constituents has said previously, we don't see agriculture as being a dirty four letter word. I've always been a supporter of agriculture. In the small communities there has always been agriculture and it's one way to reduce import replacement. Everybody needs food and if you can grow your own food, it's something that will help reduce the cost of living. Over the years, this government has undertaken a number of initiatives to support agriculture and as we go through our priority setting exercise, I would hope that we would be able to advance agriculture. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 80-16(1): Development Of Territorial Agricultural Policy**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in order to advance agriculture, I think we need an agriculture policy. That's something that has been wanted by the folks from the Territorial Farmers' Association for, like I said, a number of years now. Is there any reason why we cannot, within the life of this government, or even sooner, develop such a policy to encourage this activity? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 80-16(1): Development Of Territorial Agricultural Policy**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have been working in the past with the Territorial Farmers' Association on a number of initiatives. We have been successful in working with them to negotiate a framework agreement with the federal government which has resulted in funding for agri-food policy. In order to have an agricultural policy that would be effective, there would be a requirement to identify some access to land, and I know the Member has heard that on many occasions. We have identified ways that it could be done whereby we could work with MACA to identify land and move towards lower taxation areas. These are some of the things, the challenges that we would have to deal with, but certainly

we can begin to start working on a policy for the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 80-16(1): Development Of Territorial Agricultural Policy**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I realize that access to new land for agriculture is an issue, but there are many people who already do have considerable sized parcels of land for agriculture. However, this government does not recognize a means under our Property Assessment and Taxation Act for there to be a dual use for an assessment on that property. For example, if somebody lives on 40 acres, which is quite possible around Hay River, and they have a house on one acre, they're going to get taxed for residential rates on the whole parcel of land. We need some small revisions like that that could actually entice people to get involved in this industry. Will the Minister consider speaking to his colleague in MACA about a change to the Property Assessment and Taxation Act to allow more affordable tax assessment for agricultural land in the North? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 80-16(1): Development Of Territorial Agricultural Policy**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll have discussions with my colleague and I'm sure I can get him to offer to come to Hay River and make a presentation to the Territorial Farmers' Association as to exactly what process would have to be followed to do exactly what the Minister is requesting. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 80-16(1): Development Of Territorial Agricultural Policy**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, that's good and I'd like to invite both of the Ministers to come to Hay River; at his earliest convenience for Minister McLeod, ITI, to come and meet with the Territorial Farmers' Association, as well. There are revisions to the PATA, or the Property Assessment and Taxation Act, on our legislative agenda right now. I would want to ask if this particular revision could be incorporated in that revision that's underway now. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 80-16(1): Development Of Territorial Agricultural Policy**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not familiar yet with the legislation she is referring to, but I'm sure that we could address that when we make a presentation. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 81-16(1): Youth Leadership Adventure Camp**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we talk about wilderness camps all the time for young offenders and for adult offenders and there's always a request for funding. I would like to see this government maybe be proactive. The reason this came to light was a piece of correspondence that I received on an adventure camp initiative for young women. I think it's an excellent idea and I think it's something that we can expand on to go throughout the Northwest Territories. I would like to ask Minister McLeod, I believe is the Minister of Youth, I would like to ask Minister McLeod if there is anything within the youth mandate that would allow him to make contributions to the operation of youth camps. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Youth, Mr. Michael McLeod.

**Return To Question 81-16(1): Youth Leadership Adventure Camp**

**MR. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a budget under our youth portfolio for youth core programs. The criteria, this will be dollars that could be used for youth camps. We've funded, through our youth programs last year through the youth contribution and the Youth Corps Program, a total of, I believe it's 55 different initiatives, and a good portion of those were youth camp-type workshops or on-the-land programs. So there are a number of ways we can provide for the youth to be on the land or be with the elders. The Department of Health, I believe, also has some Summer Camp Program dollars that they use. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 81-16(1): Youth Leadership Adventure Camp**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the Minister for that informative answer. I'd like to ask the Minister, how many requests would his department receive in any given year, and are these from the wilderness camps for offenders or just youth camps in particular? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Robert McLeod. Mr. Michael McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 81-16(1): Youth Leadership Adventure Camp**

**MR. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have to commit to coming back with that information. I know our programs are oversubscribed. We have, as I indicated, about 55 different initiatives and a great deal of them are geared towards youth at risk, and a lot of them are using it for different types of camps. We also have the Youth Abroad Program. We have the foster family coalition camp, and a sports and youth leadership conference, and youth forums and things of that nature, Mr. Speaker. However, I would have to commit to getting back with the number of applications that we receive overall. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Michael McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 81-16(1): Youth Leadership Adventure Camp**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister if he gets communications from aboriginal groups, aboriginal governments about their desire to have youth camps in their region that are culturally based. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Robert McLeod. Mr. Michael McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 81-16(1): Youth Leadership Adventure Camp**

**MR. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes. We've had requests and we've funded programs with the Inuvialuit and we've also worked with the Dehcho First Nations and others, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Michael McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 81-16(1): Youth Leadership Adventure Camp**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems that a lot of money is going out to the youth camps and the youth. It is important because the youth are one of our best resources and anything we can invest in the youth, as long as Ottawa doesn't take it away, will benefit the people in the Northwest Territories. I'd like to ask the Minister if he would also commit to contributing to the Children First Society of Inuvik in their desire to have their own standalone building for day care and other programs. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Robert McLeod. Mr. Michael McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 81-16(1): Youth Leadership Adventure Camp**

**MR. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'd be glad to consider any applications that come forward from any of the communities across the Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Michael McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**Question 82-16(1): NWT Arts Achievement Acknowledgement**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last term I talked about the need for a territorial arts and cultural achievement award evening. It could be a focus or a way we could pinnacle our arts achievements throughout the Northwest Territories; whether it be culture, whether it be in the sense of visual arts, whether it be crafts. Mr. Speaker, the former Minister of Education, Culture and Employment was supportive of this initiative and, of course, the department, as I understood it, was working towards something. I'd like to ask the new and current Minister of the Department of Education, is he willing to continue to work on this project and do we

foresee anything coming forward in the near future as a discussion? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**Return To Question 82-16(1): NWT Arts Achievement Acknowledgement**

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I definitely will get back to my department and see where the status is at. If there was a formal commitment made, then I will certainly look into that and work with Mr. Hawkins, as well, in that specific area. Mahsi.

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

**Supplementary To Question 82-16(1): NWT Arts Achievement Acknowledgement**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hold in my hand the NWT Arts Strategy, a copy of this, and it talks about the promotion of the arts. I just want to make sure that we're singing from the same song sheet, that the Minister will ensure that he can get back to me and this House before February so we can have a good and lengthy discussion in advance of any type of budget session if there needs to be support on this type of initiative. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Lafferty.

**Further Return To Question 82-16(1): NWT Arts Achievement Acknowledgement**

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we've outlined in the strategic plan for the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly, this can certainly be one of the priorities; it will be up to the Members here to set priorities. But I'm more than willing to sit down with the Member and other Members who are requesting meetings with Ministers on various issues and concerns. This could be one of them that we'll certainly meet on. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

**Question 83-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Premier. I wanted to ask the Premier, does the Government of the Northwest Territories have a list of priority projects for the Building Canada Fund? Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 83-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we've done to date is work with the federal government on a framework agreement, as Minister McLeod has stated, and working with their criteria, requested departments to look at the plans that we have in place -- that is the 2007-2008 infrastructure plan -- and see what we can work with in looking at our existing financial situation. It has a role in that. We've done that work and we're prepared to work with the federal government in coming up with a couple of

key initiatives early on and then work through our normal business planning process. So is there a list? The list would be our starting point as the capital plan for this government that's already out there. That's our starting point. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 83-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was quite a lengthy answer for a yes or no question. Again, I'd like to ask the Premier what... Okay, first I'm going to ask him again: Is there a list of priority projects for the Building Canada Fund? Yes or no.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 83-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Cabinet has not made a decision on a priority list that we're prepared to present to the federal government. We've had discussions within departments and, as I've laid out, we've worked from the information we have available and that's public to date. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 83-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Assuming that there's no list, how do Regular Members have any input into the decisions on what priorities are on that list, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 83-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the lead Minister on the Building Canada Fund has prepared the information for Members and had discussions with them, we're going to work with our existing arrangement that we have in place. For example, right now the federal government is looking for an announcement, an assignment of a framework that would highlight the first project or two that we'd be prepared to move on, meeting their criteria. We would then, because the money is a seven-year funding agreement, sit down with Members and, as highlighted, we're intending to go forward with an interim appropriation that would have the full capital plan attached to that because of the timing of contracts that need to be let. Through that process, we're ready to sit down with Members and go through that list of what can be further added to the Building Fund dollars that would be available to us. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 83-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The last government had a history of avoidance and not including Regular Members in the decision-making process. I'd like to ask the Premier how is this government going to be different and how are they going to engage Regular Members in the decision-making process so that consensus government and the spirit and intent of consensus government is not continually eroded? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 83-16(1): Building Canada Fund**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, we've already started, I think, a cooperative arrangement. We've gone forward, a meeting already has been held on this issue. A decision has not been made by Cabinet. I am prepared to sit down with Members again. As I already laid out, the interim appropriation, the business planning, no decisions have been made in that area. We have to set the priorities, but we are going to have to work within a fiscal environment that is going to squeeze us in a number of areas. Infrastructure is going to be one of those large areas. So that is where we are at, at this point. I am prepared to continue to work with Members, but at some point, so we don't lose a year on some of these projects or potential projects, we are going to have to make a decision. I trust that is what Members have given us authority in. As we have our discussions, at some point a decision is made and we will need to proceed. Hopefully we will have enough support that we will proceed on a number of projects. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 84-16(1): Constituency Infrastructure Priorities**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. It is in regards to the infrastructure needs in our communities. I am not making it sound like there is no need in the community of Aklavik. I know with the flood a couple of years ago, that we expended over \$2 million hauling crushed gravel from Inuvik to Aklavik by barge. But yet, Mr. Speaker, there is a gravel source 15 kilometres from the community by way of Willow River. I think, as a government, that we do have a program called the community access road program, but it is very limited on really doing anything practical on the ground. I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, that we, as government, develop a program or put more resources into a program to allow for communities to develop their granular sources so that they are able to meet the challenges of climate change, floods, infrastructure needs and, more importantly, build up those communities that are threatened by climate change such as shore erosion, floods and other things. As a government, maybe we should look at the policies we already have and develop around those policies. I would like to ask the Premier not to lose sight of his neighbours to the west, but to keep them in mind that we also have some challenges which are unique. I support the project in regards to site 177, but I think also the community of Aklavik is in similar need.

I would like to ask the Premier, will he also commit to the community of Aklavik as he just committed to the Member for Nunakput?

---Applause

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

**Return To Question 84-16(1): Constituency Infrastructure Priorities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will do our job to try to get to every community in the Northwest Territories, and I am prepared to meet with the Member and his community on this issue. It has been a longstanding one. We have arranged, for example, transportation at times if the Housing Corporation or a number of departments have projects. They arrange for a larger source. At times the winter road is built into that area and gravel hauled out. As a government, we are going to have a discussion on the overall package of what we bring forward and those initiatives and priorities. I am prepared to work with the Member and travel with him and speak on this issue. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 84-16(1): Constituency Infrastructure Priorities**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, I touched on the community access road program. We do have federal dollars now that we are plugging into in regards to \$33 million of capacity funding. Is there a possibility that the Premier and his Cabinet could look at the possibility of expanding the community access road program to expand the amount of money that is allocated to the community access program? Right now it is \$50,000 per year. Maybe we can take some of that federal funding, put it into this program, increase the allowances that are allowed for that program so that we really can make a difference to communities to access their gravel sources, such as \$2 million per project.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 84-16(1): Constituency Infrastructure Priorities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we have entered this cycle, we are preparing to come forward once we have our discussion about the overall priorities of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly, look at the interim appropriation, for example, to carry on before we come forward with our full budget which would be in early spring, May or June. At that point, the requests for additional money, change of programs, we would be willing to work with Members, again looking at the overall priorities of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 84-16(1): Constituency Infrastructure Priorities**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regards to the Premier's commitment, I do believe, as a

government, we have the unique programs out there. We have developed them over the years. But I think it is the lack of real adequate resources that are in those programs that really make them work. I think I mentioned the community access program. It is a good idea. It is a good initiative, but it is limited on the amount of resources that is in it. As a government, I think we should look at programs that do work and put more resources into them and make them accessible to all communities throughout the Northwest Territories to make sure that it is not generally just to a couple of regions or a couple of communities, that we are able to develop a lot of our smaller communities who have all of these challenges by way of infrastructure. I would like to ask the Minister, would the Premier consider looking at the possibility of expanding this program by putting more resources in it to make it more deliverable and accessible for our communities?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 84-16(1): Constituency Infrastructure Priorities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would have to agree with the Member on putting more resources where programs are working. As an Assembly, we are going to have to go through the exercise of coming up with some of those key priorities and then try to find the funding to put into those areas, but we are going to have to look at how we do that. There are going to be challenges across the board. We are going to have to reallocate internally, as well. We need to have that discussion. As I committed, we will do that through our business planning process. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 84-16(1): Constituency Infrastructure Priorities**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, also I would like to encourage the Premier to build partnerships outside of governments, outside of communities and also with aboriginal governments. I know the aboriginal community is interested in different projects to assist their communities. I would like to ask the Premier if he would like to consider the possibility of getting by aboriginal governments, corporations, development corporations, so that they can move on some of these projects.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 84-16(1): Constituency Infrastructure Priorities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is those kinds of partnerships that will help in the delivery of key infrastructure in our communities. The more that that type of partnership can come forward and can help us and we help each other by bringing our resources together, that is something that we definitely have to look at. So we would be open to those types of discussions. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Question 85-16(1): Gas Tax Rebate For Non-Transportation Industries**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think my question is for the Premier. A lot of people are involved in activities where they consume petroleum products in the North that have nothing to do with using our roads and yet there is a road tax component on gasoline and diesel. I am thinking along the same vein as the folks involved in agriculture who need petroleum products, and people involved in the commercial fishing industry. I don't know why fuel for their vessels should be contributing to a road tax. Also, harvesters that are involved in traditional hunting and trapping activities are all paying a tax. Their activities would be more sustainable if their costs of doing business would be lowered. Why can't we, as a government, come up with a way of not creating a cumbersome administration on trying to decipher at the point of sale what is going to be used for what purpose, but why can't we come up with a receipt program just like you would when you file your income tax and if you own a small business, where you are allowed to submit receipts for a rebate based on certain activities? Why couldn't we come up with something like that to alleviate the cost of living on some of these activities that have nothing to do with roads? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 85-16(1): Gas Tax Rebate For Non-Transportation Industries**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the last time there was a differentiation between the type of gasoline for transportation versus agriculture or fishing, I recall many years ago it was referred to as purple gas. It was used in equipment outside of transportation. We, as the GNWT, hadn't put that in place. We could look at options of doing that. We would recognize a certain amount of lost income. The problem I think that becomes bigger is the administration of something like that. How it would work is something that we would have to work around, as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 85-16(1): Gas Tax Rebate For Non-Transportation Industries**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I think we did determine that trying to determine the use of the product at point of sale was too difficult and too cumbersome. It is understood and agreed we can't do that. We can't even keep track of the difference between stuff going for diesel for home heating fuel to diesel going for filling your vehicle. We can't even keep that straight. So I don't suggest that we try to do it at the point of sale. What I am suggesting is that somehow when people file their personal income tax return and they are involved in those activities which are included in their return, that they be able to submit receipts and get a rebate for the portion of the tax related to on road. That is what I am suggesting. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 85-16(1): Gas Tax Rebate For Non-Transportation Industries**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that area would take a fair bit of work as we work with the federal government in collection and remittance of our personal income tax in the Northwest Territories. I am sure there are ways of looking at our portion to see if we can make something like this happen. As we know, there are other ways already. If you have a small business, you can remit receipts for certain areas and have an impact on your taxation side. I would have to look at that if that is already available to people in this area, but that's something we can look at working at.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Time for question period has expired; however, I will allow the Member a supplementary. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 85-16(1): Gas Tax Rebate For Non-Transportation Industries**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Okay, if it's difficult to do that with the federal government, what about the people involved in these activities just submitting these receipts to this government for a rebate on the fuel for the tax portion only related to roads? That should not be too difficult to administer. Just submit their receipts in these activities for a rebate on their fuel purchases. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 85-16(1): Gas Tax Rebate For Non-Transportation Industries**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The one thing I have learned having the Finance portfolio and the whole taxation side and how fuel moves from one location in the territory to another or even from one tank to another, how the categories can change. The big issue will be, as we look at developing a program, is how it would be administered and how do we ensure people are putting the right claims in is an area. That's something we can work on. I think it's an interesting area and I would be prepared to sit down with Members to see if we can work this out a little further and look at what we might be able to bring forward. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 85-16(1): Gas Tax Rebate For Non-Transportation Industries**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I was asked to raise this by the Territorial Farmers' Association and I realize that it may be cumbersome, but the cost of doing business is continually going up. The price of the product is not going up. This is discouraging people from being involved in any of our renewable resource sector activities that are not involved with roads. The cost of fuel, it's going to be an all-time high now again. I look forward to working with the Minister on trying to find some way of alleviating the cost of doing business in these sectors. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to oral questions. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to oral questions. Are there any nays? There are no nays. We will return to oral questions. Before we do, the chair is going to call a break.

---SHORT RECESS

**MR. SPEAKER:** We'll return to orders of the day. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS**

**Question 86-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Update**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Deh Cho Bridge has been a topic of much debate the last few days and I believe the November 30<sup>th</sup> date was to be a very important and critical date. I would like to know if the Minister of Transportation could give us an update on the status of the Deh Cho Bridge project to find out where it sits. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Return To Question 86-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Update**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning I was notified and am happy to report to the House that I heard from the president of the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation, Mr. Michael Vandell. We were advised the last couple of hours by Transport Canada that their navigable waters to construct the Deh Cho Bridge across the Mackenzie River was approved by the navigable waters protection office of Transport Canada. This is good news for the Northwest Territories. Now the corporation can close the financial arrangements under the public/private partnership and make preparations to begin construction on the long-awaited Deh Cho Bridge.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**Supplementary To Question 86-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Update**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have always, in principle, been a big supporter of the Deh Cho Bridge project. I think it's a good project. Mr. Speaker, there were a lot of problems associated with this project and, as I understand it, there were still 12 outstanding issues. If the Minister is not prepared to give me an answer on every single one of those 12 issues that are still outstanding today, will he provide Members details on every one of those issues and how we are remedying them in the next few days? Can he provide that by the end of next week? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 86-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Update**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to, first of all, congratulate the people



of the aboriginal corporations in Fort Providence, the Metis, the band, the hamlet, the people in Fort Providence and the people of the Deh Cho, the Deh Cho Corporation also, and the GNWT department staff in terms of making an historical agreement that would see a project like this be very successful in the Northwest Territories. Once we have done our work in terms of working it out with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation in terms of some of the 12 outstanding issues, we would certainly be happy to share that with the Members.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**Supplementary To Question 86-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Update**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the people concerned about the 12 outstanding issues I don't think are in any way concerned about the bridge in principle. It is more about the nuts and bolts of this agreement to make sure it is online and on track. So, Mr. Speaker, I heard the willingness of the Minister to provide this. I just want to get some timelines on when we can actually see this document in front of us so we can really understand the fullness of what has been fully committed to this project. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 86-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Update**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly, once we have arranged our discussions and some final discussions with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation, our staff, this government on this side here, then we would produce the concession agreement for the Members here. I cannot say right now as to when those timelines would be stated as we still need to meet with the bridge corporation and work on some of those issues that would see a conclusion to this concession agreement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 87-16(1): Arctic Sovereignty Matters**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot in regards to the Prime Minister's announcement in regards to the Throne speech in regards to Arctic sovereignty and also looking at more military presence dealing with the many challenges seen by way of ships travelling back and forth. But yet, Mr. Speaker, we have heard very little on behalf of this government on exactly where we stand in regards to Arctic sovereignty, and yet, Mr. Speaker, the Arctic is our home, it is our territory, but yet we have not really responded on it. Mr. Speaker, the residents of Aklavik travel back and forth between Alaska to visit relatives and whatnot. But yet, Mr. Speaker, these are our eyes and ears on the ground. These people are already out there. They travel back and forth between Alaska and Canada, but yet we are not really using them. We have the Rangers program. I think, as a government, we have to start using that. I would like to ask the Premier, exactly are we in communication with the federal government when it comes to Arctic sovereignty in regards to how the federal government can

include us in any discussions on Arctic sovereignty in regards to the residents of the Northwest Territories?

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

**Return To Question 87-16(1): Arctic Sovereignty Matters**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area of Arctic sovereignty is of great interest to us here in the Northwest Territories. In my brief discussion with the Prime Minister, I referenced the Throne speech. It is good to hear that the Arctic is playing such a prominent role in it. I look forward to working with his government in coming up with how we can be a part of dealing with Arctic sovereignty. In other areas, I have also mentioned that Arctic sovereignty, we are here, we are living here. One of the things they can do is support us in securing the sovereignty piece by helping us with our infrastructure. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 87-16(1): Arctic Sovereignty Matters**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe it is critical that we, as government, do have a position going forward but, more importantly, realize the importance our communities play and the residents, especially in the Beaufort Sea and Mackenzie Delta have played in regards to the Arctic sovereignty. The threat that we have in the Arctic is coming from Russia in regards to submarine traffic and also in regards to air transport flights over the Arctic. I think it is important that we, as government, do a better job by way of ensuring that the federal government commits to infrastructure to accommodate the residents in our communities, but also, more importantly, make that presence a reality by way of realizing the importance that people play in our communities in regards to being the eyes and ears on the ground. I would like to ask the Premier, exactly have we developed a position dealing with Arctic sovereignty so that we can present something to the federal government?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 87-16(1): Arctic Sovereignty Matters**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we, as the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly, haven't had opportunity to come up with a proposal as of yet. There is some ongoing work on how we can strengthen our position, what are the key pieces we would like to present as being what we would call solutions to the issue of Arctic sovereignty. A solution is that we are here and we can help the federal government in that area. So we don't have a proposal yet. There are meetings coming up within the new year that can help us along this way and further discussions about what avenues might be available to us. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 87-16(1): Arctic Sovereignty Matters**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that by building a road to the Beaufort Sea is one way that we, as Canada, can show that we do have control of sea to sea to sea, which includes all the portions around Canada, but also developing an Arctic institute by way of either the Inuvik region or...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Do you have a question, Mr. Krutko?

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier, exactly are we looking at federal funding to help us implement our needs by way of infrastructure needs to push the road to the Arctic and also have an Arctic institute in the Beaufort Sea?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 87-16(1): Arctic Sovereignty Matters**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we have highlighted on a number of occasions, core infrastructure for the further development of the Northwest Territories, for our people, for transportation is one of the key pieces we see as we proceed forward. So we will need to continue to work in that area. We are, of course, when it comes to highways, know that it is the federal government's responsibility, but that shouldn't stop us from continuing to put the argument forward and look for some solutions as we proceed forward on a number of initiatives. So, yes, we are going to work with the federal government and try to see if there are areas that we can use as we proceed forward in trying to help secure the issue of Arctic sovereignty for the federal government. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 87-16(1): Arctic Sovereignty Matters**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regards to the military side, the Beaufort has played a role in regard to the DEW Line sites, the Inuvik army presence that they had during the 1970s and into the 1980s. I would like to ask the Premier, have we looked at the possibility of a military presence in the Arctic and where they are going to be located? I know there have been a lot of announcements in the Eastern Arctic but very little on the western side. So I would like to ask the Premier, has he also had discussions on military presence in the Arctic and where they are going to be located?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 87-16(1): Arctic Sovereignty Matters**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have not had discussions on the area of a military presence in the Northwest Territories and where they would be located. We know there is an increased presence. For example, the Forward Operation Location in Inuvik has been busier this last fall and winter than it has in the last number of years. So they have stepped up some of their work and their presence in the Arctic

already. We haven't had any direct discussions about a further enhancement of that area. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

**Question 88-16(1): Motor Vehicles Licensing Office In Nunakput**

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation if he is able to commit to me today on giving the Hamlet of Paulatuk the capability of issuing driver's licences and general identification?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Return To Question 88-16(1): Motor Vehicles Licensing Office In Nunakput**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this issue has come up in my discussions with the Member from Nunakput. Certainly, our department is making arrangements to see how best we can serve the community of Paulatuk in terms of this specific issue on the issuing of driver's licences.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

**Supplementary To Question 88-16(1): Motor Vehicles Licensing Office In Nunakput**

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that would be easy. It is just entering into a contract with the Hamlet of Paulatuk to provide that service. The people of Paulatuk are taxpayers to the territorial government. It costs \$1,100 to go and just to get your driver's licence renewed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. I am not sure I heard a question there. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 88-16(1): Motor Vehicles Licensing Office In Nunakput**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member from Nunakput is also...I come from a region that faces challenges like this. I will be happy to look at that specific issue and work with the Member in terms of how we can serve the people of Paulatuk on this issue.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

**Question 89-16(1): GNWT Fiscal Framework**

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I have a question for the Minister of Finance. There have been a lot of discussions on this side of the floor of the much needed infrastructure like highways and various public infrastructures in the community. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if he can provide this Assembly with a fiscal framework for the GNWT prior to the strategic planning session next week.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 89-16(1): GNWT Fiscal Framework**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we could work at putting that together. That shouldn't be a problem. One of the things I think we need to look at as an Assembly before we look at a number of situations, I hope that we would set our priorities first and then look at the fiscal environment that we would have to operate in and take those steps. If we go down a path that becomes strictly about numbers, we may not look at opportunities for restructuring or refocusing of how we operate as a government. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 89-16(1): GNWT Fiscal Framework**

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that both the priorities and the fiscal framework should be looked at together. Having said that, can the Minister ensure that, should he be providing the fiscal framework prior to his strategic planning session next week, all leverage dollars be also included in the fiscal framework? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 89-16(1): GNWT Fiscal Framework**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we would be prepared to put our information out there. Our fiscal position, the infrastructure piece of it would be part of that as well as all instruments that we have within our authority. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 89-16(1): GNWT Fiscal Framework**

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in relation to that, can I ask the Minister to also provide us with the most updated five-year infrastructure acquisition plan including all projects that are leveraged?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 89-16(1): GNWT Fiscal Framework**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is referencing leveraged areas. Is that debt that we would have on our books through a number of other corporations? We put all of our information together that would impact our fiscal framework. We will put all of the pieces together and be prepared to share that with Members. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**Question 90-16(1): Mackenzie Ice Road Construction Materials**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in my Member's statement, I spoke to the state of transportation in the Beaufort-Delta. Another concern I had was the ice bridge at the Mackenzie River. It is not a \$165 million bridge, but it is a bridge that allows goods and services to come into the Beaufort-Delta quickly. The concern I have, Mr. Speaker -- and I am going to direct my questions to the Transportation Minister -- there is an important piece of equipment that is used for making ice at the Mackenzie ice crossing stored 150 kilometres away while we have a storage yard 150 yards from the site. Does the Minister know why we are storing this piece of equipment by the Yukon border? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Return To Question 90-16(1): Mackenzie Ice Road Construction Materials**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Mackenzie ice bridge crossing machinery I think the Member is referring to is right now at what I have been told is the location that the department feels is the only location that it can be stored at. I did check into it and asked about other areas that it can be stored in. It is not being used right now. That is where it can be stored in terms of safety and security reasons.

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

**Supplementary To Question 90-16(1): Mackenzie Ice Road Construction Materials**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister why this piece of equipment is not being used. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 90-16(1): Mackenzie Ice Road Construction Materials**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is due to budget constraints and certainly budget reductions in the department that is unable to use this machine at the Mackenzie ice crossing at Tsiigehtchic.

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

**Supplementary To Question 90-16(1): Mackenzie Ice Road Construction Materials**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Well, Mr. Speaker, if it is budget concerns they are worried about, why is the machinery stored 150 kilometres away when it can be stored at the Transportation yard right at the Mackenzie River right at Tsiigehtchic? I would like to ask the Minister if he is aware of the cost of hauling this piece of equipment 150 kilometres there and 150 kilometres back? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 90-16(1): Mackenzie Ice Road Construction Materials**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, even though we did haul the machine to the area the Member is referring to, it is going to sit there. It is not in the budget. It has been reduced in terms of our transportation. We are looking at ways we could bring the machine in and possibly use it in the future. However, again, we are going through the process of planning priorities. We will see if this is something that is really needed. I will continue working with the Members in terms of making this machine available to the people of the Delta area.

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

**Supplementary To Question 90-16(1): Mackenzie Ice Road Construction Materials**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister again, how much is it costing the department to transport that machinery back and forth? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 90-16(1): Mackenzie Ice Road Construction Materials**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, right now it is not moving so it is not costing the department anything.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

**Question 91-16(1): News Release Distribution On GNWT Messenger**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, the Economic Development and Infrastructure committee put out a press release through normal channels. The press release requested information regarding the Deh Cho Bridge process. It was agreed to by all of the committee members. Mr. Speaker, it was the government's decision yesterday not to send this out through Messenger, the government's e-mail service, because of the political nature of that press release.

Mr. Speaker, most press releases are political in nature. I am wondering what would make this press release any more political than any other one we send out. The first question I would have for the Premier is, who made the decision not to send out the committee's press release yesterday? Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 91-16(1): News Release Distribution On GNWT Messenger**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know the Member would probably be happy to say it was I that said not to release it, but I have just been made aware of it by a note being sent over to me. So I am unaware who made that decision. It is something that we would have to look at. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 91-16(1): News Release Distribution On GNWT Messenger**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe any Minister or northern Premier can thwart the free speech and a privilege that we have here as Members of this House. I would like to ask the Premier if he could find out who made that decision and why it was made. If we are going to be censored and there is going to be a gatekeeper on press releases that committees make, we should know about that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 91-16(1): News Release Distribution On GNWT Messenger**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I understand this did go out yesterday. It may be on the Legislative Assembly website. Is the question it didn't go out through the Messenger which goes to every employee's e-mail? Is that the question? Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 91-16(1): News Release Distribution On GNWT Messenger**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, somebody somewhere made the decision not to send out EDI's press release on government Messenger e-mail system to all employees in the government. Every other press release that gets issued goes out on Messenger. This one got stopped. Somebody was gate keeping and said this press release was too political in nature and didn't deserve to go out on Messenger. So, again, I would like to ask the Premier if he would investigate this and find out who this gatekeeper is so that Regular Members know and committees know that we are obviously going to be censored in press releases in the future, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 91-16(1): News Release Distribution On GNWT Messenger**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is, within Executive, the whole sending out through the Messenger falls through the Department of Executive. My understanding is when that came across -- and I am just going from the note that was forwarded to me -- the question was asked for more thoughts on this matter. So that discussion I'm not aware has taken place yet. The government, overall, should have a discussion about what appropriate message should be sent. I recall in the past being requested to put some things from other groups on that Messenger service and they've been disallowed on a number of areas. So my understanding is that questions were going back and forth; is this the appropriate avenue? It's not a matter of has it gone or not gone; one day, is that a time to permit some discussion about this? That's my understanding where it went. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 91-16(1): News Release Distribution On GNWT Messenger**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm having trouble understanding what's appropriate and what's not appropriate and who makes the decision not to send a committee of this Legislative Assembly's press release out on our government service. Who ultimately makes that decision? Is it the deputy minister? Who makes the decision and who is going to censor, who is there that's going to censor our press releases? Are they being censored? Judging by yesterday's events, there was some censorship there and I take great offence to that censorship, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 91-16(1): News Release Distribution On GNWT Messenger**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let's be clear here. The message has gone out, the public's aware of it. So what censorship happened? The question was asked when this was sent, is this the appropriate avenue to be using this Messenger service that's available to just GNWT employees? It's not available to anybody else out there unless you're a Government of the Northwest Territories employee and you can tap into this. We do have a policy in that area and I'd be prepared to share that with Members and see where that goes. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

**Question 92-16(1): Seniors' Access To Pension Benefits**

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the Minister responsible for Seniors. Can the Minister assist me in looking into making our elders' cheques from once a month to twice a month? My elders are running short every third week in the smaller communities due to the high cost of living. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, I guess. Who is it? Oh. The Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Return To Question 92-16(1): Seniors' Access To Pension Benefits**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll have to work closely with the Member from Nunakput in terms of the types of cheques that he's referring to and requires other Ministers to be involved or requires the federal government departments to be involved in this issue here. So I would ask if the Member could be more specific in terms of what type of cheques so that I could have some direction.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

**Supplementary To Question 92-16(1): Seniors' Access To Pension Benefits**

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the cheques I'm referring to, Mr. Yakeleya, are the seniors, the pension cheques every month. Our elders need to be helped and it's our obligation, as the government, to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Again, I didn't hear a question there, so I'm going to go on to the next Member. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

**Question 93-16(1): Wind Energy Conference**

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask a question sort of related to the Wind Energy Conference. As with any discussion, the proof is in the pudding. It depends on the action that comes out of it. I think a number of people here have been very pleased to hear about the Wind Energy Conference. Are the Ministers committed to following up with actions, and programs, and funding to establish wind energy where appropriate in the North after this conference? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I didn't hear who that was addressed to, so I'll address it to the Premier, Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll use my prerogative in this matter and ask the Minister of ENR, who's made his statement on wind energy a day or so ago.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Return To Question 93-16(1): Wind Energy Conference**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're committed to working with the Assembly, as we've been saying over the last number of days, sorting out the final priorities for the strategic direction and priorities for the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Cabinet will be moving on that. The issue of alternative energy is a key issue. We're working with communities, and have been, between the energy plans. We know that there have been significant advances in a lot of areas. As oil hits \$100 a barrel, the interest levels are continuing to grow, as well as the pressure to reduce our greenhouse gases. So we have to sort this out. But, yes, we're interested in trying to move ahead in any ways that will make communities more self-sufficient and self-reliant. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 93-16(1): Wind Energy Conference**

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to note that my vagueness at the beginning was intentional. It shows that there is a need for cooperation and integration of programs on these important subject matters. ITI would obviously be involved in this, as well. I'm happy to go with the Minister of the Environment, here. The federal subsidy rate for the establishment of wind energy was set according to costs

in southern Canada. Clearly this is not suitable for us, where our energy costs are quite high relative to that. Is the Minister working with the Yukon, Nunavut, and Ottawa to get federal subsidies set in an appropriate level that are suitable to the advancement of technology in the North? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 93-16(1): Wind Energy Conference**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is an energy coordinating committee on Cabinet made up of ITI, myself, and Public Works and Services and such, and we're tasked with overseeing the energy plan, conservation issues, hydro issues. As we get up and running -- in fact, we're having a meeting Monday to start the business of the committee -- those type of detailed issues will be one of the things that we're going to be looking at. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 93-16(1): Wind Energy Conference**

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is my last supplemental. I'm also wondering if the Minister is working with Aurora College and those sorts of follow-up programs to establish the learning and the knowledge in the North that we need for these renewable energy projects to come to fruition. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 93-16(1): Wind Energy Conference**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I had the opportunity to meet with the college Board of Governors yesterday at noon, as well with the president, to talk about the NRTP course, the need to work together, the role of the Aurora Research Institute up in Inuvik, the need to set a collaborative science agenda between the government and Aurora College. So we're setting the framework in place to have those type of discussions that will lead to the resolution and the moving forward of the issue that the Member has raised. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 94-16(1): Ice Road Construction Equipment Storage At James Creek**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is in response to the Minister's answering my questions before. He said that it's not moving, so it's not costing us anything. If that's the case, then there's a lot of things within the government not moving, but they're costing us something.

---Laughter

I would like to ask the Minister, and maybe I should rephrase my question. Obviously there was a cost to transporting this piece of equipment to James Creek, 150 kilometres away. Is the Minister aware of the cost of transporting it from Tsiigehtchic on the Dempster to James Creek, 150 kilometres away? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Return To Question 94-16(1): Ice Road Construction Equipment Storage At James Creek**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the Member from Twin Lakes I apologize for not being very clear on this question. I will look at the issue in terms of what it costs the department to move it over to James Creek, and what it's costing us to have it there, and what it would cost if we were to move it to another location that would be satisfactory to him and other members of the Mackenzie Delta.

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

**Supplementary To Question 94-16(1): Ice Road Construction Equipment Storage At James Creek**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you. I thank the Minister for that. I'd like to ask the Minister if he is aware of the last time that this piece of machinery has been used. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 94-16(1): Ice Road Construction Equipment Storage At James Creek**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my discussions with the department, I've been told that this machine was used at the Mackenzie crossing, in terms of experimental project, and that it was used only the one time. However, if he needs the specific dates and times, I certainly will go into sending that over to the Member for him for his review.

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

**Supplementary To Question 94-16(1): Ice Road Construction Equipment Storage At James Creek**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Well, I appreciate the Minister's answer and I would like to say that I spoke with someone who had an opportunity to use the machine and said that the machine worked beautifully and it did the job that it was supposed to do. It sped up the opportunity to get goods and services to the Beaufort-Delta. I would like to ask the Minister, who made the decision to not use that machine again and store it at James Creek? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 94-16(1): Ice Road Construction Equipment Storage At James Creek**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** Thank you for the specific decisions there. Mr. Speaker, I would get that to the Member. It's my understanding that he knows that I've also come from areas that have this kind of concern and

that's certainly something that I'd be happy to talk with the Member about. This certainly does raise some questions; however, I will provide that information to the Member when I can get it from the department.

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

**Supplementary To Question 94-16(1): Ice Road Construction Equipment Storage At James Creek**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's answers to my questions. I would also like him to undertake to find out why the machine is not stored at the Transportation yard at the Mackenzie ice crossing in Tsiigehtchic. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Further Return To Question 94-16(1): Ice Road Construction Equipment Storage At James Creek**

**HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA:** I'll certainly get the information for the Member, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll certainly again ask the Member from Twin Lakes that I certainly want to work on this issue. It's an important issue, I know, for the people in the Mackenzie Delta. It's something that I'll bring up with the department in terms of a list of priorities of our infrastructure needs and across the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 95-16(1): Investigative Follow-up To Death Of Constituent In Fort McPherson**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty, in regard to a situation that occurred in Fort McPherson regarding a young lady that passed on. Before she passed on, apparently she was in police custody. She was arrested, put into police custody, released to the health centre, and then later put back into the jail, and then later released on her own recognizance. Later, she passed away. So I'd like to ask the Minister, exactly was there an investigation by the RCMP or by anybody in Justice and the Department of Health to look at the circumstances of this and, also, suspicious or not, is there a report on this particular incident?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

**Return To Question 95-16(1): Investigative Follow-up To Death Of Constituent In Fort McPherson**

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the particular incident, the department is looking into that. When Mr. Krutko first approached me, I notified my department to say has there been any investigation and so forth. So it has been brought to my attention. I'll certainly be more than willing to share that information once it's in my hands. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I don't have that detailed information. Mahsi.

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

**Supplementary To Question 95-16(1): Investigative Follow-up To Death Of Constituent In Fort McPherson**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to also thank the Minister for continuing to look into this matter, but I believe it's severe enough, I hate to call for a public inquiry into this, but I think it does include other agencies: the Department of Health, Justice, and also in regard to the RCMP. So I think it's important that we do it right, we look at this. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he could also include the Minister of Health in regards to the health side of this situation where it included the health centre in Fort McPherson. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he could also include his colleague on this report.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Lafferty.

**Further Return To Question 95-16(1): Investigative Follow-up To Death Of Constituent In Fort McPherson**

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with these kind of incidents, there are various parties involved. The coroner area, their office. Also the Department of Health and Social Services and our Department of Justice. Certainly I will be working closely with my colleague and also the coroner and see what they have on file. Again, I committed to, and I am willing to share that information with Mr. Krutko. Mahsi.

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

**Supplementary To Question 95-16(1): Investigative Follow-up To Death Of Constituent In Fort McPherson**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I'd like to thank the Minister for that. But I think we kind of lose sight of the family members who are affected by this. I'd like to ask the Minister, once the report is concluded, if an effort could be made, either by himself or someone within his department, to sit down with the family and explain what the findings of that report is?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Lafferty.

**Further Return To Question 95-16(1): Investigative Follow-up To Death Of Constituent In Fort McPherson**

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once the report is due, then we'll certainly make that effort to meet with the Member and also the family. We'll have our department conduct that. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko. Oral questions. Written questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

**ITEM 8: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**Written Question 3-16(1): Diamond Industry Report**

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier.

Will the Premier table a comprehensive government response in this House by February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008, to the recommendations contained in MP Bevington's Diamonds are Forever, Our Mines are Not report, which was released publicly on November 29, 2007? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Petitions. Reports of standing and special committees. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

### ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

#### Tabled Document 12-16(1): Adult Supported Living Facility In Hay River

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have two packages to table. The first package is a letter addressed to the Minister of Health and Social Services. It's called Adult Supportive Living Facility in Hay River and it's a letter written by People First of the NWT, signed by the president, Pierre Lafond, and attached to that package is their national newsletter.

#### Tabled Document 13-16(1): Northern Arts And Cultural Centre Funding Update - Including Reference Material

The second document I'd like to table today is a letter addressed to me, and I'm aware that all Members of the Assembly have received this package. It's a letter from the Northern Arts and Cultural Centre regarding funding updates and their concerns. Part of the package also includes a summary called Making the Case for Culture. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

#### Tabled Document 14-16(1): E-mail Message From Shaun Dean Regarding GNWT Messenger Services, Dated November 30, 2007

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table a document, an e-mail communication from the Department of Executive to the Legislative Assembly staff, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

#### Tabled Document 15-16(1): Member Of Parliament's Report On The Northern Diamond Industry

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a report by Dennis Bevington, Member of Parliament for Western Arctic, titled Diamonds are Forever, Our Mines are Not, which includes recommendations to improve and sustain the diamond mining industry. The report's end goal is to develop a long-term sustainable industry for the benefit of all northerners and contains recommendations directly relevant to GNWT. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to seeing this government's comments on the report and the responses to recommendations contained therein.

#### Tabled Document 16-16(1): Statutory Declaration Of Residence For: Mr. R. C. McLeod, Mr. D. Krutko, Mr. K. Menicoche, Mr. J. Jacobson, Mr. P. Delorey, Mrs. J. Groenewegen

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Tabling of documents. Pursuant to section 14 of the indemnities allowances and expenses regulations of the Legislative

Assembly and Executive Council Act, I hereby table the statutory declarations of residents of the following Members of the Legislative Assembly: Mr. Paul Delorey, Member for Hay River North, declaration dated November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007; Mrs. Jane Groenewegen, Member for Hay River South, declaration dated November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007; Mr. Robert C. McLeod, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, declaration dated November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007; Mr. David Krutko, Member for Mackenzie Delta, declaration dated November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007; Mr. Kevin Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh, declaration dated November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007; and Mr. Jackie Jacobson, Member for Nunakput, declaration dated November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Motions. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Reports of Committee of the Whole. Third reading of bills.

#### Speaker's Closing Remarks

Members, I would like to take a moment to thank the Pages who have assisted us this past week.

---Applause

We have had students from St. Patrick's High School and Sir John Franklin High School here in Yellowknife. Having our young people here in the Chamber and taking part in the work of the Assembly offers a visible connection to the youth and the future of our territory and our institution, and we appreciate their presence and the work that they do for us.

On a rather pressing matter, I would also like to take this opportunity to remind Members of the necessity to meet the reporting requirements of Elections NWT. I would hate to see any empty seats when we return to the House in February.

---Laughter

Although I may be premature, I would also like to publicly wish each and every one of you the very best of the holiday season. I know that your schedules are full. Committee meetings continue during the next week and on through the holidays; however, Cabinet will continue to meet their duties and we will all be very busy with constituency work, but we will not sit together again in this House until February of 2008. I will, therefore, take this opportunity to extend my very best wishes to you and your loved ones a joyous holiday season and a happy New Year.

I know we can all get up in the volume and the importance of the work that we do and I offer this advice to all of you: Ensure that you carve out some time to spend with your family and friends over the coming holiday season. I look forward to returning to our work in the New Year.

With that, Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain if the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Anthony J. Whitford, is prepared to enter the Chamber and prorogue the First Session of the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

### ITEM 22: PROROGATION

**COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. Tony Whitford):** Monsieur le president, monsieur



le premier ministre, messieurs et Mesdames les deputes, Mesdames et messieurs, et amis.

It is once again a pleasure and honour for me to be here and to prorogue this First Session of the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

Using this time for a few personal comments before I begin my formal duties, I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to the families and loved ones of the people we have lost over the past few months.

I particularly want to mention Willie Laserich, owner, operator and chief pilot of Adlair Aviation, who passed away on November 12<sup>th</sup>. Many northerners across the Northwest Territories and Nunavut owe their lives to Mr. Laserich and his crew of pilots and medevac nurses who have safely transported and cared for thousands of northerners over the years. In addition to this, Mr. Laserich and his family have operated a vital charter flight and freight hauling business for many years and is legendary. Some of you know that Mr. Laserich was often the first pilot in the air to begin searching for missing people in the Kitikmeot region. Now his sons, daughters, pilots and ground crew will continue this special legacy.

I would also like to offer condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of RCMP Constable Christopher Worden who was killed on duty in Hay River on October 6<sup>th</sup>. His tragic death has touched all citizens of the Northwest Territories and we grieve his loss tremendously.

Also in our thoughts and prayers, mine in particular, are the family and friends of Doris Lemouel Francheschi. Doris worked as an administrative assistant to three Commissioners over the years and brought great stability to our office.

On a happier note, I look forward to watching the important work of your new government coming together through sincerity and hard work for all northern people.

Being in politics is a difficult task, not just for you Members but for your families, as well. Without the support of your families, your jobs here would be much more difficult, if not impossible. To them, we all owe a great deal and I extend my admiration and gratitude to your families on behalf of all northerners.

The agenda you will set for yourselves will be ambitious, and your commitments to the people of the Northwest Territories will inspire each of you to do the very best work possible in the coming years.

Sometimes your deliberations will be difficult, but ultimately your work will serve to improve the North's general condition and have a positive effect on the lives of northerners.

Now, as we leave this House to return to our home communities for the holidays, I wish you safe and pleasant travels. As this House will not reconvene until the New Year, may I be the first, the second in this case, to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a healthy, peaceful, prosperous and safe New Year.

Prior to proroguing this First Session of the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, I wish to announce that the Second Session of the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly will convene on Wednesday, February 6, 2008, at 1:30 p.m.

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I hereby prorogue the First Session of the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

Thank you, merci, qnanami, mahsi cho.

---Applause

---PROROGATION

The House adjourned at 13:09.