



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable David Krutko, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	1
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	1
1-15(1) - SESSIONAL STATEMENT	1
2-15(2) - REMEMBERING DENNIE LENNIE.....	2
3-15(2) - FIRE AT FORT MCPHERSON POWER PLANT.....	3
4-15(2) - 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF APPRENTICESHIP NWT.....	3
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	4
MRS. GROENEWEGEN ON MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON RESTRUCTURING BOARDS OF GOVERNANCE	4
MR. VILLENEUVE ON COOPERATIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS	4
MR. RAMSAY ON RECOGNITION OF COMMISSIONER'S SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS	5
MR. DELOREY ON RESIDENT JUSTICE REQUIRED FOR HAY RIVER	5
MR. ALLEN ON ADDRESSING YOUTH CRIME IN THE NORTH	5
MR. HAWKINS ON DEALING POSITIVELY WITH FAMILIES	6
MR. YAKELEYA ON PASSING OF SAHTU RESIDENTS DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON	6
MR. BRADEN ON WORKING IN A CONSENSUS SYSTEM.....	6
MR. MENICOCHÉ ON MACKENZIE VALLEY GAS PIPELINE.....	7
MS. LEE ON SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN THE NWT	7
MR. POKIAK ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES STAFFING LEVELS	7
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	8
ORAL QUESTIONS	9
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	16
NOTICES OF MOTION	16
1-15(2) - TO AMEND RULE 85 OF THE RULES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	16
2-15(2) - APPOINTMENTS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	17
3-15(2) - APPOINTMENTS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL PROGRAMS.....	17
4-15(2) - APPOINTMENTS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES	18
NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS	18
BILL 1 - SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT, No. 3, 2003-2004	18
MOTIONS	18
1-15(2) - TO AMEND RULE 85 OF THE RULES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	18
4-15(2) - APPOINTMENTS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES	19
2-15(2) - APPOINTMENTS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	19
3-15(2) - APPOINTMENTS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL PROGRAMS.....	20

ORDERS OF THE DAY20

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Tuesday, January 20, 2004****Members Present**

Mr. Allen, Honourable Brendan Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Honourable Charles Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Hawkins, Honourable David Krutko, Ms. Lee, Honourable Michael McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Pokiak, Mr. Ramsay, Honourable Floyd Roland, Mr. Villeneuve, Mr. Yakeleya, Honourable Henry Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. David Krutko): Mr. Clerk, would you please see if Her Honour the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories Glenna Hansen is prepared to enter the Chamber and open the Second Session of the 15th Legislative Assembly.

ITEM 2: OPENING ADDRESS

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Welcome back and happy New Year. As you look forward to a new year, I know that this has been a busy time for each of you and I thank and commend you for your concerted efforts to familiarize and prepare yourself for the challenges that lie ahead.

I trust that you have also found the opportunities, particularly over the holiday season, to spend time and connect with your families, friends and constituents.

As you begin your term as Members of this territorial Assembly, you represent a territory that is on the brink of unprecedented development and growth.

There are opportunities in this growth to bring benefit to the Northwest Territories through jobs, contracts and resource revenues. There are also inherent responsibilities to ensure that this growth does not happen at the expense of what we value most: our northern environment, cultures or traditions. Your guidance and wisdom will be the key.

Together, you must find ways to build and strengthen relationships with each other and with government and industry partners, to deliver programs and services in efficient and effective manners, and to move forward with important negotiations for land and resource ownership. This is no small task and it will not happen on its own.

It will take difficult decisions, debate and choices. It will take all of you and many others working together toward a common vision or goal. Most of all, it will take a true and honest commitment to the spirit and intent of consensus government, on which this Legislative Assembly is based.

I thank you in advance for your continued and earnest consideration and good judgement in the days, weeks, months and years that lie ahead. Before I declare open the Second Session of the 15th Legislative Assembly, I would like to remember Dennie Lennie who passed away January 13th. Mr. Lennie was a leader in the Inuvik and Northwest Territories business community and a tireless contributor to the community of Inuvik. More importantly, he was a friend and supporter to all who had the pleasure of meeting and working with him.

I offer my personal condolences to his wife Barb, and their children Jolene, Allison, Dayna and Issac, and the many friends and loved ones Dennie Lennie has left behind. I would also like to include at this time and give my sincerest condolences to all the families who lost loved ones before this last session.

During this session, the Government of the Northwest Territories will be introducing a bill entitled Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2003-2004, for consideration by this House. Mr. Speaker, the government considers this bill essential to the good conduct of government business and, as such, I recommend its passage.

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I now declare open the Second Session of the 15th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Ministers' statements. Minister Handley.

ITEM 3: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 1-15(2): Sessional Statement**

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are well into 2004 and already busy on a number of fronts. As this is our first time back in this House since the Christmas holidays, I would like to take the opportunity to wish the Members of the Assembly and all people of the NWT a happy New Year and best wishes for 2004.

Working Together

I look forward to the coming year with enthusiasm and optimism. We will have significant challenges to face, but I sense a strong will amongst all Members of this Legislative Assembly to roll up our sleeves and get to work as a team on behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories.

Trust is the foundation upon which good relationships are built, both at home and in the workplace. It takes time to build trust. It has to be earned with consistent actions, respect for input received, and a demonstrated commitment to live up to promises made.

There is agreement among Members that we must find ways to better work together. The challenge is to translate our good intentions into concrete actions.

We have started off with informal meetings to explore ideas about the setting of priorities. Discussion focused on how the Members of this Assembly might reach out to the public more effectively and build partnerships with other northern governments and stakeholder groups. As a Caucus, we are determined to find ways to open up the lines of communication with all northern residents.

As a beginning, it is important that we find new ways to talk with other northern leaders; discussion that allows for a frank exchange of views and creates a foundation for understanding and working together.

All 19 Members of Caucus are committed to establishing productive partnerships with other northern leaders. It will be my pleasure, later today, to join Caucus Chair Mr. Kevin Menicoche, as he announces an initiative to bring northern leaders together in the spring to discuss common issues.

Aboriginal Rights Negotiations

Mr. Speaker, as all residents of the Northwest Territories know, the face of governance in the Northwest Territories is changing as aboriginal rights negotiations are concluded and agreements are implemented. This environment is a complex one. A variety of agreements deal, in varying degrees, with aboriginal rights over land, resources and self-government, and these agreements are in different stages of negotiation or implementation.

The Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Sahtu have concluded land claims agreements. The Inuvialuit and Gwich'in are pursuing a joint self-government agreement and signed an agreement-in-principle last year. In the Sahtu, Deline signed a self-government agreement-in-principle last summer and Tulita has just recently begun the process of negotiating a self-government agreement. The Tlicho Comprehensive Land Claim and Self-Government Final Agreement is the first combined land claim and self-government agreement in the Northwest Territories. Framework and interim measures agreements have been reached with the Deh Cho First Nations, Akaitcho Territory Dene First Nations and Northwest Territory Metis Nation.

The jurisdiction and responsibilities of aboriginal and public governments are in a process of transition that will establish new relationships between the peoples and governments of the NWT. As we move forward with aboriginal rights negotiations, the shape and structure of government in the Northwest Territories will change, including the territorial government.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories is fully committed to the negotiation and implementation of aboriginal rights agreements in the NWT; agreements that will bring further clarity and certainty to governance in our territory.

Achieving Self-Reliance

Mr. Speaker, we have much work remaining to reach our full potential as a fully self-reliant and prosperous territory; one where our people are healthy, educated, employed and living life to the fullest.

For the territorial and other northern governments, this means a better fiscal deal with the federal government. We need to conclude an improved formula financing agreement with Canada. We need a fair deal on devolution and resource revenue sharing that will give us what most other jurisdictions in Canada already have: a reasonable opportunity to generate own-source revenues, that can be used to pay for the social and infrastructure costs associated with the unprecedented boom in development that we are now experiencing.

We need additional resources to invest in our people and infrastructure now so we mitigate the impacts of development on our communities. We need to continue to work together to ensure these messages reach Ottawa.

It is a simple fact that what separates the "have" from the "have not" provinces and territories in this country is the ability of any given province or territory to generate its own revenues and pay its own way. We have the great good fortune of being a resource-rich part of Canada, so we have the ability to generate our own resources and become a net contributor to the nation.

There is a strong relationship between the economic self-sufficiency we seek and having the ability to determine our own future. Having one means gaining the other.

For individual residents of the Northwest Territories, self-reliance is just as important on a personal level. Personal independence means making healthy choices, taking responsibility for oneself and one's family, and contributing to the community in which we live.

Fiscal Update

As Members are well aware, we face significant fiscal challenges. While we pursue a new fiscal balance with the federal government, we must also explore other avenues that maximize the resources at hand. We must take a hard look at how we are managing spending in order to ensure operational efficiency wherever possible.

Even at the best of times, governments are in a constant state of change. This is because we are challenged every day, with examining our current circumstances and making the necessary adjustments required to stay on target. Our spending should reflect the priorities that we hold most dear. We face some very tough choices and it is important that we work together to make those choices over the next four years.

Tomorrow, the Honourable Floyd Roland will provide the Members of this House with an update on the budgetary process that we have laid out.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, we are deeply committed to running the business of government in a more open and cooperative manner. I believe the Members of this House share the desire to demonstrate to the rest of Canada consensus government at its best, in spirit and in its actions.

While we intend to run a tight ship, we will also look to make strategic investments that make sense in light of the priorities we collectively establish - as a government, as a Caucus, and as northern leaders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 3, Ministers' statements. Premier Handley.

Minister's Statement 2-15(2): Remembering Dennie Lennie

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the passing of Dennie Lennie of Inuvik. Dennie was a highly respected northerner, a person who

contributed to the development of the Northwest Territories in many ways.

Dennie was an active member of the NWT business community as the owner of Arctic Esso in Inuvik.

Dennie was very active in the Inuvialuit organizations where he served in a variety of capacities. For the past 10 years, Dennie served as chair and chief executive officer of the Inuvialuit Development Corporation, one of the most successful aboriginal business corporations in Canada. He also served on the boards of a number of IDC investments including NorTerra Inc. and Akita Equitak Ltd., where his thoughtful advice and wisdom was greatly appreciated.

Dennie's knowledge and experience was widely recognized throughout the territory and he was often asked to contribute to panels and boards focused on the development of the NWT economy. Dennie served as a member of the GNWT Economic Development Strategy Panel, the Business Credit Corporation and most recently as co-chair of the Economic Development Advisory Group.

Mr. Speaker, Dennie also contributed in many ways within his home community of Inuvik where he has served in a variety of important positions including town councillor, deputy mayor and as chair of the Inuvik Community Corporation.

Dennie's quiet manner, his sharp intellect and his passion for business gained the respect and devotion of staff and those with whom he worked and associated.

Finally and most importantly, Mr. Speaker, Dennie was a loving husband to his wife Barb and his children Jolene, Allison, Dayna and Isaac. On behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories, I ask all Members to join me in extending our sympathies to Barb and her family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 3, Ministers' Statements. Premier Handley.

Minister's Statement 3-15(2): Fire At Fort McPherson Power Plant

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring the House up to date on the serious fire that occurred at the Fort McPherson power plant on January 19th and the steps that are being taken to restore power as quickly as possible while ensuring a high level of safety is maintained.

A fire began in the Fort McPherson power plant early in the morning of January 19th causing severe damage. The corporation and its insurers are still assessing the damage and whether any of the equipment can be salvaged. The cause of the fire is under investigation by the fire marshal. Fortunately, no injuries were incurred.

The fire was reported to the corporation's Inuvik staff at 3:30 a.m. and the corporation immediately mobilized its emergency response plan. A mobile generating unit was dispatched from Inuvik along with an emergency team of personnel from across the corporation. Partial power was restored to the community beginning at 3:00 p.m., approximately 12 hours after the fire was reported.

A second mobile unit and more personnel were chartered to Inuvik by Hercules aircraft arriving in Fort McPherson at 2:00 a.m. this morning. The crew has been working since then to get this second unit up and running. Mr. Speaker, as we speak, I understand that unit is running now.

Mr. Speaker, restoring power to the community under these emergency conditions is very much a co-operative effort. The corporation is working closely with the local EMO, community leaders and the RCMP. The people of Fort McPherson are playing a vital role in restoring power by dramatically lowering their consumption of power and by helping out in many other ways. The corporation would like to thank everyone involved for their efforts to date and for their continued support.

Mr. Speaker, while the immediate emergency is in hand, with some power restored to the community, much work remains to be done to ensure a reliable power source for the community. The corporation is closely monitoring the mobile unit and local emergency generators currently serving the community. Load will remain limited until the corporation can undertake the next step of installing additional generating capacity to ensure reliable service until the plant is restored. It is expected to take about three to four days to ensure reliable service back to the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 3, Ministers' Statements. Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 4-15(2): 40th Anniversary Of Apprenticeship NWT

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the first week of February, the Northwest Territories will reach a milestone. Since 1964, we have been certifying and recognizing our apprentices in their chosen fields.

During the past 40 years, our territory's buildings, roads and communities have been built through the efforts of certified tradespeople. Ever since 1968, when Colin Adjun from Kugluktuk received top tradesperson status in his course as a heavy equipment operator in Fort Smith, there has been no stopping northern residents from distinguishing themselves as electricians, plumbers, cooks, welders and in 37 other trades. Mr. Speaker, during the past 40 years, over 4,500 men and women have received their journey certification in the NWT.

Many residents have gone on to become entrepreneurs and today's leaders. People such as Bob Hanna of Fort Simpson, who not only holds five tickets but also runs a successful plumbing and mechanical business. I would be remiss if I also didn't recognize two successful tradespeople who are Cabinet Ministers, the Honourable Michael Miltenberger, a journey carpenter by trade; and the Honourable Floyd Roland, a journey motor vehicle mechanic. Mr. Speaker, in paying tribute to those who have literally paved the way during the past 40 years, we need to recognize what the latest generation of tradespeople will do for our Territories in the very near future.

These are the people who will build the proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline, our bridges, maintain and create our infrastructure, develop new power plants, build new mines and polish diamonds. Tradespeople are in high demand now and will be even more so in our future.

Mr. Speaker, while our apprenticeship and trades programs have been very successful over the years, we need to ensure that our northern workforce is better trained and benefits from future resource development. Programs such as the Schools North Apprenticeship Program where secondary school students can become registered apprentices in designated trades are now more important than ever. Work that is being done with our industry partners and through Aurora College will continue to be critical to our future success.

I will be inviting all Members to the apprenticeship awards ceremony on February 4th, to help honour our apprentices.

We know how far we have come in the last 40 years. We need to ensure that our northern workforce is ready and prepared to take us into the future. Please join me as we salute those who will create the roads for us to get there, and the homes we will live in...the tradespeople of the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Ministers' statements. Item 4, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 4: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Minister's Comments On Restructuring Boards Of Governance

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have just gathered as the 15th Assembly for the second time and there has been much reference at the outset to the merits and principles of consensus government. Premier Handley's remarks after being acclaimed as Premier included, "I think we have to work together, working together toward common goals." In his sessional statement today, the Premier referred to working together, trust and translating our good intentions into concrete actions.

As Mr. Handley said, later today there will be a press conference. An idea that actually emerged with the 14th Assembly will be acted upon when the 19 Members of this House meet sometime in April with other community, northern and aboriginal leaders. Mr. Speaker, this is the backdrop and the context in which I raise my concern today.

I heard comments in the media early on in our mandate which have caused me concern, and I have to believe have caused other northerners concern as well. Back in December, Mr. Handley made reference to the trilateral approach to negotiating devolution; that it had been slow and hadn't resulted in significant progress. In the absence of any reference to an alternative, immediately I began to wonder how this would be perceived by our aboriginal government partners who have been at the Intergovernmental Forum table with us. If a new approach to negotiating devolution had been considered, developed or approved, it is news to me.

Then, as recently as this morning, there it was on the CBC news: "Health Minister Michael Miltenberger proposes changes to health board operations. We need fewer boards and we should amalgamate education and health boards." If that's a government initiative or approved direction, it's not one that I had any part in developing or

discussing. I don't know what my constituents would think of this idea because, like me, they just heard it on the radio this morning.

I don't want to belabour this, Mr. Speaker. I think the Premier and the Minister get my point. It's an affront to the Members elected to this Assembly and to other northern and aboriginal leaders who we say we want a closer working relationship with, and to our constituents, to hear on the news in this manner, any reference to sweeping reform of governance structures for two areas of service and programs as significant and critical as health and education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Of course, the Members of this House, including myself, want to work together in a cooperative and constructive way, but hearing news as we did today is not going to serve that purpose. So let's get the line drawn right now, up front, that we're here to have meaningful input on this side of the House, on behalf of our constituents and we will not tolerate anything less. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Member's Statement On Cooperative Working Relationships

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to extend my best wishes for the new year to all the Members of this House, my constituents, the people of the NWT and especially my family. Mr. Speaker, as the honourable Member for Weledeh, our Premier indicated earlier that trust is a key component to making this government a productive partner in building a strong working relationship with other northern and aboriginal governments. As this government embarks on developing these new agreements with other governments, I can assure all the Members of this 15th Assembly that I will be at the forefront working to establish this trust and will be supporting this government so that we can all move forward with this new working relationship with the people of the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to inform the Members and my constituents that I am committed to continue working on the many issues in health, housing, education and economic development over the next four years, with particular emphasis on issues that can only be resolved if there is a trust between all governments, the Members of this House and the people of the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, in light of our fiscal situation, I realize -- and I'm sure many northerners do too -- that we all have to start working together in order to maximize our potential and to ensure a more efficient, effective and responsible delivery of programs and services for our people. I'm committed, and I trust this government is too, to meeting this challenge with enthusiasm and hard work. We cannot do this alone. This government will not only require the support of all our communities, but also some direction and dedication from all our strong northern leaders so that we can all make a positive change and set the stage for a brighter future for all our children. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. The Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Member's Statement On Recognition Of Commissioner's Scholastic Achievement Award Winners

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to start off my first statement of the new year by wishing a happy New Year to all my constituents and the other residents in the Northwest Territories and Members of this House, as well. My Member's statement today is one that I'm very proud to make, Mr. Speaker. I wish to recognize and acknowledge two constituents who have been honoured by winning the Minister's Award for Academic Achievement. This award is issued to the person receiving the highest mark in the Northwest Territories on departmental exams.

Mr. Sean McGee received the 2002-2003 award for Biology 30. Congratulations on a job well done. The next young gentleman I would like to make mention of and acknowledge is Mr. Jonathon Millard, who incredibly scored the highest marks in both Physics 30 and Social Studies 30. Mr. Mallard is currently attending the University of Toronto. I again would like to congratulate both young men on their outstanding scholastic achievements and wish them both well in their future endeavours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Member's Statement On Resident Justice Required For Hay River

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as most Members are aware, the Honourable Chief Judge Robert Halifax has retired after some 26 years of distinguished service to the residents of the North. A common theme that was echoed by many at Chief Judge Halifax's retirement party, Mr. Speaker, was the relationship with the people of all nine of the communities south of the lake that Robert Halifax was able to establish as a resident judge based in Hay River.

Mr. Speaker, in 1976, the Government of the Northwest Territories made an important decision to place a resident judge in Hay River upon the completion of the courthouse. Mr. Speaker, Hay River has been a judicial centre since that time and the residents of the South Slave have enjoyed the services of a resident judge for almost 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, there are many inherent benefits to having a resident judge in the South Slave. For example, a resident judge is essential to establishing continuity, both within the justice system and within the communities that are served. As well, they will get to know the families involved and the people's background, which I believe is key to an effective judicial process.

Another key benefit to a resident judge, Mr. Speaker, is the justice of the peace program, which has proven to be a tremendous success over the years. There are a number of long-serving justices of the peace south of the

lake and it's essential that this vital and valuable program be continued. Also, we would be in danger of losing, Mr. Speaker, the community-based justice programs that have been so effective in the South Slave.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it's imperative that we, as legislators, create a sustainable economic base at the community level. The support services for a resident judge are firmly established in Hay River. We have all of the infrastructure in place to fully support a resident judge and our location within the South Slave region is ideal for travel to all of the communities in the South Slave.

Mr. Speaker, there appears to be a force at work that is compiling statistics that imply a reduced workload for a judge in the South Slave communities, thereby justifying the argument that a resident judge is not required. Conversely, the statistics that I have been able to garner, which are far too extensive to go over in this forum, clearly show that there is a demonstrated need for a resident judge to serve the South Slave and that there is no reduced workload.

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

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

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I feel that it is incumbent upon the Minister of Justice to ensure that the needs of the residents of the nine communities south of the lake are taken into consideration when determining a replacement for resident Chief Judge Halifax. Mr. Speaker, I urge the Minister to do the right thing and ensure that a resident judge is placed in Hay River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Member's Statement On Addressing Youth Crime In The North

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the course of the past several months, a great deal of criminal activity has occurred in the riding of Inuvik Twin Lakes, as well as other parts of Inuvik. This raises a community-wide concern. In the opinion of my constituents, this issue has surfaced too many times in a number of forums without any recourse or corrective action.

Mr. Speaker, the issue of youth crimes is not the only source of contention or the only problem from my community's perspective. At issue is the Criminal Code as it is applied under the Youth Criminal Justice Act. Mr. Speaker, the "judicial measures" parts of the Youth Criminal Justice Act only reference how to deal with the conduct of judicial proceedings against young people.

Mr. Speaker, although the act itself conforms to the jurisprudence under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms where a young person must be provided with the opportunity to exercise his or her rights to counsel in private, subsection 25(2) requires the police to conform to this provision upon arrest or detention of a young person.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of my constituents emphasize that this speaks mainly to the provision of counsel and in no way does this subsection refer to the powers under which the young offender can be arrested or detained. We need further clarification on the due process for the act to effectively reduce or minimize youth crime in all our municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to discussing this very important matter more thoroughly with the Minister and his officials, in an attempt to make my constituents more aware of the effectiveness of this act and I will ask the Minister pertinent questions at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Member's Statement On Dealing Positively With Families

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm here to talk to you about family. This past weekend, I happened to have the pleasure of attending a special surprise birthday party for a couple of constituents of mine, Larry and Hermie Pineda. They're 75 years and 74 years of age respectively, and they've been married almost 54 years. I think that's an incredible feat to recognize and it's with an amazing amount of respect you have to look towards folks like this. They don't just build a family; they build a community, folks like this.

On that note, sometimes you can look around and there are sad stories out there that don't necessarily have happy endings and we have to pray extra hard. So at this moment, I want to recognize the teamwork of the Department of Health and Social Services over the Christmas season.

As we all know, Christmas is a stressful time. A constituent of mine came to me with a concern that truly was a life-and-death circumstance; it wasn't blown out of proportion. It was reality. I have to stress that the staff of the Department of Health and Social Services recognized the compassion needed to deal with the issue. They took a realistic approach with a willingness to find a solution. The staff did find a solution by taking reasonable steps and they worked within the policy and found a way to make this happen to unite a family.

So with that being said, I just want to take a moment to recognize them and say that though sometimes happy stories get overlooked about departments, I want to bring this forward today.

I'm going to close my statement by pointing out that I'm going to put this government on notice of my high expectation of a good working relationship between Cabinet Ministers and regular Members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. The Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Member's Statement On Passing Of Sahtu Residents During The Holiday Season

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to wish the House a happy New Year and say that I'm looking forward to working with the Cabinet on new initiatives for this year. Over the past couple of months, from early November to a couple of days ago, there were many deaths in the Sahtu region. This Christmas, there were Christmas cards, New Year's cards and sympathy cards. In the Sahtu, we had many losses and communities were heavily impacted. I want to acknowledge the families because it was one death after another and families, grandparents and children were all impacted. It was just one after another. The communities are really feeling it now. We need to do some work on dealing with losses in our regions, especially in our communities in the Sahtu. I want to look at that more closely.

However, Mr. Speaker, I want to just acknowledge the people in the Sahtu communities who have already dealt with these losses and hope that this government will also look at an approach to dealing with the losses of the families in the small communities. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that there are elders who were lost in our communities and a lot of knowledge left with them. People in our region are looking forward to working with their elders to deal with some of the issues that are being faced today. That's all I have to say, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement On Working In A Consensus System

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to start by complimenting Mr. Handley on his sessional address and the messages that he has again sent to the Assembly and to the people of the NWT about the desires that we have to really be an Assembly that demonstrates how consensus can work, and how we can get on and really prove by our actions that we can and will do a good job.

This morning, as my colleague Mrs. Groenewegen indicated in her statement, we heard on CBC news that Minister Michael Miltenberger was suggesting that sweeping changes to health, social services and education boards and authorities were in the offing. My concern, Mr. Speaker, is not with the substance of the idea but, at this early point in our Assembly, with how it was presented.

Hearing of an issue, even in the most general ways, but of something with the scope and the range of this kind of news is not the way we want to operate. It compromises us, Mr. Speaker, as regular Members, when we hear about this kind of thing outside of our process or, indeed, as one of our Members did in the coffee shop first thing this morning. It forces us into a reactive mode and, as I'm doing right now, a critical mode.

I don't want to work this way, Mr. Speaker. I want to be collaborative, constructive and, where I can, supportive. This is what consensus is all about. I know I speak for my colleagues when I say that we want to see this Assembly

set a new standard for consensus. What we heard this morning, Mr. Speaker, does not meet that standard. I'd like to remind Ministers that their best sounding board, their first sounding board, is just down the hall in the offices of the Members and in our committee rooms. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. The Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Member's Statement On Mackenzie Valley Gas Pipeline

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, mahsi cho. (Translation) Today, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak about the pipeline. (Translation ends) I would like to let them know that I'm on a steep learning curve, but I am getting up to speed.

Speaking of getting up to speed, Mr. Speaker, the GNWT needs to get up to speed on dealing with the opportunities that will come with the construction of the gas pipeline down the Mackenzie.

---Applause

Oil and gas remains central to the economic development and viability of the Deh Cho region and the NWT. Even though this government has placed great emphasis on the Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline, it has not attached the necessary resources for communities to capitalize on the opportunities that will be available to them in the very near future. For example, the communities future loan fund in my region is one of the smallest in the NWT.

In short, Mr. Speaker, we need to get ready for the pipeline. We need to have funding in place to support aboriginal and local businesses in getting their share of opportunities. We need to have employment and training opportunities coordinated with the needs of industry.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, there is a need for a central agency in Fort Simpson to coordinate all economic and GNWT activities relating to the construction and operation of the pipeline up the Mackenzie. The federal government has created a pipeline readiness office to deal with the pipeline from their perspective. I believe the time is now for the GNWT to show leadership and open a similar office in Fort Simpson. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Member's Statement On Social Conditions In The NWT

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we embark on our work as the 15th legislature in earnest today and in response to the Premier's sessional statement, I would like to take this opportunity to express my strong and very broad desire to work very hard and to do everything I can during the life of this Assembly to improve the social conditions of the residents of the Northwest Territories.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, just in the two months since our election in November, not a week has gone by when we haven't heard reports in the media about an array of tragedies befalling our people. Just in this month of January, we're on the verge of breaking all records in suicides, homicides and other incidents, most of them related to alcohol and drug use and abuse.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we're very well aware of the enormous economic and political potential we have as a territory and people. We're experiencing already a great deal of wealth coming from mining industries. Yet, there are so many in our communities and in our city who are unwell or hurting too much from abuse to enjoy this wealth and progress. We have too many addicted to alcohol and drugs or unrecovered from abuse they have suffered in the past, or those who are born with the effects of alcohol.

Mr. Speaker, I firmly believe that at the end of our time here, no amount of progress in devolution or formula financing self-government agreements would mean much or make much difference, or be of much value, unless we make an equal progress in addressing the social conditions of our people so that our children are growing with a fair chance at a full life, that they are given opportunities to educate themselves and take full advantage of all that our economic and political advancements have to offer. We need to heal the adults suffering from abuse and addiction of all forms so that they can raise our young and be full participants of our society.

I would like to close this statement, Mr. Speaker, by pledging my commitment to work with everyone in this House, and my proven energy and tenacity to move this agenda and to put the government on notice that they should expect to hear from me about these issues in the days and months to come, in and out of this House, in whatever means I can possibly express them, to make sure that we make real and substantial progress by the end of this term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. The Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Member's Statement On Health And Social Services Staffing Levels

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to speak about health and social services and staffing in my riding of Nunakput. For the past number of years, the Nunakput riding has experienced reductions in services and staffing. A number of other concerns are raised by my constituents, such as elderly patients traveling without escorts and the lack of translation services. Recently, Mr. Speaker, on my return to Yellowknife, I received a short memo from the Minister of Health and copy of the letter indicating the closure of the health centre in Paulatuk, from January 6th to the 9th, 2004. This concerns me as well as my constituents.

The Inuvik Regional Hospital may at times provide translation services. Plus, let's not forget the Inuvialuit. There are different languages, dialects. How can this be addressed to ensure my constituents receive proper translation services? Also, Mr. Speaker, escorts for elderly patients should be reviewed because our loved ones may not feel comfortable when traveling alone to an urban or city centre.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, these reductions in services and staffing cause great frustration both to the nurses, doctors and the public. So where do we go from here?

In closing, Mr. Speaker, again, I will follow up with the Health Minister on these issues sometime during the next session of the legislature. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, Members' statements. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have in the gallery, students from Kiononia Christian School in Yellowknife. The students came and visited here last year during the last assembly and we enjoyed it so much that they insisted that they come back here and they call this House "righteous house." With the indulgence of the House, if I may recognize the students one by one, if they could get up and be recognized: Lydiah Rabesca; Layah Rabesca; Nadia Wilson; Devon Allooloo; Michael Fowler; Jena Westergreen; Hannah McLeod; Nathan Rabesca; Liam Cameron; and the parents, Titus -- a former Member of this House -- Titus Allooloo; Cathy Allooloo and Mrs. Westergreen; and the teachers, Mr. Gordon Johnston and Morina Feenstra. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Welcome to the House. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have three constituents in the gallery I would like to recognize today: Mr. Blake Lyons, who is president of the NWT Association of Communities and a constituent; also, Ms. Karen Hamre, a businessperson in town and a former candidate in the NWT election; also, Barb Wyness, with the UNW, who is joining us again. I should mention that she is beside Mr. Todd Parsons and both of them participated in a reading buddies program at Weledeh with me. Also I would like to make special note of an old friend, Mr. Ed Jeske, who typically joins us on our openings in the House here. Thank you.

---Applause

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to note one of our most notable seniors in Yellowknife, Mr. Ed Jeske. I believe he is up there, he was waving to me when I came in. Thank you.

---Applause

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

HON HENRY ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to recognize Yvette Gonzales, executive director for the NWT Association of Communities. She is up there somewhere.

---Applause

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome...as Mr. Menicoche said while I'm on a learning curve, I would like to recognize the visitor in the gallery, my spouse, Cheryl Bonnetrouge, who also supported me through this process. I want to say I love you, babe.

---Laughter

---Applause

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

HON BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Zoe beat me to the punch but I would like to recognize Yvette Gonzales, the ED for the NWTAC, and also a constituent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to recognize Karen Hamre, my opponent from the most recent territorial election, and also Mr. Pierre LeBlanc, formerly of the Canadian Armed Forces, one of the commanders and now a very valued member of the business community in the resource section. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the Gallery. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to recognize two constituents. First of all, Major Karen Hoefft with the Salvation Army and a constituent; also Pierre LeBlanc with Canadian Diamond Consultants and one of my constituents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Welcome to the House. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize my sister, Lorayne Menicoche-Moses. Thank you very much.

---Applause

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

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a prominent member of the Akaitcho Territory Government who was up there earlier, I am not sure if he is there now, but Mr. Peter Liske.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. For those people who haven't been recognized, I would like to welcome you to the gallery and thank you for coming. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 1-15(2): Minister's Comments On Board Restructuring

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am following up on my Member's statement today and being the very fair person that I am I wanted to give Mr. Miltenberger a chance to perhaps clear up any misconceptions, apprehensions, fears that may be out there in the public with respect to the direction that his department may be going with the health board. I would like to ask the Minister if he could tell what perhaps precipitated this report that appeared in the media today and is there anything going on in the department right now, specifically and recently in this direction? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 1-15(2): Minister's Comments On Board Restructuring

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the interviewing question was precipitated around the issue of the Stanton board and an update in terms of what was happening with the Stanton board that dissolved prior to the end of the 14th Assembly. A decision was made to leave it empty for the life of the 14th Assembly, because it was anticipated there would be a broad review of governance of boards and agencies at the start of the 15th Assembly. I was asked what the status was; I indicated that the plan was still the same, that there was no plan to change the current arrangement where we have a CEO reporting to a public administrator, and that the issue of boards and agencies and governance was an issue of interest to the legislature of the 15th Assembly, and that we were currently in the process of deciding how we intended to address the issue. I was asked if we were intending to use southern consultants. I indicated no, we weren't, and in fact that there was some work from the 14th Assembly that was on its way to conclusion; that specifically being the review of the Dogrib Community Services Board, which is a board that has been in place now for a number of years, and in fact where health and social services and education are delivered under one board. I indicated that, in fact, that review would be part of the decision-making information that's put on the table for the legislature in terms of what we were going to do to address the broader issue.

Mr. Speaker, that was my recollection of the interview. As I indicated, the issue was precipitated by a question about what is happening with the Stanton board. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 1-15(2): Minister's Comments On Board Restructuring

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that answer. I would like to, without getting into debating the merits of health boards versus community service boards, just ask the Minister to outline for us what process would be undertaken if this were to become a topic of discussion. What kind of consultation would take place, and would it take into account the direction and aspirations of some of the self-government negotiations currently underway? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. I heard two questions there. Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 1-15(2): Minister's Comments On Board Restructuring

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, clearly as a legislature we have not come to grips with the specific plans of action for a lot of these broad areas. I indicated to Ms. MacDougall that in fact it was an issue before the legislature and we were still in relatively early days and we hadn't come to any decision on how we wanted to proceed on reviewing that issue, but the intent was to address this issue hopefully in the coming months. So regardless of what approach is taken, clearly it will come before this House. It will be at the direction and understanding of this House how we're going to proceed, and will involve consultation, it will involve clearly accommodating whatever self-government arrangements are currently in existence or will be coming into existence. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 1-15(2): Minister's Comments On Board Restructuring

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just in view of how much education and health services do impact people's lives, I wonder if the Minister would commit to this House and to the public to defer any further discussion and work on this until perhaps we could put it on the agenda of the Circle of Northern Leaders meeting that we anticipate we'll be having, so that a broad direction could be set in reference to this as a governance issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Health and Social Services.

Further Return To Question 1-15(2): Minister's Comments On Board Restructuring

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the one piece of work that is drawing to a conclusion is the review of the Dogrib Community Services Board. At this point, as I've indicated, we haven't as a legislature agreed on any particular course of action. So clearly we are not going to be moving until that is clear. I, as Minister, will be coming back to Cabinet with the results of the review. We've heard the concern of the Member, and clearly we have some work to do before we're ready to move in any particular direction. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Question 2-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Justice, the Honourable Charles Dent. As I stated in my Member's statement, the Honourable Chief Judge Robert Halifax retired in the fall after some 26 years of distinguished service to the North. In view of the fact that this has created a vacancy in Hay River, and indeed in the judicial system in the North, could the Minister explain to this House what his role is in filling this vacancy created by the retirement of the resident judge in the South Slave? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Justice, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 2-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Territorial Court Act establishes the process for the appointment of territorial judges. Basically, there is a Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee which is established by the act. The chief judge chairs it, and the membership consists also of the senior territorial judge, four members of the public appointed by the Commissioner in Executive Council, and two lawyers appointed by the Law Society. The committee advertises the vacancy, reviews the applications, assesses the qualifications of candidates, and in confidence gives the Commissioner in Executive Council a ranked list of the candidates it recommends with brief supporting reasons. Cabinet then can consider for appointment only those candidates who are on that list and recommended by the committee. The act does not compel the Executive Council to accept the recommended candidates, but we're not sure because the act is silent regarding what the process would be if that was not followed.

In terms of the residence of the judge, the Territorial Court Act does provide that appointment may specify the location at which a judge must reside. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary To Question 2-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Minister has to go to Cabinet with this, could the Minister please advise the House as to who his informers/advisors are on what kind of recommendations you'll go to Cabinet with? Who are his informers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Justice.

Further Return To Question 2-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

HON. CHARLES DENT: Mr. Speaker, as I said, the committee will recommend a list of people that must be presented to Cabinet. It's not up to the Minister to make any sort of recommendation at all. In fact, the Minister does not make a recommendation as to the appointment of a judge. The Minister only presents the letter that is provided by the committee to Cabinet, and then Cabinet

as a whole will make a selection. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary To Question 2-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that this part of the judicial system in the North especially affects the residents of the South Slave, what consultation has the Minister done, or does he intend to do, in helping him make a decision as to where the resident judge should be placed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Justice, Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 2-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the chief judge will provide some advice on this issue, as likely will the committee that's going to be making some recommendations. All of the information will be based on the workload that is found in whatever regions we have in the Northwest Territories, so it's not an issue of consultation. I have been contacted by Members of this House, I have been contacted by the mayor of Hay River and by the president of the Chamber of Commerce, so I have heard from people about the interest as to where the position would be located. I will ensure that, when this is considered, all the information is put before my Cabinet colleagues, then the decision will be made.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary To Question 2-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the Minister would make sure that he has all the accurate information in front of him on all aspects of this issue before he makes a decision. It is my understanding in reading the act that the Minister can make a recommendation to Executive Council when he does present a short list to council. Would the Minister commit that he recommends that this resident judge be placed in Hay River or in the South Slave? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Justice, Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 2-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My advice isn't that I can make a recommendation about who should be hired. It is clearly a decision of Cabinet, that a location or residence can be stipulated. But as Attorney General for the Northwest Territories, part of my responsibility is to present the case that the judges bring forward, as well. So I have to present the arguments that are given to me by the chief justice and advocate on their behalf, as well as keeping in mind the political sensitivities around the issue. I think that the Members can be assured that Cabinet will have all of the facts before them and will consider this appointment very carefully.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Question 3-15(2): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Opportunities

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With regard to my Member's statement, I'd like to ask the Minister of RWED for the GNWT's current strategy for coordinating the GNWT activities relating to a pipeline being built down the Mackenzie Valley.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 3-15(2): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Opportunities

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With regard to the Member's statement, the Member is certainly correct that this is one of the bigger challenges this government faces. He referenced the pipeline readiness office that DIAND has brought forward, and that is certainly something and a development that we are looking to work with. We do have the Mackenzie Valley preparedness division of RWED that is working in connection with the pipeline readiness office, and obviously there is a lot of collaboration that has to go on in order to make sure that residents are able to take care or take advantage of the economic development opportunities that will be coming their way. The Member referenced the community futures program. That is something that we believe is a cornerstone of economic development in the Northwest Territories, but it has been grossly underfunded historically. I think the Member knows that in the transfer with HRD in the early 90s, insufficient funding was transferred to cover all of the regions in the Northwest Territories. We have added to that pot with our own funds. The Business Credit Corporation has also made loans available to the community futures program at simply our borrowing cost. So we have been working with the community futures program to make sure that it meets as many needs as possible with residents of the Northwest Territories, specifically in this area to take advantage of economic development opportunities relating to the pipeline. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Menicoché.

Supplementary To Question 3-15(2): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Opportunities

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'd just like to ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, if the government is going to create some kind of readiness offices or something similar in the near future. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 3-15(2): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Opportunities

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is something that we are having internal discussion about with the Mackenzie Valley development planning office of RWED that is heading up the government's efforts in this regard, but we do have a committee of deputy ministers that is working on the government response and we have done a number of things in collaboration with DIAND already and the pipeline readiness office. I don't know if the Member is aware, but both RWED and DIAND did

contract the McLeod Institute to look at options for collaborative approaches and strategies to manage impacts and take advantage of economic development opportunities caused by oil and gas development. We have also, as a government, hired a consultant to help us develop a clear and achievable 2003 strategic action plan to take advantage of the opportunities as well. So we have had a lot of discussion about working in closer collaboration with the pipeline readiness office and these are discussions that are ongoing, but we do recognize the need to make sure that we have folks on the ground to help our residents take advantage of opportunities that come their way. Thank you.

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

Question 4-15(2): Correctional Officers' Pay Scale Dispute

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, I believe it is Mr. Roland. Mr. Speaker, my question has to do with a dispute that has existed between correctional officers in our facilities in the North and the GNWT as an employer. It is too complicated to go into, but this is something that a lot of my constituents have brought up and it has to do with the dispute between the government and the correctional officers on the pay scale. The dispute got to the stage where it got to the arbitration and, in the last conversation I had with the government, the government has made it clear that it would follow whatever the arbitrator's decision might be. So it was with great pleasure that I saw a notice on January 15th that the arbitrator ruled in favour of the employer. I would like to know whether or not the Minister has addressed his mind to this issue, and to get his commitment that he will follow the arbitrator's decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 4-15(2): Correctional Officers' Pay Scale Dispute

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct. Arbitration has been dealt with and we have gotten the decision. I myself have had a chance to just look at it briefly, but I intend to bring it forward to FMBS to have a decision on that and we will notify the Member as soon as we have that decision made. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 4-15(2): Correctional Officers' Pay Scale Dispute

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the spirit of cooperation and working together, and knowing that the Cabinet Ministers are messengers for the Members to take our messages to Cabinet, could I get the commitment from Minister Roland that he would do his job to convince the FMBS or the board that he is going to be meeting with that the just thing, and the right thing is to follow these arbitrations and to pay these correctional officers the retroactive pay they have been without and the arbitrator has ruled to be in their favour? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 4-15(2): Correctional Officers' Pay Scale Dispute

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, the Member is correct in the decision. As I stated, I will be bringing forward the decision paper to FMB and will be making a decision around that issue. We have had a chance to look at a preliminary and, following that, will be bringing it forward. My intention is to do the right thing for all of government and we need to look at the whole decision and its impacts for government, but my intention again, is to bring it forward and to have the decision made in the very near future around this issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 4-15(2): Correctional Officers' Pay Scale Dispute

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the answer from the Minister. Could I have a commitment from the Minister that he will do everything in his power and exercise good will in doing everything he can to avoid a situation like the pay equity dispute that we had that was long and protracted and very expensive, and that he would do everything he can to shorten this process and get to the conclusion as soon as possible? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 4-15(2): Correctional Officers' Pay Scale Dispute

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, it is my intention to ensure that we as a government are doing the right thing for the benefit of all people in the Northwest Territories. In this case it has gone to arbitration, a decision has been rendered and we will be bringing that forward for a decision by FMB. I will ensure, from my part, that we will be doing the best for those affected as well as for the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Your final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 4-15(2): Correctional Officers' Pay Scale Dispute

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must say, for the first day he is very good at rounding out his answers because he keeps saying that he will do what is good for the government and the workers. We know that this arbitration has to do with the grievance that the employees have against the government as an employer, and they have now a fair and just arbitration decision. So could I get the commitment from the Minister to do all he can to commit with Cabinet Ministers that we cannot afford any more pay equity disputes that cost us millions and have for years? Would he give me a commitment that he will do everything he can to avoid that? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 4-15(2): Correctional Officers' Pay Scale Dispute

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will do everything in my power to ensure under my watch that we do not get into another scenario of pay equity that has cost the Government of the Northwest Territories millions over the years. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Question 5-15(2): Treatment Of Young Offenders

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I made reference to certain points in my Member's statement regarding the Youth Criminal Justice Act, I want to ask the Minister if he would advise this Assembly upon request to his department, that they would work more closely with RCMP under the policing agreement as well as in accordance with subsection 3.2.1 to provide greater clarity for the police officers who arrest or detain young offenders under the act, and if he could kindly explain how he plans to do that. Thank you.

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

Return To Question 5-15(2): Treatment Of Young Offenders

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hope to have an opportunity to meet fairly soon with the chief superintendent of the RCMP and will certainly offer to work in collaboration with the RCMP to ensure that we are moving issues of justice and law enforcement forward.

I would like to make clear though, that the RCMP's ability to arrest youth has not changed under this act. The Youth Criminal Justice Act hasn't changed the circumstances under which a young person could be arrested, but the RCMP must consider extrajudicial measures now before proceeding with charges. I think that may be the issue that the Member would like us to address. I can commit that we will move to address that quickly.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Allen.

Supplementary To Question 5-15(2): Treatment Of Young Offenders

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of contentious issues under the new act, but it's important that the Minister conveys to the public on an official basis that they need to be aware of the process used to deter any youth criminal activity, as it is certainly becoming a territory-wide problem. Would he kindly address that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Justice, Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 5-15(2): Treatment Of Young Offenders

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that it's important that people become more aware throughout the Territories of the options that are available now for dealing with youth who have run

afoul of the law. Alternative measures, such as youth justice committees, are certainly an important aspect to deal with those circumstances. I think it's important that we try to make sure more and more people are aware of these options, and that we do what we can to support the committees in their operations throughout the Territories. So we'll certainly work towards further emphasizing the use of youth justice committees. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Allen.

Supplementary To Question 5-15(2): Treatment Of Young Offenders

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I refer to the point that this whole issue speaks mainly for provision of counsel. It doesn't speak to the provisions under the act of how they're going to eradicate youth crime in the communities, and that's a contentious issue across the Northwest Territories. So I'm asking the Minister again, is he willing and prepared to work more closely with the community-vested interest groups who deal with youth crime, and how he intends to deal with it through his portfolio? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Justice, Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 5-15(2): Treatment Of Young Offenders

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories currently funds one position with the RCMP to work with communities across the North in trying to address community concerns about crime, and particularly youth crime. It certainly is an issue that is of concern to the department and this government. If the Member has any suggestions for how we can better work in the communities to address issues around youth crime, I'm prepared to commit to work with him to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Braden.

Question 6-15(2): Cabinet Consultation With Regular Members

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question this afternoon is for the Premier and it regards the issue that I made my statement on, as did Mrs. Groenewegen: the operation of consensus government. I would like to ask the Premier what are Cabinet's procedures when it comes to major government initiatives, and the expectations that are on Ministers when it comes to consulting with Members in committees? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 6-15(2): Cabinet Consultation With Regular Members

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated in my sessional statement, our government intends to operate on the principles of inclusion and partnership. We intend to bring all major decisions to the regular Members, mostly through the committees, and also to work in partnership with other governments. That's the reason we're planning the Circle of Northern Leaders meeting later this year, as I announced. But inclusion, partnership, consensus, I think, are cornerstones for our

type of government and we intend to do everything to adhere to that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 6-15(2): Cabinet Consultation With Regular Members

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, in the Premier's response, he indicated that it is the intention to be inclusive, to promote partnership and I certainly support that. But the question I would like to ask is, in his response he said it's the intention of Cabinet to take all major decisions to committees and partners. This is very much the point, Mr. Speaker, of what we have a problem with: whether decisions are brought to committees or Members, not the question of whether there is an issue to be discussed or to be negotiated. So I would like to ask the Premier again, would he care to clarify that statement? Is Cabinet simply going to make decisions, or are we going to be indeed included in discussions that would lead up to those decisions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 6-15(2): Cabinet Consultation With Regular Members

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, any decision requires a lot of consultation and discussion. I think over the last days since our government was elected, we've had a lot of discussions and I think a lot of topics were dealt with. We certainly want to continue with that kind of consultation. In arriving at a decision, then we will work very closely with committee. We will bring the information we have, we will listen to what the concerns are and then we will proceed. In the end, a decision has to be made and I think that in the end, it will fall to us as a government to make that final decision after the consultations take place. We would hope that we would get the endorsement of this House for the decision that we do make. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Delorey.

Question 7-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Honourable Joe Handley, Premier of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, in my line of questioning a little earlier with the Minister of Justice, it seems to me that I heard that the Minister is not prepared to go to Cabinet with a decision on the replacement of the resident judge in Hay River and that he's getting his direction from the judiciary. So it creates some concern, Mr. Speaker, that if his information is coming from the judiciary, who is looking after the interests of the people? I just heard the Premier say that every decision that's made requires a lot of consultation and input. I would like to ask the Premier if he would commit to making a recommendation to Cabinet that the resident judge in Hay River is re-established. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 7-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I had a good meeting in Hay River last week with the mayor and some council and MLAs from Hay River. This issue was raised at that meeting. I committed to making sure we have all of the information, the best information available to us in making this decision. A paper will be brought to Cabinet by the Minister of Justice, and at that point we'll look at the information and Cabinet will make a decision at that time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary To Question 7-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Premier just said that when the paper comes to Cabinet they will look at all the information and make a decision at that time. What avenue do we have or do people have to get the information to Cabinet that we want Cabinet to look at, not just the information that comes from the judiciary? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 7-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think all of the MLAs are now aware of this issue. If there are any questions, I certainly invite you to talk to me or talk to the Minister of Justice. Our door is open, we welcome you to come and discuss it with us. When I met in Hay River, the concerns were raised. At that meeting, I also invited people to provide me with information. I gave them a summary of the information I had and asked that if they felt it wasn't correct, then provide me with the other side as well. So the door is open for Members to approach us with more information, better information if they want. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary To Question 7-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier commit to also passing on to Cabinet the negative possible impacts that not replacing the resident judge in Hay River could have on the community; both what he has been informed of so far and any information that comes to him between now and the decision? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier.

Further Return To Question 7-15(2): Resident Justice Vacancy In Hay River

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, yes, we will. I listened very carefully in Hay River last week. I listened very carefully to the Member's statement today. If there's other information, I welcome that as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 8-15(2): Update On Intergovernmental Forum And Devolution

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Premier and they are with respect to the issue of devolution, which I referred to in my Member's statement, and some comments that he had made.

Mr. Speaker, we have a new Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. We have a new Prime Minister. Everyone, I think, in the territory agrees that devolution and discussions with Ottawa and with our aboriginal governments and partner governments is a very critical thing. I'd like to ask Mr. Handley for an update on the status of the work of the Intergovernmental Forum and the devolution framework agreement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 8-15(2): Update On Intergovernmental Forum And Devolution

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Intergovernmental Forum has not met since last spring when we had our meeting in Inuvik. At that time, the then-Minister of DIAND, Robert Nault, asked that a framework agreement -- basically a process document that would outline how negotiations would proceed -- be prepared and be signed. Over the summer, that document was prepared and, in fact, it was initialed off, I believe, by all or at least most of the aboriginal leadership and also by our government.

The Intergovernmental Forum meeting in the fall was postponed and the framework agreement is now waiting for signature by all of the participants. I believe four of the aboriginal leaders who are leaders of the economic forum have already signed, and others have indicated that they are considering it. I expect we will have six out of seven of the aboriginal leaders willing to sign, with some negotiations yet to be completed. So that document is proceeding.

I had some brief discussions with the Minister of DIAND, Andy Mitchell, last week. He indicates to me that devolution is still very much a priority for his department and for the federal government. So I'm looking forward to the next opportunity to discuss the framework agreement and devolution generally with him, as well as with the Prime Minister. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 8-15(2): Update On Intergovernmental Forum And Devolution

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in light of how important this is in terms of the timing of some of the resource development and things which are emerging, when will the Premier be meeting with Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Martin on the subject? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 8-15(2): Update On Intergovernmental Forum And Devolution

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of DIAND was going to be in Yellowknife this week, but other

priorities got in the way so he has postponed. I don't have a date yet of when I'll be able to meet with him. If it's not soon, then I intend to talk with him by phone. Mr. Speaker, as well, there is a possibility of a First Ministers meeting in Ottawa next week, and if there is I certainly intend to be there and intend to raise this issue with the Prime Minister at that time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 8-15(2): Update On Intergovernmental Forum And Devolution

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank the Premier for those answers. I'd also like to, again for the benefit of the people, of our constituents who follow our proceedings and listen to what's going on, I'd like to ask the Premier if he could outline for us the significance of seeing progress on this front in light of some of the development that we are anticipating. I think sometimes people talk a lot about devolution and resource revenue sharing, but perhaps don't fully comprehend the absolute importance and significance of it in terms of our wellbeing as a territory. Could the Premier please make reference to that? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 8-15(2): Update On Intergovernmental Forum And Devolution

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a very complex process, but I'll try to be brief. First of all, devolution means the transfer of responsibility for land and resources from the federal government to the territorial and aboriginal governments. It is a trilateral process now, meaning there's a three-way negotiation between the Aboriginal Summit representing the aboriginal governments, our government and the federal government. So it's a process that if successful would mean that between ourselves and aboriginal governments we would have the same authority and responsibility as does a province.

On the resource revenue sharing side, then that side is critical to devolution as well, because we do not want to take on responsibility for land and resources and programs and services that come with it without having the dollars to go along to be able to pay for it. So we don't want a situation, Mr. Speaker, where we have the responsibility, but the revenues still flow to the federal government without us getting a fair share that results in a fiscal benefit. So that is being negotiated at the same time. Not only is it complicated as a trilateral process between three parties, it's also complicated because devolution is handled by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and resource revenue sharing is handled by Finance. Given the size of the federal government, it's like dealing with two different governments in many ways. I hope with the new federal government we're able to bring some coordination between the federal Department of Finance and Department of Indian and Northern Affairs so that we can talk about devolution and resource revenue sharing in one process.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that gives an overview, but it's complicated. I know a lot of the public don't really understand what devolution means. The bottom line to me is that devolution of resources and lands and the resource revenue sharing means that we as northerners are able then to make decisions that affect our lives. We won't

have someone in Ottawa licensing a mine or heading up an environmental review process. That will be our responsibility. We'll be the ones who decide our own future here. That's what we want, the same as do the aboriginal governments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 8-15(2): Update On Intergovernmental Forum And Devolution

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, I think I can determine from the Premier's response that any reference I heard in a media interview that would suggest that anything other than a trilateral negotiation is not anything that he would consider or would even be possible. Could he please confirm that for me? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 8-15(2): Update On Intergovernmental Forum And Devolution

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, our government and aboriginal governments have been talking about devolution for more than 17 years. We don't want to be seeing that process just continuing on for another four years under our watch. We want to see some process made on that. So would I consider any other alternative? I like the trilateral model. That's the way to do business: government to government to government. But if there is not an interest in pursuing devolution by the federal government or by any other partners, then we have to look at some other model. Right now I'm optimistic that the federal government is on side. Minister Mitchell has told me they are. We have a meeting this week with some of the aboriginal leadership. I hope to hear the same message from them and if we can go on with confidence that we're negotiating devolution in a trilateral process with everybody's intention to meet a timeframe that will say we're going to finish off this exercise, not drag it on for many more years while our people do without. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 9-15(2): Dealing With Loss Of Residents In The Sahtu Region

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I make reference to my statement this afternoon. My question is to the Minister of Health and Social Services in regard to supporting the people in the Sahtu region in terms of dealing with many of their losses in November and December and just recently, a couple days ago, an elderly lady passed away in Fort Good Hope that the Sahtu people need to be acknowledged and, I guess, to recognize that we're carving out our own territory. In many aspects of what we're discussing this afternoon and that we have the resources to reinvest in our people here, we want to develop a model with the department to deal with these sensitive issues, such as losses to our communities.

The question to the Minister is, would he consider meeting with some of the people in the Sahtu to develop a regional model to deal with the crisis and losses in our communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return To Question 9-15(2): Dealing With Loss Of Residents In The Sahtu Region

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've been engaged in a process now for some months in terms of setting up a separate, standalone Sahtu authority to deal with health and social services. We're currently in a state of transition, separating from Inuvik. There have been, as my colleagues indicated, a number of unfortunate deaths in the Sahtu, and the staff in the communities have been under a lot of pressure to deal with them.

The Member, as well, has been very persistent in terms of requesting that I come into the region and meet with the community leaders and we, in fact, intend to do that the second week in February with the Member. I'm talking to officials from the Sahtu authority, as well as some staff from the department, and we will sit down and we will talk about what's possible as we look at how we're going to structure services in the Sahtu so that they best reflect what are identified as critical issues by the people of the Sahtu. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 9-15(2): Dealing With Loss Of Residents In The Sahtu Region

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess on the short-term notice here, would the Minister consider dealing with the losses in the Sahtu region with our communities? I understand the long-term goals and aspirations are the separate health board for the Sahtu, however, when we're looking at losses such as what we're having in the Sahtu and how it contributes to many other areas in someone's life, we're looking for some guidance on this issue from this government here to take the measures to deal with it as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 9-15(2): Dealing With Loss Of Residents In The Sahtu Region

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to hear the specific suggestions that the Member may have. I can tell the Member that the staff from Inuvik, from Norman Wells and the staff in the various communities have been working extensively with the communities right now to deal with the issues surrounding the many deaths currently happening in the Sahtu. As well, the RCMP have been involved. As the Member has indicated, the communities have been affected. So if he has suggestions over and above what is already being done and the longer-term stuff we're looking at, I would be more than happy to talk to him so that we could have discussions with the people in the Sahtu and with the authorities in the Sahtu to make sure we're doing everything possible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Allen.

Question 10-15(2): Pipeline Employment Opportunities

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is again to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment with regard to his Minister's statement. It's in the context of if he can explain to this Assembly if he's aware of a union of pipeline politics in the NWT and how it impacts the employing economy in the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 10-15(2): Pipeline Employment Opportunities

HON. CHARLES DENT: Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid I don't have an answer for that question. I'll have to take it as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, petitions. Item 9, reports of standing and special committees. Item 10, tabling of documents. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 10: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 1-15(2): Aurora College 2002/2003 Annual Report

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Aurora College 2002/2003 Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 10, tabling of documents. Mr. Handley.

Tabled Document 2-15(2): Tlicho Agreement

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have two documents for tabling. First, Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Tlicho Agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Tabled Document 3-15(2): Tlicho Agreement Implementation Plan

As well, Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Tlicho Agreement Implementation Plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 10, tabling of documents. Mr. McLeod.

Tabled Document 4-15(2): Transportation Of Dangerous Goods Report For 2003

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Minister of Transportation's Annual Report on the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act (1990) for 2003. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 10, tabling of documents. Item 11, notices of motion. Mr. Villeneuve.

ITEM 11: NOTICES OF MOTION**Motion 1-15(2): To Amend Rule 85 Of The Rules Of The Legislative Assembly**

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, January 22nd, 2004, I will move the following motion: NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that the rules of the Legislative Assembly be amended by rescinding Rule 85(2) and substituting the following:

- (2) The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight shall;
 - a) Review issues which have government-wide implications, including the overview of the budget and fiscal framework;
 - b) Review multi-year business plans, budgets and those of the department of the Executive, including the Executive offices, the Financial Management Board Secretariat, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Finance;
 - c) Consider the budgets and financial management of any other boards and agencies that are outside the responsibility of any standing committee;
 - d) Examine the reports on the annual financial statements and public accounts of the Government of the Northwest Territories and the report of the Auditor General.
 - (i) In the event that the Assembly is not in session the Speaker may provide the Auditor General's report and the Minister of Finance may provide public accounts to the committee for review, which may include public hearings in advance of tabling;
 - e) Review government reports on financial and performance results on program and policy evaluations to ensure anticipated outcomes are being achieved and accountability is maximized;
 - f) Review, as necessary or appropriate, the annual and other reports of statutory offices of the Legislative Assembly, including the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, the Equal Pay Commissioner and the Human Rights Commissioner;
 - g) Coordinate House business, scheduling and planning in cooperation with appropriate Cabinet representatives; and,
 - h) Consider any other matters referred by the House.

AND FURTHER that Rule 85(3) be rescinded and the following substituted:

- (3) The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development shall consider the following matters with respect to the departments of Public Works and Services, Municipal and Community Affairs, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, and Transportation:
 - a) Review multi-year business plans and budgets, bills, and boards and agencies including the Workers' Compensation Board, the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, the NWT Development Corporation, the Business Credit Corporation and the Public Utilities Board;
 - b) Review departmental performance, including that of boards and agencies; and,
 - c) Consider any other matter referred by the House.

AND FURTHERMORE that Rule 85(5) be rescinded and the following substituted:

- (5) The Standing Committee on Social Programs shall consider the following matters with respect to the departments of Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment, Justice, and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation:
 - a) Review multi-year business plans and budgets, bills, boards and agencies, including the Status of Women Council, and programs for Seniors, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities;
 - b) Review departmental performance, including that of boards and agencies; and,
 - c) Consider any other matter referred by the House.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Item 11, notices of motion. Mr. Braden.

Motion 2-15(2): Appointments To The Standing Committee On Governance And Economic Development

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, January 22, 2004, I will move the following motion: NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that the following Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development: Mr. Allen, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. Delorey, Member for Hay River North; Mrs. Groenewegen, Member for Hay River South; Mr. Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh; Mr. Ramsay, Member for Kam Lake; Mr. Villeneuve, Member for Tu Nedhe.

AND FURTHER that the following Members be named alternates to the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development: Mr. Braden, Member for Great Slave; Mr. Pokiak, Member for Nunakput; Mr. Yakeleya, Member for Sahtu.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Item 11, notices of motion. Mr. Ramsay.

Motion 3-15(2): Appointments To The Standing Committee On Social Programs

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, January 22, 2004, I will move the following motion: NOW THEREFORE I MOVE,

seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that the following Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Social Programs: Mr. Braden, Member for Great Slave; Mr. Hawkins, Member for Yellowknife Centre; Ms. Lee, Member for Range Lake; Mr. Pokiak, Member for Nunakput; Mr. Yakeleya, Member for Sahtu.

AND FURTHER that the following Members be named alternates to the Standing Committee on Social Programs: Mrs. Groenewegen, Member for Hay River South; Mr. Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh; Mr. Villeneuve, Member for Tu Nedhe.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Item 11, notices of motion. Ms. Lee.

Motion 4-15(2): Appointments To The Standing Committee On Rules And Procedures

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, January 22, 2004, I will move the following motion: NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that the following Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures: The Honourable Mr. Bell, Member for Yellowknife South; Mr. Braden, Member for Great Slave; Mr. Delorey, Member for Hay River North; Mr. Hawkins, Member for Yellowknife Centre; Mr. Villeneuve, Member for Tu Nedhe.

AND FURTHER that the following Members be named alternates to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures: Mr. Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh; Mr. Pokiak, Member for Nunakput; Mr. Ramsay, Member for Kam Lake.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Item 11, notices of motion. Item 12, notices of motion for first reading of bills.

ITEM 12: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 1: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2003-2004

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, January 22, 2004, I will move that Bill 1, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2003-2004, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 12, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 13, motions. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Rule 85 of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly prescribe and describe the mandates of the standing committees of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to make changes to the mandates of the standing committees to better reflect their work and to equitably apportion responsibilities among committees;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kam Lake, that the rules of the Legislative Assembly...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Villeneuve, are you seeking unanimous consent to deal with your motion?

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

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion. Are there any nays? You have unanimous consent. Continue.

ITEM 13: MOTIONS

Motion 1-15(2) To Amend Rule 85 Of the Rules Of The Legislative Assembly, Carried

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll try again.

---Laughter

WHEREAS Rule 85 of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly prescribe and describe the mandates of the Standing Committees of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to make changes to the mandates of the Standing Committees to better reflect their work and to equitably apportion responsibilities among committees;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that the rules of the Legislative Assembly be amended by rescinding Rule 85(2) and substituting the following:

- (2) The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight shall;
 - a) Review issues which have government-wide implications including the overview of the budget and fiscal framework;
 - b) Review multi-year business plans, budgets and bills of the Department of the Executive, including the executive offices, the Financial Management Board Secretariat, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, and the Department of Finance;
 - c) Consider the budgets and financial management of any other boards and agencies that are outside the responsibility of any standing committee;
 - d) Examine the reports on the annual financial statements and public accounts of the Government of the Northwest Territories and the report of the Auditor General.
 - (i) In the event that the Assembly is not in session, the Speaker may provide the Auditor General's report and the Minister of Finance may provide the public accounts to the committee for review, which may include public hearings in advance of tabling;
 - e) Review government reports on financial and performance results and program and policy evaluations to ensure anticipated outcomes are being achieved and accountability is maximized;
 - f) Review, as necessary or appropriate, the annual and other reports of statutory officers of the Legislative Assembly,

including the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, the Equal Pay Commissioner and the Human Rights Commissioner;

- g) Coordinate House business scheduling and planning in cooperation with appropriate Cabinet representatives; and
- h) Consider any other matter referred by the House.

AND FURTHER that Rule 85(3) be rescinded and the following substituted:

- (3) The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development shall consider the following matters with respect to the departments of Public Works and Services, Municipal and Community Affairs, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, and Transportation:
 - a) Review multi-year business plans and budgets, bills, and boards and agencies including the Workers' Compensation Board, the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, the NWT Development Corporation, the Business Credit Corporation and the Public Utilities Board;
 - b) Review departmental performance, including that of boards and agencies; and,
 - c) Consider any other matter referred by the House.

AND FURTHERMORE that Rule 85(5) be rescinded and the following substituted:

- (5) The Standing Committee on Social Programs shall consider the following matters with respect to the departments of Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment, Justice, and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation:
 - a) Review multi-year business plans and budgets, bills, boards and agencies, including the Status of Women Council, and programs for Seniors, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities;
 - b) Review departmental performance, including that of boards and agencies; and,
 - c) Consider any other matter referred by the House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried unanimously.

---Carried

Item 13, motions. Ms. Lee.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with her motion. Are there any nays? You have unanimous consent. Continue.

Motion 4-15(2): Appointments To The Standing Committee On Rules And Procedures, Carried

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Rule 85 requires that Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that the following Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures: The Honourable Mr. Bell, Member for Yellowknife South; Mr. Braden, Member for Great Slave; Mr. Delorey, Member for Hay River North; Mr. Hawkins, Member for Yellowknife Centre; Mr. Villeneuve, Member for Tu Nedhe.

AND FURTHER that the following Members be named alternates to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures: Mr. Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh; Mr. Pokiak, Member for Nunakput; Mr. Ramsay, Member for Kam Lake.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried unanimously.

----Carried

Item 13, motions. Mr. Braden.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion. Are there any nays? You have unanimous consent. Continue.

Motion 2-15(2): Appointments To The Standing Committee On Governance And Economic Development, Carried

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Rule 85 requires that Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that the following Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development: Mr. Allen, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. Delorey, Member for Hay River North; Mrs. Groenewegen, Member for Hay River South; Mr. Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh; Mr. Ramsay, Member for Kam Lake; Mr. Villeneuve, Member for Tu Nedhe.

AND FURTHER that the following Members be named alternates to the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development: Mr. Braden, Member for Great Slave; Mr. Pokiak, Member for Nunakput; Mr. Yakeleya, Member for Sahtu. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried unanimously.

---Carried

Item 13, motions. Mr. Ramsay.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion. Are there any nays? You have unanimous consent. Continue.

Motion 3-15(2): Appointments To The Standing Committee On Social Programs, Carried

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Rule 85 requires that Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Social Programs;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that the following Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Social Programs: Mr. Braden, Member for Great Slave; Mr. Hawkins, Member for Yellowknife Centre; Ms. Lee, Member for Range Lake; Mr. Pokiak, Member for Nunakput; Mr. Yakeleya, Member for Sahtu.

AND FURTHER that the following Members be named alternates to the Standing Committee on Social Programs: Mrs. Groenewegen, Member for Hay River South; Mr. Menicoche, Member for Nahendeh; Mr. Villeneuve, Member for Tu Nedhe. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried unanimously.

---Carried

Item 13, motions. Item 14, first reading of bills. Item 15, second reading of bills. Item 16, Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 16: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Tim Mercer): Orders of the Day for Wednesday, January 21, 2004:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements

3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Petitions
10. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
11. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
12. Tabling of Documents
13. Notices of Motion
14. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
15. Motions
16. First Reading of Bills
17. Second Reading of Bills
18. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
19. Report of Committee of the Whole
20. Third Reading of Bills
21. Prorogation

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, January 21, 2004, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 3:40 p.m.