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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Great Slave)

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(Tu Nedhe)

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**Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Monday, October 6, 2008**

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.

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

Prayer

Prayer.

Speaker (Hon. Paul Delorey): Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The Hon. Premier, Mr. Roland.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 87-16(2)
2008 FEDERAL ELECTION

Hon. Floyd Roland: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 14 Canadians will go to the polls to choose the next federal government. There has been a great deal of media attention paid to the campaign, to party leaders and platforms, and to the promises made to Canadians. Some of those promises, in areas such as the environment, taxation and economic development, will have a direct impact on the North.

During the past year the North has had a significant degree of media coverage and an unprecedented number of visits by the Prime Minister and other federal Ministers. Quite clearly, we are solidly on the national stage.

The federal election campaign provides an excellent opportunity to raise issues of importance to Northerners and to hear what the national parties, national leaders and local candidates have to say about them.

To this end, I have taken the opportunity to send letters to the national party leaders and to the candidates running in the Western Arctic riding, asking a series of questions about northern issues.

Mr. Speaker, I have asked the party leaders and local candidates for their plans to address the high cost of living in the North, the need for alternative energy to protect our northern environment while facilitating economic development, the need to assist the NWT in dealing with the effects of climate change, the need for critical infrastructure investment in the NWT, the need to address the critical shortage of social and affordable housing in

the NWT, federal obligations under existing land claim and self-government agreements, and the need for a fair deal on devolution and resource revenue sharing. These are priority issues for this government and for NWT residents.

I intend to keep this Assembly and aboriginal leaders informed of both the questions I have asked and the responses. All of this information will be posted on my website, The Premier Online — <http://www.premier.gov.nt.ca/> — for all NWT residents to read. I encourage them to do so. I would also like to encourage all Northerners to participate in the national election to the fullest extent possible.

Mr. Speaker, Northerners must make an informed decision on election day. Their decisions will have an impact on our collective future. As Premier I have raised our issues during this campaign to ensure that the NWT continues to be on the national stage and to build upon the foundation of work that we have undertaken to date with our federal partners.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 88-16(2)
CONGRATULATIONS TO FSC
ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS

Hon. Bob McLeod: Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate the management of FSC Architects and Engineers for being named as one of Canada's Top 100 Employers.

This architecture and engineering company, proven leaders and innovators in cold climate and remote location building, are now also proven leaders in employment. Committed to providing top level service to their clients, FSC owners concluded that this same service should be provided to their most important company assets: their staff. Management has worked hard to ensure that their staff has benefits that meet or exceed industry standards.

The competition specializes in employment. This year, I am told, was the most competitive since the inception of this project. This year's field of 2,000 competitors included large and small employers

from a wide range of industries offering varying benefits and working conditions. All the winners are leaders in their field at attracting and retaining quality employees. Criteria included physical workplace; work atmosphere; social, health, financial and family benefits; vacation and time off; employee communications; performance management; training and skills development; and community involvement.

Details showcasing these top 100 employers will be published in *Maclean's* magazine. This information should help other northern organizations, including our own, in developing their own human resource strategies.

In these challenging times, where competition for finding and keeping staff is critical to any organization, forward thinking employers like FSC are finding ways of improving working conditions for their employees and attracting and keeping top talent for their company and in the North.

Again, I'm sure the Members of this House will join me in congratulating FSC for this prestigious achievement. I would like to note that I am particularly proud that my son Warren McLeod is a key member of the FSC team, as well as Mr. Jerry Jaud, who is here today.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 89-16(2)
HONOURING OUR LAW
ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today we honour the memory of one of our own RCMP officers. Constable Chris Worden lost his life one year ago today while responding to a call in Hay River. Later today the RCMP will be adding his name to the cenotaph outside G Division headquarters in Yellowknife.

On behalf of our government I extend my condolences to the Worden family and to the brave officers who serve our communities so faithfully. This incident is a tragic reminder that serious crimes do happen here. All too often they are related to illegal drug trafficking and use.

In the past few months we have seen high profile drug seizures in Behchoko, Yellowknife, Hay River and Inuvik. The RCMP has also made seizures of drugs that were clearly headed to our smaller communities and to work camps.

We have a solemn duty to honour Christopher Worden's memory, not just when we speak about the events that led to his death but every day around our territory. We owe our officers a debt of gratitude. They need to know they are supported.

This government is taking the steps to ensure that the new backup policy is fully implemented.

In the North there is no such thing as a routine call. More and more often our officers are dealing with people who are carrying weapons or trafficking hard drugs like crack cocaine and ecstasy.

Drugs are a serious concern for our territory. They are certain paths to jail, heartache and family breakdowns. I have talked to many elders who have told me about family members who have destroyed their lives with illegal substances. Fighting drugs is a priority for this government.

Over the long term we are working towards increased police presence in all of our communities and to fully implementing the RCMP backup policy. But this is not something the RCMP can fix on their own. Fighting crime will take a community effort. It's easy to call for more policing, but the drug dealers will never go away as long as there are still people in our communities who are willing to buy drugs. This is going to take real effort from all of us. We need to refuse to buy drugs. We need to encourage our family members to go into treatment centres. We need to let the dealers know we don't want them to sell drugs in our communities.

Some of the dealers are from outside the NWT, but others are our own friends, neighbours and families. This government will support people who want to go into treatment, but we are also determined to get the drugs out of our communities.

We plan to open new RCMP detachments in Gameti and Wrigley and to increase the number of RCMP officers in our existing detachments that service remote communities. We will ensure the RCMP have adequate resources to make more patrols to our smaller communities. They are supported by specialty units like the police dogs and major crime units.

During my past year as Minister I have been consistently impressed by the dedication and professionalism of our RCMP. This government supports their effort to make our communities safer. Mahsi.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Ms. Lee.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 90-16(2)
FAMILY VIOLENCE AWARENESS WEEK

Hon. Sandy Lee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today at noon we officially launched Family Violence Week with the event planned by the Coalition Against Family Violence at the Great Hall. This year's theme is Honouring Resistance.

Family Violence Week was first sponsored in 1999 to bring the issues of family violence into the public arena, provide information on social service organizations that could provide help, and call attention to the toll that family violence takes on its victims and our society. We have come a long way since then, and I'd like to highlight phase 2 of the NWT Action on Family Violence, which is the result of much collaboration and commitment on the part of all partners in the coalition.

Our efforts have resulted in greater public awareness of the violence that goes on behind closed doors of a family home; legislation for emergency protection orders; the signing of a victim services protocol with the RCMP; the establishment of new victim referral services in Aklavik, Paulatuk, Behchoko, Gameti and Whati, in addition to existing services in Fort Good Hope, Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith and Inuvik; \$340,000 for enhanced funding for social services and \$450,000 for creating new services in regions where there is no family violence shelter; supporting the Children Who Witness Abuse Program at the YWCA; and enhancing existing services through the development of interagency family violence protocols, including the Yellowknife Interagency Family Violence Protocol, which was officially announced earlier today.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to building on its past successes, continuing the important work of preventing family violence, resisting violence and helping those who need our support to overcome the aftermath of family violence. I want to thank the individuals and organizations in the NWT who work day in and day out throughout the year with men, women and children in family violence situations to provide them with the support and assistance they need.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the Coalition Against Family Violence and the Status of Women Council of the NWT for spearheading the planning of activities for Family Violence Week over the past several years.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CABINET COMMUNICATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

Mr. Abernethy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last June I made a Member's statement about Cabinet communication and consensus government. As I indicated then, I believe in consensus government. I feel that it can and does work. However, for it to

be effective, it will take cooperation from all Members: those in Cabinet and those on this side of the House. Unfortunately, open two way communication and open dialogue does not always occur.

Toward the end of the May–June session I was optimistic that effective two way communication between Cabinet and the rest of us was going to be a reality. Since then there has been improved communication in some areas — unfortunately, not in all areas.

Specifically, I'm talking about the recent actions undertaken by the Premier with respect to advancing the devolution and resource revenue sharing negotiations with the federal government. I'm not criticizing the proposal the Premier has presented to the federal government. It may be a great deal. It may be the best deal that this territory can get. It may even be the right deal.

My problem is that we the 11 Regular Members of the 16th Legislative Assembly don't have or know any of the details of this proposal. Resource revenue sharing and devolution are incredibly important to the future of the Northwest Territories. As elected officials all 19 of us need to have input and provide some direction on where we as a territory go with respect to these issues. Unfortunately, we are once again being told by Cabinet what's being done. We are not included in decision-making and are not being permitted to work together in the best interest of the people of the Northwest Territories.

Today I'd like to encourage the Premier and Cabinet to think about the commitment each of them made during the first TLC of this Assembly: a commitment to work together. Further, I would like to remind you that membership on Executive Council is a privilege, and a four-year term is not guaranteed. Working together is critical for the success of this Legislature and consensus government.

At the appropriate time I'll be asking the Premier some questions on the status of the devolution and resource revenue sharing agreement between Cabinet and the federal government.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE HERITAGE FUND

Mr. Bromley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are mining our best sources of non-renewable resources, our richest mineral and fuel deposits and most valuable diamonds, as fast as we can with little regard to the future or our responsibility to nail down firm benefits for those who will come after.

Like many jurisdictions we face two main problems: resource prices can be highly volatile, and the resources are exhaustible. Also, of course, development can have significant negative social and environmental costs.

One opportunity to manage this is to establish a non-renewable permanent fund or heritage fund. This is typically a savings and investment fund established from the dollars government obtains from non-renewable resource development. A heritage fund will help the NWT to provide benefits from non-renewable resources for future generations who will not have these resources. It will give us better protection from boom and bust cycles, and it will provide a stable revenue source for the government. It can be used to help diversify our economy and ensure a stable economic base in the future when these resources are gone.

A recent study by the Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development established that the Canadian government has failed to maximize revenue generation, and they make poor use of the revenues they do generate from non-renewable resources. In their comparison of Alberta with Alaska and Norway, Pembina found that the funds of both Alaska, at \$40 billion, and especially Norway, at \$400 billion, provide significant benefits to their people. In contrast, Alberta's heritage fund at \$12 billion has stagnated and provides relatively little future security to their people. It's worth noting that production from the originally huge amounts of conventional oil and gas resources in Alberta has been declining now for years, and those resources are largely gone.

We do not have all the levy tools that many jurisdictions have, and our access to royalties is currently pitiful. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, we insist on being open for business and developing our resources as fast as possible, regardless of our ability to manage the impacts. Perhaps it's through our devolution discussions, perhaps through access to windfall profits enjoyed by the feds from our resources, possibly through an innovative resources tax, but please let's get off our butts. Instead of squandering the financial benefits from non-renewable resource development, let's take the example of jurisdictions that have done it the smart way and immediately establish a heritage fund for the future of our people. Mahsi.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CABINET COMMUNICATIONS
AND LEADERSHIP

Mr. Ramsay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to speak today about a growing concern that I have

with how this government communicates with both the Members of this Assembly and the public.

On Friday I made a statement and had questions for the Premier about how it came to be that the GNWT planned, developed and delivered a billion dollar cost shared infrastructure proposal to the federal government without running any of it by Regular Members of this House. Nor did they have any meaningful communication about it with aboriginal governments. I believe this is yet another sad chapter in this government's year-long existence.

This is not just a small oversight. It's a billion dollar substantive proposal to the federal government that Regular Members should have been consulted on. It's inexcusable. But, then again, should I or any other Regular Member be that surprised? This is the same Premier and government that failed to tell us about a signed concession agreement tying us to the Deh Cho Bridge when they knew it was signed off three days before the last election. This is the same Premier and government who told us that we would be consulted before any layoff notification letters were sent to affected employees. This is the same Premier and government that developed a list for the Building Canada Fund but forgot to consult with us. This is the same Premier and government that divvied up equal trust dollars without involving Regular Members.

Mr. Speaker, in my estimation, this government lacks sense to understand that loose communication, poor messaging and lack of coordination is going to erode public confidence and the confidence Regular Members have in this government. How many more times are we going to have to take issue with this government's lack of oversight and poor communication skills? Regular Members and the public deserve better treatment. This government just does not seem to understand or appreciate political sensitivity.

Mr. Speaker, the political barometer of this government is broken and in desperate need of repair. As a Regular Member I cannot and will not accept this poor treatment, especially its reoccurring nature. Regular Members cannot continue to be an afterthought of Cabinet. Mahsi.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
SYPHILIS OUTBREAK

Ms. Bisaro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NWT today is headed for a health crisis, one unknown to most of us. Sexually transmitted infections, or STIs, are unfortunately rather common in the NWT, but one in particular is not, nor is it common in other parts of Canada. That one is syphilis.

As of last Friday there were 18 confirmed cases of syphilis in the NWT. Compare that to a total of four cases in the NWT in the last 13 years. In early September health officials noted that five cases had been confirmed in the month previous. Added to the three already confirmed cases, that made a total of eight. Several weeks later another five cases were confirmed to bring the total to 13. And now another five cases brings it to 18 as of last Friday.

Why are we continuing to see an increase in the number of cases of syphilis in our territory and why in this day and age when it's easily cured? Eighteen cases to date for this year alone versus four cases in 13 years. There's something wrong here, Mr. Speaker.

I understand that the department is trying to track down anyone who has been infected or is at risk of infection and administer appropriate treatment, yet we are continuing to see an increase in the number of syphilis cases. What else is the Department of Health doing to halt this outbreak? Not enough, in my estimation.

A month ago there were some reports in the newspapers, and there is a warning of the outbreak hidden deep in the department's website. These actions are insufficient to really warn the public, to mobilize residents who may be at risk. A major education and publicity campaign is warranted, Mr. Speaker.

Early last month the department refused to identify the two NWT communities where the syphilis cases have been reported, in spite of the fact that patient confidentiality is guaranteed. Syphilis is an infection, and it has disastrous consequences if not treated. People die from this infection. It is easily cured, however, if you know you have it. The department should be doing more to highlight which residents are at risk and which residents should consider getting themselves tested. An STI can be stopped in its tracks as long as everyone who has been infected gets treated. It's time the Department of Health took aggressive action to stop this outbreak.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NTPC GENERAL RATE APPLICATION

Mr. Menicoche: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, the NTPC general rate increase for 2008, I'd like to address this burning issue for Nahendeh residents: a proposed increase in power rates to the NWT smaller communities. I have long been a champion of a standard flat rate system. That's right: a one rate power zone. This, I believe, brings fairness and equality to all NWT residents in

regard to having an essential service, electricity, in all our homes, the same access and the same benefits no matter where you live in our NWT.

One year ago I asked the Public Utilities Board and the NTPC to have the general rate hearing for their general rate application in our small communities to hear and see for themselves the concerns from the community based residents. But they did not. Now we see that the most impacted residents in this general rate application are the small communities. I feel they still do not have a voice. I object to the increased rates.

Why does this Crown corporation go straight to the people who have the highest cost of living to have them pay more? I think the current process, the proposed general rate increase, should be delayed and deferred. Above all, I ask that the NTPC first review their operation costs and their bonus clauses before coming to the people's pocketbooks.

We MLAs are asking the same from this government. Make sure that the House is in order, and demonstrate to the people that you can do more for them, not the people do more for government. Mahsi cho.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON YOUTH PROGRAMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Beaulieu: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, many times over my first year as MLA for Tu Nedhe I spoke of our lack of programs and infrastructure for youth at the community level, specifically in my riding. On September 8, 2008, I attended the grade 12 graduation in Fort Resolution, where six graduates were honoured. This year's graduation brings the total to 27 since grade extension started in Fort Resolution in 1999.

Of the 21 students who have graduated prior to this year, 18 of them have gone on to post-secondary education or landed themselves good paying jobs. Our youth have continued to move forward to do what they can to better themselves, even with the limited opportunities in our smaller communities. However, our government has not effectively responded to the needs of the youth in the smaller communities.

Mr. Speaker, in the budget of this government we have not provided any infrastructure, any substantial operating and maintenance dollars specifically targeted for youth in small communities. I have asked the government to think strategically to turn things around for the youth and provide the youth every opportunity possible to improve their

lives and to help them become productive members of society. I feel that the government is unable to see beyond this term of office and therefore is unable to think long term and strategically when it comes to curing the ills of our society through youth improvements.

Mr. Speaker, as the government we have not responded to the youth issues we have all heard about in the news. To put this in simple terms, we need to work with the youth, give them something constructive to do, or they will find something to do on their own. Usually these are not productive or community building but, rather, damaging and counterproductive choices. Later on this week I will have questions for the Minister responsible for Youth.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROPOSED DEVOLUTION AND RESOURCE REVENUE SHARING MODEL

Mr. Krutko: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the sessional statement given by the Premier I was alarmed to find out that recently there had been a significant proposal offered to the federal government in regard to discussions on devolution, resource revenue sharing, seeking inclusion of Northerners, yet the proposal talks about infrastructure partnership with Canada.

Also, in regard to the integrated part, after looking at the overall devolution and resource revenue sharing deal.... That deal wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for the land claim agreements that have been negotiated over the last 30 years. In the Gwich'in agreement it clearly states:

"The Government of the Northwest Territories shall involve the Gwich'in in the development and implementation of any Northern Accord on oil and gas development in the Northwest Territories which [had been] negotiated pursuant to the enabling agreement, dated September 5, 1988, between [the Government of] Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories."

This land claim agreement has precedence over the Legislative Assembly, yet we find out again that this government is totally ignoring the land claim agreements, the aboriginal organizations who have these agreements and, more importantly, the political partnerships we say we have in place between ourselves and aboriginal governments. I spoke to the president of the Gwich'in Tribal Council, who didn't hear anything in regard to this matter, was not consulted and was not even aware that this proposal exists.

I believe that as a government we have to do a better job of being transparent, open and up front with our so called partners. More importantly, the Members of this Legislative Assembly should not be caught off guard by a sessional statement, by a deal that is supposedly worth a billion dollars. We're told there are going to be layoffs, there are going to be tax increases and nowhere was this put on the table.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking questions of the Premier on this matter.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROPOSED TAXATION MEASURES

Mr. Jacobson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have listened to Members talk during the previous days about concerns of residents in the communities. I have attended many community meetings and listened to briefings about programs and services of the government. The Minister of Finance has released a discussion paper called Revenue Options. It is unlikely the residents of Ulukhaktok, Sachs Harbour, Paulatuk and Tuktoyaktuk will read this discussion paper.

The Minister of Finance held a round table discussion for two days last week in Yellowknife. I know that no one from any of my communities participated in this workshop. It is also unlikely that many of these community residents will send in their comments to the Minister.

So it seems to me we come from different situations as Northerners. Some people come from places of abundance and wealth; some people come from small northern communities where even a high income does not go very far. Having a good job in small communities does not guarantee that the government will actually deliver basic services.

Mr. Speaker, the residents in my communities expect me to convince government to not make it any more difficult to live in small communities. The Northerners in the communities expect me to convince the government that residents of small northern communities need help from this government.

I am talking about our hopes of basic services — to have a health centre with a nurse, roads of gravel, housing for teachers, safe drinking water. The incomes of our families are not high, Mr. Speaker. Our young men and women are not able to easily find high paying jobs. The cost of living in our communities is high. Our fuel costs are set by the Petroleum Products Division.

I don't think the government is going to find a way to reduce the costs. I don't think the Minister is

going to find immigrants who want to move to Nunakput communities. If the economy grows in the communities, it will be because of the oil and gas industry, not because of something the GNWT does.

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

Unanimous consent granted.

Mr. Jacobson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. We doubt that if the GNWT collects more money from its citizens any of the money will find its way to Nunakput communities. It seems to be the right time to ask, to let the Minister know what we think. We think we are not able to pay more taxes on our fuel, on our groceries, on our incomes. We think that would be very unfair. We need to take interest in our small communities to help us maintain our services and make it possible for families to live in northern communities.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CABINET COMMUNICATIONS
AND LEADERSHIP

Mrs. Groenewegen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been listening to my colleagues here today talking about the lack of communication with Regular Members on this side. I have been in this government now for four terms. I have never seen it worse than it is right now. I am feeling extremely discouraged, to be honest. I hate to admit discouragement, but I feel discouraged.

Any time we offer an opinion or any kind of criticism, even if we try to be constructive on this side of House, it seems to be met with, so early in this term, almost kind of a mocking arrogance from the other side of the House — the demeanour, the talking, the laughing when we are trying to share things that are really important. We're not here just for a good time; we are here to get something done.

I think everybody here could be doing something different, but we are here because we feel we have something to offer and something to contribute and something to bring to the table on behalf of Northerners. Every time we talk like this, it seems, I could say we get met with this kind of mocking laughter from the other side of the House. Well, I'm telling you, I don't think they think over there that we will do anything about this situation. I think that is why they can sit there and laugh at it; I don't think they think we will do anything about it.

We all got on board the good ship Government when we got elected a year ago. But I'm sorry; the government has got its sails down. We are going

nowhere fast. The petty little bits of legislation that come before us: if that's the agenda of the government, that's pretty sad, and it is out of touch with the realities facing the North. We have big problems. We have big issues out there, and we are just taking this kind of, I don't know, stargazing approach.

Maybe I'm not in touch. I'd sure like to hear from Northerners about how they feel this government is performing. My sense from within this government here, sitting at this table, is that we haven't even raised the sail on this government yet. We're just tossing about to and fro with no real direction. I don't want to be part of that. I don't want to be on that side of the House. I want to be here, but I want to feel that the input I have, the energy I have to bring to this job is meaningful and respected and will actually get some results.

We do have an issue here. I would be very interested in hearing from the folks out there in the public about what they think of this government. This is not a bureaucratic exercise. We are the leaders; we are the visionaries, so let's get the sails up.

Mr. Speaker: Thanks, Ms. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
COOKING TRADE RED SEAL
TRAINING PROGRAM

Mr. Hawkins: Thank you Mr. Speaker. In May of this year I raised the issue of the lack of trades programs in the field of cooking here in the North. At the same time, I also talked about the opportunities and solutions we have right here. However, in typical fashion, it seems that maybe another good idea has been lost in the grumbling bowels of government. What continues to be obvious to me is that there still are many gaps that need to be filled in our trades programming for those who want to learn more.

That is why, more than ever, a Red Seal trades cooking program needs to be supported. There is a hunger out there, Mr. Speaker, to learn, to teach and, most certainly, to be fed. There's a high demand for certified cooks in our diamond mines, exploration camps and certainly in the food service industry in our communities.

I ask the government: what additional signals are you looking for? Because if you need something to be made more obvious, I'm sure many of us here will get them for you. This sector truly is not being served. The demand for skilled cooks will only increase as government watches maybe even the Mackenzie pipeline go by with no one to train to send to their camps.

We all know there is a camp cook training program at our rural college, but this is an entry level program, Mr. Speaker. It does not provide the necessary training for a fully licensed cook in a Red Seal tradesperson program. I believe we need to extend the cook training program opportunities here in the North. We have the facilities here in Yellowknife; they are just sitting idle waiting for students. We have journeymen, we have journeymen, we have journeymen who want to teach their skills, but we have no government support to back them up, and we certainly won't have any students for them to teach.

Let's not waste this opportunity. Government, I hope you're listening. The potential is sitting idly by. They certainly want to learn. I've had the opportunity to take the Education Minister down to see this facility here in Yellowknife, and there is promise, Mr. Speaker. There is certainly promise for the next generation, because it shows that it wants to learn. So let's unlock these doors, not keep them locked. We have industry that wants to be part of the solution. Where's the Minister helping them? Bring them to the table, I say.

We have the people, we have the skills, we have the teachers, but we now need government. The next step is easy. Let's flip into gear before this opportunity boils over and is lost. I will have questions for the Education Minister later today.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APPRECIATION TO COLLEAGUES AND CONSTITUENTS ON SELECTION TO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Mr. McLeod: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today this Assembly placed a vote of confidence in me by electing me to a seat on the Executive Council. I truly am grateful for that, and I'm humbled by that. I will do my utmost to carry on the good work of the Regular Members and the Members of this House.

I want to use what is possibly my last statement as a Regular Member to assure my constituents back in Inuvik Twin Lakes that I will continue to press their issues while I'm down here. One thing I have noticed over the last couple of years I have been here is that a lot of issues that Members on this side of the House bring up are common to all communities across the Northwest Territories. The issues that are common will continue to be brought up by Regular Members. I will continue to and I commit to work with constituents in dealing with all the constituency issues that come forward. I just want to use this opportunity to let them know that I

am always available. I will continue to fight for the constituents of Inuvik Twin Lakes.

Again, colleagues, I thank you for your vote of confidence today. I go back to the Member's Conduct Guidelines that we all signed, and I take that quite seriously. I know we have discussions here on "this side, that side," "we, they" and "us, them." I said this morning that I believe in the principles of consensus government. I think we have to look at it sometimes as "we" instead of so much as "us" and "them." I think we should work towards that.

The Member's Conduct Guidelines that I always point back to has a statement in there that says, "To my colleagues, I owe fairness and respect for our differences and the duty to work together with goodwill for the common good." I truly believe in that. I think that as an Assembly, even though we do have our differences, we try to work towards the common good of people in the Northwest Territories. I will continue to do that no matter what side of the House I sit on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Jacobson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am honoured to have constituents all the way from Tuktoyaktuk, my good friends Francis Andersen and his brother David. Andersens, welcome to the house. Also Charlene Steen and her daughter Kailey. Also Mrs. Shannon Steen. Her father was a past Minister and MLA for Nunakput, Mr. Vince Steen. Welcome to the House.

Hon. Bob McLeod: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Warren McLeod and Jerry Jaud, principals of FSC Architects and Engineers, one of Canada's top 100 employers.

Mr. Bromley: I would like to recognize Richard Edjericon, Weledeh resident, and I believe Jerry Jaud is also a resident of Weledeh.

Ms. Lee: I would like to recognize Blake Rasmussen, a well known individual from Old Town, I think, and also from my high school grad. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Lee. If we missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the House. Hope you are enjoying the proceedings. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 420-16(2) COOKING TRADE RED SEAL TRAINING PROGRAM

Mr. Hawkins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During my Member's statement today I talked about the issue of elevating our trades program. I highlighted the issue that we have a perfectly good facility here in this community that could raise the standard from just regular cook to a Red Seal tradesperson. I am wondering what the Education Minister has to say about that here today. I have taken him down to that facility in person on a tour, and I know he liked it. I would like to know what the Minister has done since the last time I took him on a tour to help raise and elevate this type of program in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, we did tour the facility the Member is referring to as having potential for a cooking program. It is one of those programs that is often needed throughout the North and also throughout Canada.

The Member made a statement about the lack of support from the government. Mr. Speaker, we do support all kinds of training programs, apprentices and at the professional level as well. We're very proud of that. Also, since we met with Chef Pierre, there has been some ongoing discussion within my department, and my department has met with the chef as well. Mahsi.

Mr. Hawkins: I'm glad to hear that the Minister supports trades, and I'm glad to hear that the Minister supports the potential of this program. When do you think we can actually hear or see something coming to fruition on this project? It's an opportunity before us, and I'd certainly like to see the Minister move on this sooner than later. Can I expect something sooner than later from this Minister?

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: Since June of this past summer my department has been working closely with Chef Pierre. They also toured the facility. They did talk about the proposal coming forward from Chef Pierre and also asked questions on the accreditation program. That is supposed to be forthcoming.

At the same time, there is also great news from the Mine Training Society. There was a proposal submitted by Chef Pierre, in partnership with the Native Women's Association, to deliver a camp cook program. That is one of partnerships that has

always been successful in the past working with the Mine Training Society. It is an 18 week program and involves the Ready to Work program, which consists of income assistance clients. That is a positive step as well.

Those are the ongoing discussions that we're having. It is looking good, and we are going to deliver programs through these partnerships. Mahsi.

Mr. Hawkins: I'm aware of the many journeymen and women that Chef Pierre has at his business downtown. It could become the new Red Seal training program for trades cooking. They have many tickets under their belt, and they're able to train under many aspects of cooking.

It's good to hear that the accreditation is being worked through. What else is holding this back, or when can we expect a big announcement from the Minister that we're able to move forward on this initiative?

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: I thought I just announced a huge initiative here on the training program.

I think this is a great start for us as a department, the GNWT, the Mine Training Society and also the partnership with the NWT Native Women's Association. It's a true partnership, and it will move forward. Again, it's an 18 week program.

With this accreditation program we're still waiting for Chef Pierre to get back to my department and discuss further the next level, because this is one area that we're focusing on as a department. The proposal has been submitted to the Mine Training Society, and they are moving forward on this. We're watching and monitoring that carefully. We have to work with those partnerships as well, instead of just one partner. Those are the discussions that we're having with various parties.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Mr. Hawkins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I did hear the Minister cite a camp cook program with the Mine Training Society, but that's not the Red Seal program that I've talked about and that he knows I'm referring to.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to be clear on the record today. Is this department fully committed to getting a Red Seal trades program for cooking here in the North, and are they fully committed and behind this project to make sure it will happen?

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: To date we have 4,683 individuals that have been certified through apprenticeship programs. We should be proud of that here in the Northwest Territories. We continue to deliver those effective programs. Camp cook or

the cook apprentices could be one of them. We need more information from Chef Pierre and his resource people to provide the accreditation so we can move forward. Mahsi.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 421-16(2)
POWER CORPORATION
GENERAL RATE APPLICATION

Mr. Menicoche: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation with regard to the general rate application increase for 2008.

Once again, as in my Member's statement, I said that residents disagree. I'm here to ask the Minister: is there a way to delay or defer this process until we get a good review of the NWT Power Corporation? Another way of doing business there is to look at reducing the operating costs. Can the Minister address that? Mahsi.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Roland.

Hon. Floyd Roland: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is there an opportunity to delay this? No, there is not an opportunity, as it's been filed with the PUB and they'll go through their process. The fact is that it is dealing with the cost of fuel for previous months and having to make up the shortfall. The more we delay, the cost to the Power Corporation itself continues to climb, and we're going to have to deal with that. That's where we are in that scenario. Within the existing operating environment that we have, the Power Corporation has to make up for its operational needs, and the rate base is the only way to do that. We're working through that process.

Are there ways of dealing with the cost of the Power Corporation? I believe there are. Through the Ministerial Energy Coordinating Committee we're looking at a number of options with the Power Corporation, as well as just how we deal with the issue of energy production in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Menicoche: I really believe that there's got to be another way of doing this, that the Power Corporation is the one that submits the general rate application. They must have the ability to at least look at their operating costs to be able to determine some savings there, some efficiencies, and then use those internalized savings to pass on to the customers. Then maybe there is an increase, but it doesn't have to be straight to the pocketbooks of our NWT residents.

Hon. Floyd Roland: I believe we just recently sent out a package to all Members of the Assembly on how the rate base is structured in their communities, from those communities that are on diesel, those that are on hydro, the administration costs, the amortization costs and interest costs on loans. All of that was put together to show Members just how much and to what percentage certain activities take up of that rate structure that impacts communities. That is one thing we're doing; we're looking at those costs. The Power Corporation, whenever it goes to the PUB, has to justify its operational requirements. That's another method of looking at it.

Overall, I believe we have to, as the Legislative Assembly, set some direction in the area of the operation of the Power Corporation and how the Public Utilities Board looks at that. We're prepared to sit down with Members and go through a whole list of initiatives that we're looking at. Hopefully, if Members are in agreement through the business planning process, we'll be able to come up with some options that we can put forward during the life of this Assembly.

Mr. Menicoche: I don't think residents of Nahendeh believe that for a minute, because we have two distinct different operating communities. We've got South Lake, which uses a different utility provider, and then you've got a community like Nahanni Butte, which uses NTPC, and their rates are almost a dollar different there. How can that be? That's why I believe in an internalized review of the NWT Power Corporation. How our people pay for this cost should be reviewed and internalized before we ask for an increase in rates for all the communities. I'd like the Minister to see if he can do that.

Hon. Floyd Roland: Under the direction of the Public Utilities Board rate structure is the process that's used. PUB has said that the Legislative Assembly has to give direction in that area. If the Assembly wants to look at how it addresses that, that's the initiative we're prepared to sit down and talk about and bring forward to Members for further discussion and hopefully some decisions.

For the actual program itself, doing an internal review, I believe we are going to do that through the whole energy initiative of how we develop power, how we distribute it and some of the alternative sources of energy that are out there. We're prepared to go to committee with a lot more detail and try to see where there's support for moving ahead on some of these initiatives.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Mr. Menicoche: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Does the Minister know if a part of the

general rate application community hearings — I think that's what they're proposing — will be in some of our smaller communities, in particular the Nahendeh communities?

Hon. Floyd Roland: The Power Corporation doesn't itself select what communities they go into. It's through the PUB. They've set up a process and how others can also feed into that system of their review. I don't have a list with me at this time. We can work with the Minister responsible for the PUB and provide that for Members. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 422-16(2)
SYPHILIS OUTBREAK

Ms. Bisaro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It should come as no surprise today that my questions are directed to the Minister of Health. As I mentioned in my statement, we have 18 confirmed cases of syphilis, as of last Friday, in 2008 alone. Compare that to less than one case last year and four in the last 13 years. My question to the Minister is: why do we have this continuing increase in the number of syphilis cases in our territory? Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Hon. Sandy Lee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to make sure everyone knows that the Department of Health and Social Services and myself as Minister take any infectious disease situation very seriously, as we do the latest outbreak of syphilis. It appears that there were a number of individuals with syphilis that were highly contagious at the time of contact.

The public health medical officer, chief medical health officer Dr. Corriveau, is using all of his authority and powers to assess the situation, identify who has this infectious disease and track all those that may have come into contact with it. We are keeping a very close eye on that, and he is working with the local health centres and communities and the media to raise awareness to address this situation.

Ms. Bisaro: I thank the Minister for the comment. I recognize the efforts of the department, as she's outlined. I'm having great difficulty in understanding why the department thinks these actions are enough. I feel that they're very understated.

Again, my question is to the Minister. Why is the department not taking aggressive action to publicize this threat to our residents, alert them to the potential risk, and provide them with information on access to testing?

Hon. Sandy Lee: The chief medical officer and the department have been very aggressive. It has been on the media and in public announcements. They are working on the ground, in the communities. They're in close touch with all of the community health workers. They're screening potential people who might come into contact with it. They're keeping track of who are the originators and who they're having contact with. They have very good information about their whereabouts and their travel schedules. They have sent out communications through doctors and nurses and anybody else who would have any contact with the individuals. We are very aggressive in getting on top of this latest syphilis outbreak.

Ms. Bisaro: I guess we have to agree to disagree on the definition of aggressive. It's been more than a month since the first sort of spurt of confirmed cases came forward. We now have 18 cases, and the cases are continuing to increase. I trust the Minister that there is action happening, that we have professionals doing their job, that things are going forward and that the work is being done to try and stifle this outbreak.

My personal experience is that I have seen nothing except a report in the newspaper some three or four weeks ago. If there is a publicity campaign, it's not that noticeable. I would like the Minister to try to explain to me what the actions are that the department is taking that is alerting everybody to the current outbreak.

Hon. Sandy Lee: The department and the chief medical health officer have contacted all the communities where we know these cases are occurring. They are using social networks on the ground. Some of our health care professionals are going door to door with community people who we know are able to provide assistance in a culturally sensitive way. We are doing aggressive screening for those who are in a high risk group.

I would like the Member to know that the chief medical health officer has vast authority and power under the new Public Health Act. He knows he has all the options available to him, and he will use his power and exercise it accordingly. At the moment he feels that the measures we are taking right now are allowing us to have very good knowledge about who these people are and where they are and what their potential contact might have been. So I want to assure the Members as well as the public that this is a top public health issue right now and that we're doing everything we can to be on top of it.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

Ms. Bisaro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. I appreciate that those actions are being taken on the ground, but I go back to the need to

publicize this particular situation. I think that if people are aware that there is an outbreak of syphilis and if people know that they are particularly engaging in behaviours which can lead them to be at risk, then that information has to be out there. I think a much more aggressive publicity campaign and educational campaign is warranted. I'd like to know if the Minister and department are considering that.

Hon. Sandy Lee: Mr. Speaker, the department works all year round to promote and encourage safe sex. The use of condoms would prevent most contagious, sexually infectious diseases, including syphilis. We are aware that these conditions are occurring more commonly in certain areas than others. Health officials are aware of that. But we want to make sure that everybody in the Territories is vigilant and taking necessary steps, and if we announce what areas they might be in, they may think that they're safe. So we would like all residents to know that this is a highly contagious infection and that everybody should be practising safe sex at all times. The use of condoms is encouraged.

As the situation progresses, we will take all measures under the Public Health Act, which is quite vast in its authority and power, and we'll make sure that we protect public health and safety.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 423-16(2)
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE
HERITAGE FUND

Mr. Bromley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We obviously are making a lot of decisions here about our future, and we are dealing with issues as a result of previous governments that have made decisions that are affecting our current situation. What is this government doing to establish long term financial benefits from the investment in or from the use of our resources, such as diamonds and oil and gas? What efforts are we putting in to establishing a heritage fund for our future?

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Hon. Michael Miltenberger: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue of a heritage fund has been now around the Legislature since at least the 15th Assembly. We've raised this issue. I raised it at the round table. It was raised in my fiscal overview of the government. Work is underway to come forward with a discussion paper to lay out some of the options for a heritage fund that would be, I would suggest, set up by statute, by legislation. There are some very strong models to look at. We have the Norway model. We have the Alaska model. We

looked at what Alberta has done. Pick the best and come forward with a discussion paper.

Clearly, there's a recognition that we have to start saving for the future. We have to think past the life of each particular Assembly. If all of us had gone through our working lives without having forced savings, when it came time to retire, we would have no pensions, because we'd have spent every cent we have today. We have to think of our grandchildren and future generations. This government is very interested in working with the Assembly to come forward with what would be a good model for the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Bromley: Thank you for those comments. If all interests and intentions, as the Minister has said, have been here since the 15th Assembly, I want to know what we are doing about getting this done. Currently this government is not shy about insisting and pressuring the assistance panel to make decisions on project developments. We are not shy about prejudging development projects as no-brainers. We can't develop our resources fast enough. All of those benefits are leaving the Northwest Territories. We needed this fund established in the 15th Assembly. Here we are in the 16th. What are we doing to actually get it done?

Hon. Michael Miltenberger: In the next few weeks there will be a proposal brought forward for review. It is being worked on right now in Finance. We are very serious about this. There are clearly things we have to consider about such a fund, and we have to be prepared not only to establish it but to look at how we want to have some initial seed capital put in it at a time when we are struggling to make ends meet, as it were. But within the next few weeks there will be a document brought forward from Cabinet to committee so we can talk about the type of fund to set up, whether it should be in legislation and what the particulars of that type of legislation should be.

Mr. Bromley: There we are talking about it again. I really want to get this fund established. I'm wondering if the government is investigating, for example, Norway's special tax that ensures that excess profits from resource development companies go to the government for the benefit of the people or the production tax that's used by the state of Alaska. What are we doing on the ground?

Hon. Michael Miltenberger: We are going to pull together a considered paper that's going to be shared with the Regular Members, having heard very clearly once again in the House the need to communicate and consult before significant decisions are made. That work is underway, and we will be moving forward on that in the next number of weeks.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

Mr. Bromley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister for those comments. It's nice to hear that something is happening — still not sure what. We're going to hear something in the next few weeks. What exactly are we going to hear in the next few weeks? And what will be the schedule for putting that in place, getting it done?

Hon. Michael Miltenberger: I am particularly taken with work that was done in Norway, the fact that they set up a fund in legislation that's politically tamper proof. It's not tied to consolidated general revenue. The parameters of what can be done to it, how it can be done are very clear. The money is kept separate, and all the petroleum, oil and gas revenues go into that fund.

There are other ones to look at. Alaska and Alberta are two. The biggest one in the world is Abu Dhabi, which is almost \$800 billion. The one in Norway is about \$380 billion. So there are things we can learn. We want to set up the best one, tailored for the North, which, I would suggest, we would want to have set up in legislation so that, in fact, it is separate and politically tamper proof, but that is a discussion we have yet to have.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

QUESTION 424-16(2)
PROPOSED DEVOLUTION AND
RESOURCE REVENUE SHARING MODEL

Mr. Abernethy: My questions today are for the Premier. On September 29 it came to our attention that on August 22 the GNWT proposed a ten year partnership agreement with the federal government in which the two governments would cost share and determine priorities for a \$1 billion investment in the economic infrastructure of the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, I would like the Premier to tell me when he and Cabinet developed the proposal, and given the importance of devolution and resource revenue sharing, why did he not engage with and discuss the proposal with Regular Members prior to making the offer to the federal government?

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The Hon. Premier, Mr. Roland.

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, when I first announced that we'd be prepared to put devolution resource revenue sharing on the back burner, I got some negative feedback on that process. We had ongoing discussions with regional aboriginal leadership and in fact looked at the opportunities when we had meetings with the Prime Minister. I've had meetings with the Prime Minister to talk about

looking at other options, because the option that was on the table, which Members are fully aware of, was not something we would consider to be adequate here in the Northwest Territories.

Also, Members know that I've talked to him a number of times, trying to get a deal with the federal government on, for example, the Mackenzie Valley Highway. So putting those together, looking at an infrastructure plan, it's a framework that's been put out there, floated out there, and we're working on trying to keep that door open. Of course, no discussions are happening at this time until we know what the results of the federal election will be.

I've informed Members, through communication of letters, to let them know of the proposal and the meeting with the Prime Minister. Hopefully, we'll be able to give more detail as we see the results of the election and find out just where this will go.

Mr. Abernethy: Yes, I remember when it was suggested that devolution and resource revenue sharing were off the agenda. We all were obviously concerned, and we pushed for him to get it on, and it's on. That's good; that's fantastic. What I'm talking about is a proposal that has now gone forward to the feds. We don't know anything about it. We don't know the details. We didn't find out until September 29, which was 38 days after you made the proposal to the federal government.

I'm still curious, and this is going to go back to my first question. Why wasn't this information on the specifics of this proposal shared with us prior to making that proposal to the federal government?

Hon. Floyd Roland: Just earlier in the Member's statement I was told to put the sails up and get moving, and now I'm being told to put the sails down and park it until I get word by word discussion with my colleagues.

Yes, we should have gotten the information to you sooner. In this case, because of the time frame, trying to get all the pieces together in a sense of regional leadership, getting that piece, having the Prime Minister come up to the Northwest Territories and trying to fit it in the schedule, I didn't have an opportunity to share that with Members. I guess I'll have to wear that one, as well, on the process that we've been involved with.

The Member himself has said this may be the right process, the right thing and what we need in the Northwest Territories, but the process is bad, so maybe we should just stop and not move forward on this. So I've got clear signals from Members of the Assembly. We've got residents out there saying it should move ahead. We've got a need for more revenue on the table, and I'm trying to build a bridge to get to that location.

Mr. Abernethy: I'm hardly suggesting it's time to take down the sails. I share my other colleagues' advice: it's time to get the sails up, and it's time for us to move forward. What I'm simply suggesting is that when it comes to something as important as resource revenue sharing and devolution, it's important to keep us all on the same page, which I don't feel actually occurred in this case. I mean, I would like to know the details.

I guess the second question, since I really didn't get the first question answered, is: when are we going to get the full description of what this proposal entails and what the benefits and the negative aspects of the deal are for us in the Northwest Territories?

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, as I've written to Members and told them, this is a framework. There is not much more detail than what I've already given Members on the framework. It is an avenue to open the door for further discussion with the federal government. It includes a partnership among the federal government, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the private sector. I've given that to Members. We've been working on trying to schedule a meeting with Members. I'm open to when the Members confirm a meeting date. I believe we do have some time set aside here in the very near future.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

Mr. Abernethy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to hear that. Given that we're all supposed to be equal partners in working towards the best interests of the people of the Northwest Territories, I'd like the Premier to commit to working with the Members on this side of the House and providing us with timely, upfront information in the future when it comes to items such as resource revenue sharing and devolution, as well as any other big picture items that the government might be proceeding with in the future.

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, Members make a point of how I haven't communicated with Regular Members on quite a regular basis, and a number of examples were given. But we have listened to Members. We've approached Members with some solutions to some of the concerns that were raised. We'll continue to do that — to work with Members to try to come up with the options.

But, Mr. Speaker, one of the things I need to do before going to Members is to see if there's even any appetite from the federal government, in this case, for a solution. Otherwise, I'd be wasting Members' time by coming and saying: here's an idea; what do you think? And then I'd have the federal government say no to it. Right now the door

has been opened, and we can have further discussion on this. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 425-16(2)
PROPOSED DEVOLUTION AND
RESOURCE REVENUE SHARING MODEL

Mr. Ramsay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to continue on with the line of questioning that my colleague Mr. Abernethy had. It gets back to the cost shared infrastructure proposal that the government put on the table.

Going back to what the Premier mentioned on Friday, I can understand that they have to get on with things. They have to do things. Move and move quickly, I think were the words the Premier used. Again, I understand that. But you don't develop a substantive proposal, a framework as he calls it, overnight.

I'd like to ask the Premier: who put the proposal together?

Hon. Floyd Roland: I hope I get most of the response here right, as I didn't quite hear the last part of the question. But I'll try and respond to what I did hear.

The work that's been ongoing originally started with an opportunity to sit down with the Prime Minister. I had about 20 minutes with him to give him the idea that we needed to look at other options, to put on record with the Prime Minister that the deal that was put forward by Finance Canada during the last government and that seems to carry on through this government wasn't satisfactory, that we were not prepared to go there, but there are other options that we could work on. At that point we felt there was enough uptake on the idea that there may be some other options, and we started putting some ideas together.

One of the other things that I spoke regularly about during my time as Premier for the Northwest Territories was about the Mackenzie Valley Highway. So I've put those two together as a possible option.

Mr. Ramsay: The best I can cobble together from the correspondence that was provided to Members and the timeline.... I think this framework was presented to the Prime Minister in Inuvik. That would have happened at the same time the Members of this Legislature were at the Gwich'in health and wellness camp just outside of Inuvik.

The question that I have: if the Premier, as the leader of our government, is going to make a substantive offer or a proposal to the Prime Minister

while he's in our backyard, why wouldn't he at least tell us that he was doing that, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the meeting's happening and the time frame we did.... Again, I go back to the fact that I needed to have an idea that the federal government would take this up and carry it forward and on that basis feel comfortable that we could proceed.

Notification that the Prime Minister was travelling up was rather short, and as Members were aware, trying to get some time set aside to actually have a one on one about the Northwest Territories with the Prime Minister was quite difficult. That doesn't give any excuse to the fact that we were there. And, yes, at caucus I probably should have put that on the table and shared that letter with them before it went to him.

Mr. Ramsay: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Premier for that. I do believe that at the very least he had an obligation to tell the Members who were in Inuvik at the time that this was taking place. That didn't happen, and that's unfortunate.

From the time the proposal was made until Members were notified was, I think, 38 days. Again, I don't understand why, if we're making a substantive proposal like that, it would take 38 days to let Members know.

In his comments to me on Friday the Premier also stated that he was looking forward to getting together with the committee to go over some of this. Are we going to get the framework in its entirety or just what the government wants us to see, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the letter I sent to Members has what we have on the table. We can share all the information about how we came up with this number in the hope of having something further. I would rather do it that way than try to get into a process here and have the federal government decide: well, they're discussing it there, and there's no real commitment and no use having any further discussion. I'm ready to share all the information we have, and I believe we have given that to the Members. But we can go through it in more detail or have more questions at that point as well as to what we've put on the table and what we hope to achieve.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Mr. Ramsay: Mr. Speaker, it just gets back to my first question. I'm not sure if the Premier heard the end of that first question, so I will ask that one again. I'm just wondering: who put the framework together for the Government of the Northwest Territories to be presented to the federal government?

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, the Executive and a number of the other departments that have the information pulled this together. We worked with a number of other people who had access and could give us information on times, and we pulled that together. But it was pretty well done internally on this one.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

QUESTION 426-16(2) PROPOSED TAXATION MEASURES

Mr. Jacobson: Mr. Speaker, just to remind the government that Nunakput has all the oil and gas to drill that proposed pipeline. To the Minister of Finance: will the Minister agree to consult with Nunakput residents and organizations before he makes revenue decisions?

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Hon. Michael Miltenberger: Mr. Speaker, the work we're doing will be brought forward, as I have committed to in the House, through the business planning process and further into the budget process, where there will be time for review and discussion. We have agreed to come forward and give the public the results of the round table and all the feedback we have received. That document is being worked on as we speak.

Mr. Jacobson: Mr. Speaker, he says he's giving us enough time. I have a pretty big riding, and the travel times are out. I have to go travel for two weeks, so I hope he does give us enough time to present this to my constituents.

Hon. Michael Miltenberger: Mr. Speaker, we're going to be timing the work we are doing. There are people working on it right now. We know the business planning is going to start in the middle of November. We would like to have as much of the information as we can have pulled together at that point to talk about what's being proposed for 2009–2010. If I can refresh everybody's memory, we are looking at year 2 of reductions, about \$28 million or so.

As well, we are tasked and targeted with finding \$10 million in new revenues. We will come forward with that work clearly laid out for the '09–10 budget and the business plan. Further work will be laid out, but that will be for future years, in 2010–2011 and going forward.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 427-16(2)
PROPOSED DEVOLUTION AND
RESOURCE REVENUE SHARING MODEL

Mr. Krutko: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier in regard to my Member's statement and the Premier's sessional statement.

There are certain sections of the agreement where the government shall involve the Gwich'in in any devolution process. I'd just like to ask the Premier: exactly what consultation has taken place today with the aboriginal governments in regard to this proposal?

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Hon. Premier, Mr. Roland.

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, as the Government of the Northwest Territories 16th Assembly took office, we set up a new arrangement with regional leadership. We hold four meetings a year where the regional leadership as well as the Government of Northwest Territories can put items on the agenda.

We have been having discussions at that table about devolution and resource revenue sharing, and again this opportunity came up. I made a number of calls, because of the short time frame, to try to get as much of the aboriginal leadership as possible up to speed as to the letter I was presenting. In fact, I did speak with the president of the Gwich'in Tribal Council. I have correspondence with the president on, for example, the Mackenzie Valley Highway right up to the coast, so we have had a discussion.

We haven't had a chance to meet face to face about the meeting with the Prime Minister and where we may be able to go from here. We are starting that process, and our next meeting, I believe, will be late November.

Mr. Krutko: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier: exactly what is the price tag on this proposal, and what are we are talking about? Are we talking about a billion dollars or more? I think the number for the Mackenzie highway is somewhere in the range of \$6 billion. What is the price tag on this proposal?

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, the Mackenzie Valley Highway is not \$6 billion, if I heard the Member correctly. We know there have been groups doing their work. For example, the Department of Transportation used, I believe, \$700 million as the target; that is an old number. We know that the Mackenzie Aboriginal Corporation did some work. They talked about \$1.7 billion, I believe, in that neighbourhood; that's their number.

We haven't progressed to that and looked at those dollar figures. What we've been working on is

coming up with a framework that would see a continued partnership between the federal government and the Government of the Northwest Territories: taking the revenues they take out of the Territories, and royalties, and putting them back into the Northwest Territories. So it's a framework right now. We're going to have more discussions, and we're going to see if it even goes any further beyond having a commitment for more discussion.

Mr. Krutko: Mr. Speaker, one of the most lucrative resources out there that the federal government owns is the Norman Wells oil field. They own one-third of the field. I would like to ask the Premier: has he discussed the one-third ownership of the Norman Wells oil field and basically used those revenues they receive from the ownership side of the field to put into these types of capital infrastructure funding projects? Has that been part of the discussions with the federal government?

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, again, we have not had any real discussions with the federal government. I put a proposal on the table for establishing a framework, and that's the area we're discussing right now.

Prior to that, probably shortly after we took office and realized that the deal that was on the table was not going to be satisfactory for us here in the Northwest Territories, we started looking at options. We know the federal government has always considered Norman Wells an equity, not a royalty. We started tracking that to see if it, in fact, would be a way of trying to look at how the revenues can be transferred back to the North. It is part of a potential solution, and that has been on the table for quite some time in trying to gauge the federal government in that area.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Mr. Krutko: Mr. Speaker, in response to an earlier question, the Premier mentioned that he did contact a few aboriginal leaders. I am wondering when he is going to contact all aboriginal leaders and, more importantly, have a briefing with Members on this side of the House so we can get an understanding of what's in the proposal, what is being stated, so we will get a commitment from the Premier on when this will take place.

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that I've given correspondence to the Members that gives details of what framework proposal has been put forward to the federal government. I sent that package, as well, to the regional aboriginal leadership. We are going to have our next meeting with the regional aboriginal leadership at the end of November, and we will be able to have a much more in-depth discussion in that area.

I have already committed to Members, and I believe we do have some time still set aside, to go over this item with committee members. Again, we'll follow through with that commitment.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 428-16(2)
PROPOSED DEVOLUTION AND
RESOURCE REVENUE SHARING MODEL

Mrs. Groenewegen: Mr. Speaker, in our style of consensus government I would like to ask the Premier: from where does he get his mandate to talk to anybody, let alone the Government of Canada, on devolution and resource revenue sharing?

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Hon. Premier, Mr. Roland.

Hon. Floyd Roland: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I got my mandate right from Members themselves in this Legislative Assembly when you voted for me as Premier of the Northwest Territories. On top of that, with a number of the issues we've put on the table.... We talk about the vision and goals of the Members of this Assembly, taking that and trying to pursue it. That's where the mandate comes from, and that's where I carry through with the business at hand.

Now, I know Mrs. Groenewegen herself has quite a number of times stated on record in this Assembly that she's not been satisfied with the approach we've taken. But at the same time Members have heard, when I spoke to the fact of getting this position, that I wasn't going to be about the status quo and that I wanted to push files forward. I have been trying to do that.

Mrs. Groenewegen: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Premier realizes that his mandate comes from the Members of this Legislative Assembly. When he embarks on a conversation with the Prime Minister or anybody else, he is representing us. That's why it would be really good for us to know what he's going to say to them before he says it.

Now, we did get a quasi-apology today here in the House as to why the Regular Members were not informed of this fairly significant proposal to the Prime Minister in Inuvik. It wasn't like he hadn't seen everybody for a long time. Everybody was out at the Gwich'in healing camp. He had just been there with Members; I wasn't there personally. But there was unbelievably ample opportunity to share with the Members at that retreat — I don't think there was a whole lot else going on out there — what he intended to go into Inuvik and talk to the Prime Minister about. So I don't understand why the Premier doesn't get it.

It's fine for him to say that I don't appreciate the approach. I'm not trying to be unnecessarily critical here. I just wish we could get the information before such large issues are broached on our behalf. I'd like to know: does the Premier think, going forward, that we can do better?

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, I think in every scenario there's room for improvement. In fact, I offered some opportunities for improvement from the last bit of criticism I had about strategic initiative committees. I got a response from the Chair of P and P on that. I guess that offer wasn't good enough either.

The fact is that we are trying to do what we can. We have to at times make decisions to proceed in a timely manner to try to keep things moving. I will continue to do that. I've already said to a Member earlier that, yes, probably at that time I should have shared the letters we were prepared to give to the Prime Minister and the discussion that was about to take place. So I'll wear that one as well.

Mrs. Groenewegen: Mr. Speaker, I guess this is not really the place to have a debate about whether or not the Regular Members want to sit on the strategic investment committees or not. There's a whole reason for that. I'll do a Member's statement on that another day.

But I'd like to ask the Premier: if he had to name one thing that would be his goal to accomplish, that would be the legacy of the 16th Assembly — from all the dialogue, communication, strategizing, retreats, sit down talks he's had with Members — what would be the thing that the 16th Assembly could advance and be remembered for? I've heard reference to the Mackenzie Valley Highway as part of this infrastructure thing. Is that something the Premier could hang his hat on?

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, I don't think that as the Government of Northwest Territories we should hang our hat on one initiative. I've watched previous governments stand up and make grand plans and talk proudly about where we can be and what we can do and at the end of that term sit down and say: well, we almost had it.

Devolution resource revenue sharing is one of those areas we'd like to get concluded in the life of this Assembly, but I also heard that in the last Assembly and the Assembly before that.

I would like to see what I think would secure our place within Canada: building the much needed infrastructure that would help us further develop our economy. That would help us and the federal government in the area of sovereignty. I've spoken to that a number of times.

One other key piece, I think — and I've laid this out in previous statements in this House — is to further

develop the hydro potential we have in the Northwest Territories. We know that all of those the Government of the Northwest Territories will not be able to move by itself on. I think every Member in this Assembly knows that. We have to go out and find partnerships.

When I switched my portfolios and passed on the Finance portfolio, I committed to Members that I would put my energy and focus on selling the North to the rest of Canada and to our own people about what we can do. That's what I've been trying to do. Unfortunately, I feel like I'm being told: slow it down; slow that horse down and maybe get back on the mule, and let's see where we end up in four years.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Mrs. Groenewegen: Mr. Speaker, you know, interestingly, I'm probably getting a clearer communication from the Premier from asking these kinds of probing questions on the floor of the House. I'm sure the people in the North are glad to hear the answers to these questions today.

Since we're on the subject of process a bit, I have one last question for the Premier, and it has to do with his mandate as Premier. If the Premier had to categorize where he gets the majority of his advice — because nobody can operate alone; no one can operate in isolation — where would the Premier say he gets the majority of his advice and guidance on going forward, for example, with such a major initiative as the discussion with the Prime Minister of Canada on the infrastructure budget?

Hon. Floyd Roland: Mr. Speaker, the first piece we and I would get advice from is the work we did as 19 Members around building our vision for the Government of Northwest Territories. That would be the first piece. That's where we talk about a strong, independent North built on partnerships. That is a key piece of where we're getting this direction from.

Secondly, it's from Members as we have discussions and take part either in committee meetings or directly in my office or Members' offices, along with Cabinet, as we try to come up with what scenarios we can put in place. As well, trying to look at and hire some folks outside of our system to build the circle bigger, to open the doors when it comes to the rest of Canada, the other provinces and the federal government, to try to come up with scenarios that would work in helping build the business case — those are areas we'd pull together.

I believe that the wisdom of many will help in getting our job done in the Northwest Territories, and by no means do I think I hold all the wisdom.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

QUESTION 429-16(2)
INMATE TELEPHONE ACCESS TO
MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Ramsay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Justice.

Being a returning Member, I remember back to the 15th Assembly. I received a number of phone calls. I know North Slave Correctional Centre is located in the riding of Kam Lake. Not a week went by when I didn't get a phone call from an inmate incarcerated at that facility. Since the election last year those phone calls have evaporated into nothing. I don't receive phone calls from North Slave Correctional Centre anymore. I've heard through various channels that the Department of Justice implemented a policy at North Slave Correctional Centre that told inmates they couldn't phone their Member of the Legislative Assembly.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Justice when this policy came into place at North Slave Correctional Centre. Is it applied across all the other correctional facilities in the Northwest Territories?

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This particular issue was raised at the 15th Assembly. The request came from a Member at that time who didn't want inmates to be calling him. It was at the request of the Member that the government initiated a policy pertaining to that event.

At the current time I did hear complaints from Regular Members, new Members of the 16th Assembly, so we followed through with that. I did write a letter to each Member highlighting if they're open to their riding inmates calling them. It was an option I threw out to them. Certainly, we're listening to the Members. They gave us concerns, and we're following through with that. That's what occurred in the 15th Assembly. Mahsi.

Mr. Ramsay: If I hear the Minister of Justice correctly, a Member — it could be a current Member or it could be a former Member — complained to the Minister of Justice during the last government and said they didn't like getting calls from inmates. So the government, in its wisdom, decided that no inmates can phone any of their MLAs. I'm glad to hear the Minister say that.

Now, I guess the policy is being looked at again. If Members want to receive phone calls from inmates who are their constituents, we're to give our number and tell the Minister of Justice or North Slave Correctional or South Slave correctional or

wherever that may be that it's okay for inmates to phone us.

Mr. Speaker, something's wrong with that. From my perspective, all of our names are in a phone book, on the Internet. If an inmate or a constituent or whoever wants to phone us, we should be accessible to everybody, whether they are incarcerated or not.

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: We at the Department of Justice, and also Corrections, recognize the importance of having a communication dialogue, whether it be between the inmates and their MLAs or the parents and so forth. Those were the issues that were brought forward by a Member. They want to have contact with their inmates if there are issues, so certainly we are allowing that to happen now.

We are asking all 19 Members, if there are inmates from their ridings wishing to make a call to them, that they give us their blessing, and certainly that will be open. There may be some Members who may not want the inmates to be calling them. We're not sure. We don't know to that degree, but certainly if Members can get back to us at the department, then we can move forward with amending the policy that we currently have in place. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Ramsay: Again, if I'm hearing the Minister of Justice correctly, if we want to entertain phone calls from inmates, we're to let the Minister of Justice or the Department of Justice know that our name and number can be provided to inmates so they can phone us. Is that correct?

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: Mr. Speaker, those are the issues at hand. In order to amend those policies we currently have in place, the Members have raised those issues. We do allow a telephone privilege for inmates to call their MLAs. There are phone numbers listed within Corrections so they can call their MLAs. We do have that information for those inmates at Corrections. Certainly, if the Members want us to amend that policy, we'll grant the wish of the committee members. That has been in the works since the last Assembly, but now we're in a new Assembly, and we can take on the task. Mahsi.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Mr. Ramsay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank the Minister of Justice for that. I don't know how this place is operating lately, because if a Member comes and complains to you, all of a sudden you can change a policy. That doesn't make much sense to me.

I don't remember this issue going through. I don't remember this issue going through caucus. I don't

remember it being brought up anywhere, except for maybe somebody complained to the Minister of the day, and the Minister took it upon him or herself to say: hey; no more inmates are going to be able to phone their MLAs.

There's something wrong with that. Again, I'd like to ask the Minister if he can change the policy. Like I said, I think whether you're an inmate or not, you should be able to call your MLA.

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: That initiative is underway. I did ask all Members where they stand on inmates calling them in their respective ridings. This had been decided upon in the 15th Assembly. Whatever decisions there are, such as this, we like to inform the committee members, which I've done. I've informed the committee members that if they feel confident that we need to change our policy, which I did.... They will eventually get back to me, get back to the department, and we'll pursue it. I think the communication we're having now is a great example of moving forward. Mahsi.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The time for question period has expired. Item 8, written questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Written Questions

QUESTION 36-16(2) STANTON HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOMS

Mr. Abernethy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a written question for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Could the Minister of Health and Social Services provide me with a comprehensive breakdown of the usage of the three Stanton Territorial Hospital operating rooms during the 2007–2008 fiscal year and the 2008–2009 fiscal year to date. Specifically:

- the number of days each operating room was opened;
- the number of days each operating room was closed;
- the number of hours each room was not in operation; and
- a list of days that each was closed.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 20-16(2) RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Mr. Krutko: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, October 8, 2008, I will move the following motion.

Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that this Assembly recommend to the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories that Robert C. McLeod, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, be appointed to Executive Council.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MOTION 21-16(2) RULES AMENDMENTS FOR ESTIMATES AND APPROPRIATION BILL REVIEW PROCESS

Mr. Hawkins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, October 8, 2008, I will move the following motion.

Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that the rules of the Legislative Assembly be amended by rescinding Rule 76 and substituting the following:

- 1) The Assembly may not adopt or pass any vote, resolution, address or bill for the appropriation of public revenue except for a purpose recommended to the Assembly by the Commissioner in the session in which the vote, resolution, address or bill is proposed.
- 2) Rule 76(1) relates only to the appropriation and does not refer to the imposition of taxes. The only condition imposed on the taxation measure is that it be introduced by a Minister.
- 3) Unless otherwise ordered by the Assembly, when an estimates document is tabled in the Assembly it is deemed referred to Committee of the Whole.
- 4) The adoption of any motion to concur in any estimates document shall be an order of the Assembly to bring in an appropriation bill or bills based thereon.
- 5) Notwithstanding Rule 64, when an appropriation bill is introduced to appropriate sums of money contained in the estimates as

approved by the Committee of the Whole, the bill may receive second and third readings on the same day on which it received first reading.

- 6) Notwithstanding Rule 69(2), when an appropriation bill is read for the second time, it shall be deemed ready for third reading.

And further that Rules 66 and 69(3) be rescinded.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Motions

MOTION 20-16(2) RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (MOTION CARRIED)

Mr. Krutko: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today.

Unanimous consent granted.

Mr. Krutko: WHEREAS section 61(1) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act requires that there shall be an Executive Council in the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS Members of the Executive Council are appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that this Assembly recommend to the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories that Mr. Robert C. McLeod, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, be appointed to the Executive Council.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question is being called.

Motion carried.

MOTION 21-16(2)
 RULES AMENDMENTS FOR
 ESTIMATES AND APPROPRIATION
 BILL REVIEW PROCESS
 (MOTION CARRIED)

Mr. Hawkins: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today.

Unanimous consent granted.

Mr. Hawkins: WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is committed to ensuring that the Budget Review Process is publicly accessible, transparent to all residents and efficient;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly has chosen to make revisions to the Estimates and Appropriation Bill Review Process;

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that the Rules of the Legislative Assembly be amended by rescinding Rule 76 and substituting the following:

ESTIMATES AND APPROPRIATION BILLS

- 1) 76(1) The Assembly may not adopt or pass any vote, resolution, address or bill for the appropriation of public revenue except for the purpose recommended to the Assembly by the Commissioner in the Session in which the vote, resolution, address or bill is proposed.
- 2) Rule 76(1) relates only to the appropriations and does not refer to the imposition of taxes. The only condition imposed on a taxation measure is that it be introduced by a Minister.
- 3) Unless otherwise ordered by the Assembly, when an estimates document is tabled in the Assembly it is deemed referred to Committee of the Whole.
- 4) The adoption of any motion to concur in any estimates document shall be an Order of the Assembly to bring in an appropriation bill or bills based thereon.
- 5) Notwithstanding Rule 64, when an appropriation bill is introduced to appropriate sums of money contained in the estimates as approved by the Committee of the Whole, the bill may receive second and third reading on the same day on which it receives first reading.
- 6) Notwithstanding Rule 69(2), when an appropriation bill is read for the second time it shall be deemed ready for third reading.

AND FURTHER that Rules 66 and 69(3) be rescinded.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question is being called.

Motion carried.

Mr. Speaker: Item 18, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 19
 DONATION OF FOOD ACT

Ms. Bisaro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Bill 19, Donation of Food Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Bill 19 has had first reading.

Motion carried; Bill 19, Donation of Food Act, read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 20
 SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT,
 NO. 2, 2008–2009

Hon. Michael Miltenberger: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2008–2009, be read for the first time.

Mr. Speaker: Bill 20 has had first reading.

Motion carried; Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2008–2009, read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: Item 19, second reading of bills. The Hon. Michael Miltenberger.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 20
 SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT,
 NO. 2, 2008–2009

Hon. Michael Miltenberger: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2008–2009, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2008–2009 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker: Bill 20 has had second reading.

Motion carried; Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2008–2009, read a second time and referred to a standing committee.

Mr. Speaker: Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, Bill 1 and Bill 13, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bill 10 and Bill 13. What's the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

Mrs. Groenewegen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee would like to deal with Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act, and Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act, today in Committee of the Whole.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Is the committee agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): With that, we'll take a short break.

The Committee of the Whole took a short recess.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): I'd like to call the Committee of the Whole back to order. Prior to the break we agreed to deal with Bill 10 and then Bill 13.

BILL 10 AN ACT TO AMEND THE PHARMACY ACT

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): At this time I'd like to ask the Minister responsible for the bill if she'd like to make any opening comments. Ms. Lee, Minister of Health and Social Services.

Hon. Sandy Lee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I would like to.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to be here to present Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act. This amendment will give pharmacists limited prescribing authority to enable them to issue a continued care prescription for a limited supply of certain drugs under specific circumstances. By doing so, the pharmacist is able to provide a one-time extended refill of the medication patients need to continue to treat their chronic condition until a new prescription can be obtained from the medical practitioner.

Mr. Chairman, the previous government passed a new Pharmacy Act designed to ensure the public receives quality pharmaceutical services and care and to modernize the definition of the practice of pharmacy. Shortly after the act was passed, it was determined that the provision in the act that allows pharmacists to supply medication to the patient if there is immediate need and the person cannot see their medical practitioner for a new prescription was inconsistent with federal regulations under the Food and Drug Act.

Many stakeholders have contributed to the development of this bill, including the NWT pharmacists association, the NWT Medical Association and the Registered Nurses Association of the NWT and Nunavut. Thanks to the cooperative efforts of our stakeholders I am now able to bring forth an amendment that will accomplish what was intended in the current act.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my remarks on Bill 10. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Minister Lee. I'd like to call on the standing committee responsible for reviewing the bill if they have any comments. At this time I'll ask Mr. Abernethy.

Mr. Abernethy: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Standing Committee on Social Programs conducted a public hearing on Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act, on September 30, 2008.

The amendments contained in this act will correct an oversight in the drafting of the original Pharmacy Act and ensure that our legislation is in compliance with federal regulations covering the prescribing of drugs. Pharmacists will be able to prescribe limited quantities of drugs to patients who have an existing prescription from a health care practitioner and who cannot get in to see their health care practitioner. In these instances the pharmacist is also required to notify the health care practitioner who wrote the original prescription.

These amendments will allow for the continuing care of NWT residents and will lessen the burden on emergency departments at NWT hospitals.

It is important to note the collaborative approach the department took in addressing the oversight and the fact that the NWT Medical Association, the Registered Nurses Association and the NWT Pharmacy Association were all involved in finding a mutually acceptable solution that will ultimately benefit NWT residents.

This concludes the committee's comments on Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act. Individual members of the committee may have comments or questions as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. At this time I'd like to ask the Minister if she'll be bringing in any witnesses. Minister Lee.

Hon. Sandy Lee: Yes, I will be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree the Minister brings in her witnesses?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses in, please.

For the record, Minister Lee, could you introduce your witnesses, please.

Hon. Sandy Lee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Mr. Gregory Cummings, deputy minister of Health and Social Services, and to my right is Ms. Kelly McLaughlin. She is the legislative counsel with the Department of Justice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Minister. Welcome, witnesses. General comments in regard to Bill 10. What is the wish of the committee? Details? Committee agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act.

Clauses 1 through 4 inclusive approved.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Going back to page 1, the bill as a whole?

Bill 10 as a whole approved.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that Bill 10 is now ready for third reading?

Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act, approved for third reading.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Bill 10 is now ready for third reading.

I would like to thank the Minister and witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses out.

Moving on to Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act.

BILL 13
AN ACT TO AMEND
THE LEGAL PROFESSION ACT

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): At this time I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the bill to introduce the bill. Minister Lafferty.

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to appear before the committee today to review Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act.

I would like to start by thanking members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs for their review and comments on the bill. The Law Society of the Northwest Territories is the organization that regulates the legal profession in the Northwest Territories. Its functions include the investigation of complaints against its members and the discipline of its members.

The bill before you today was developed at the request of the Law Society to update the discipline provisions of the Legal Profession Act. The Law Society has been an active participant in developing this bill.

This bill will result in a number of changes to the way the Law Society carries out its mandate. One of the main changes is the addition of a mediation process that could be used for resolving complaints in appropriate circumstances. Effective solutions can often be achieved when parties have the opportunity to be active participants in a process.

The amendments in this bill will also require that the membership of the discipline committee of the Law Society include at least one person who is not a lawyer. It is the role of the discipline committee of the Law Society to receive and coordinate complaints. This bill will also make it a requirement that at least one non-lawyer must be included on a committee of inquiry, the body responsible for hearing the most serious cases involving the conduct of a lawyer.

Another change that will result from this bill is an automatic suspension of the membership of a lawyer who is sentenced to a term of imprisonment. Protection of the public is an important concern of both the Law Society and the government in supporting this change. Other changes in the bill relating to evidence and procedure are designed to assist the discipline process to run smoothly.

The Department of Justice supports efforts of professional associations such as the Law Society of the Northwest Territories to modernize and improve standards, processes and procedures in the best interest of the profession and the public. I believe that this bill promotes that goal.

Mr. Chair, I will be pleased to answer any questions that committee members may have regarding Bill 13. Mahsi.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. I would like to call on the standing committee that reviewed the bill if they wish to make any comments. At this time I will call Mr. Abernethy.

Mr. Abernethy: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Standing Committee on Social Programs had a public hearing on Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act, on September 11, 2008, and after being forced to adjourn due to a small fire, again on September 12, 2008.

The proposed amendments will bring the regulation of the legal profession in line with the best practices and standards being applied in the rest of Canada. The amendments were developed with active participation by the NWT Law Society and reflect the needs and wishes of the profession while still ensuring that the rights of the clients are protected.

The amendments clarify the disciplinary process for lawyers, provide for a layperson to sit on the discipline committee, allow for mediation of certain complaints, provide reinvestigation of complaints, allow for restrictions to be placed on the practices of lawyers or students at law, allow for the suspension or termination of the right to practise of a lawyer suspended or terminated in another province, and for automatic suspension if the lawyer is serving a prison sentence.

This concludes the committee's comments on Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act. Individual members of the committee may have comments or questions as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. At this time I would like to ask the Minister if he will be bringing in any witnesses. Mr. Lafferty.

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that the Minister brings in his witnesses?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses in.

Mr. Minister, can you introduce your witnesses, please.

Hon. Jackson Lafferty: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. To my left is Mike Reddy. He is a senior policy analyst with the Department of Justice. To my right is Mark Aitken, director of the legislation division. Mahsi.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witnesses. General comments in regard to Bill 13. Does the committee agreed to detail?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Move on to page 1, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act, clause 1. Agreed?

Clauses 1 through 23 inclusive approved.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Move back to the preamble. The bill as a whole?

Bill 13 as a whole approved.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that Bill 13 is ready for third reading?

Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act, approved for third reading.

Chairman (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, colleagues. I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses out, please.

At this time I would like to ask what the wish of the committee is. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Mrs. Groenewegen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

Motion carried.

Report of Committee of the Whole

The House resumed.

Mr. Speaker: Can I have the report of the Committee of the Whole, please. Mr. Krutko.

Mr. Krutko: Mr. Speaker, the committee has been considering Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act, and Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act, and would like to report progress in that Bills 10 and 13 are ready for third reading.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. A motion is on the floor. A seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Motion carried.

Mr. Speaker: Item 22, third reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 20
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT,
NO. 2, 2008-2009

Hon. Michael Miltenberger: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2008-2009, be read for the third time.

Mr. Speaker: Bill 20 has had third reading.

Motion carried; Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2008–2009, read a third time.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Clerk, Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

Clerk of the House (Mr. Mercer): Orders of Day for Tuesday, October 7, 2008, 1:30 p.m.

- 1) Prayer
- 2) Ministers' Statements
- 3) Members' Statements
- 4) Returns to Oral Questions
- 5) Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
- 6) Acknowledgements
- 7) Oral Questions
- 8) Written Questions
- 9) Returns to Written Questions
- 10) Replies to Opening Address
- 11) Petitions
- 12) Reports of Standing and Special Committees
- 13) Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

- 14) Tabling of Documents
- 15) Notices of Motion
- 16) Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
- 17) Motions
- 18) First Reading of Bills
- 19) Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 19: Donation of Food Act
- 20) Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 80-16(2)
- 21) Report of Committee of the Whole
- 22) Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 10: An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act
 - Bill 13: An Act to Amend the Legal Professions Act
- 23) Orders of the Day

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, October 7, 2008, at 1:30 p.m.

The House adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

