

March 27, 1996



HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Krutko on March 22nd, regarding contamination of the Fort McPherson water supply.

The Member for Mackenzie Delta asked if the Department of Transportation was taking measures to alleviate the hamlet of Fort McPherson's concerns about the possible accidental contamination of its water supply from the Dempster Highway.

The department has no record of an accident ever occurring on the highway in the vicinity of the water source. Nonetheless, the department plans to widen the highway this year from 7.5 metres to 10.5 metres which will improve traffic safety and reduce the likelihood of an accident near the water source. The department also plans to install guardrails along the highway beside the lake to reduce further the possibility of a vehicle leaving the road and contaminating the water source.

The Member's question also raises the possibility of contamination from the calcium chloride the department applies on the highway to control dust. Dust control improves visibility on the highway and helps to maintain safe driving conditions. The water source is tested regularly, and the department has no evidence that calcium chloride from the highway is contaminating the water supply.

The Department of Transportation would prefer to continue applying calcium chloride on the highway. It makes a positive contribution to highway safety and reduces the amount of dust that would otherwise settle in the reservoir. However, should the hamlet of Fort McPherson so request, the department will promptly discontinue its dust control program near the water source.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

May 14, 1996

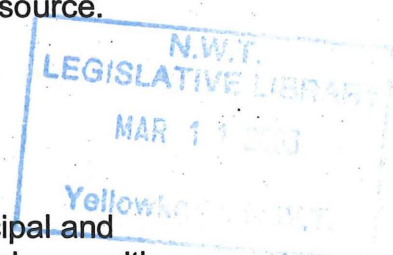
MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs or Public works and Services, whoever can help me with the issue of the water treatment plant in Fort McPherson, which I made note of in my opening statement. Over the years, there has been a real concern. This past spring has probably been the worst. The water smells and has heavy traces of chlorine. People have been complaining to the Health department, the

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hamlet office and myself asking if anything is going to be done.

The mayor of Fort McPherson has written to Goo Arlooktoo with regard to the possibility of finding an alternative well, or lake. Their main concern is because the lake that is presently being used has become a dead lake. That is where they are tracing the water to. In a report I received yesterday from Ken Lovely, it clearly states that one prominent concern, which is still outstanding, is that ... (inaudible) ... which is a by-product between chlorine and certain dissolved organisms in the water system. THM is a source of



carcinogens, which is a cancer-causing component. That is what is in this report.

My concern is, if this is a cancer-causing component in the water treatment process, what effect is it having on the population of Fort McPherson. The solution is to try to pour as much chlorine into the system to get rid of this cancer causing component. It doesn't seem to be working. My question to the Minister is, will he make this a priority item for his department and find the resources needed to look at a new water source and resolve this problem which I now see as a health issue and not just a public issue.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Deputy Premier.

Return To Question 211-13(3): Quality Of Drinking Water In Fort McPherson

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of the situation. I did give information to the Member this morning, which was the report he talks about. In this report, it states that the water quality is an annual problem. It talks about a temporary problem on an annual basis. I am informed that the water quality is treated and it does conform to the Canadian drinking water guidelines. However, there are complaints about odour and discolouration. As for further work that the Member asks about, I am informed that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has allocated \$40,000 to review the functions and operations of the existing water supply for next year. The intent there is to find and recommend a more stable year round water source. So we are working on it.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 211-13(3): Quality Of Drinking Water In Fort McPherson

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't see \$40,000 as much of a solution to a major problem, especially when we are talking about cancer-causing components which are being traced to the water treatment process. My view is it has to be a larger-scale project than just the \$40,000 Band-Aid solution, which we are going to have to deal with next year. Will the Minister allocate reasonable amounts of revenue and also work along with the community as soon as possible to try to find an alternative source of water to deal with this concern at this time?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Deputy Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 211-13(3): Quality Of Drinking Water In Fort McPherson

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker,* I understand the concern. It is a priority for me and for the department, which is why the government has set aside \$40,000 to begin the process of finding a better way to deal with the problem. I am not prepared to commit anything else at this time. We are currently looking into this matter and we will keep the Member informed.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 211-13(3): Quality Of Drinking Water In Fort McPherson

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister make adequate resources available to deal with this problem? I don't think \$40,000 is adequate; \$40,000 is probably what it costs you to fly your consultants in from Edmonton to give you a report that says it will happen again next year and you can fly us back in again. It costs more than \$40,000 to review this problem. Will the Minister make adequate resources available to resolve this problem which is more than \$40,000?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Deputy Premier, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 211-13(3): Quality Of Drinking Water In Fort McPherson

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is looking into cost effective options to provide a more stable, year-round water source. Once that department has completed this review and identified ways of dealing with it, then the Department of Public Works will go out and do it. The question of finding resources is, there is no money there. There is no money.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 211-13(3): Quality Of Drinking Water In Fort McPherson

MR. KRUTKO:

I think I would like to ask the Minister when will he be able to find adequate resources to deal with this problem if you do not have the money now. Clearly, in this report it says there are cancer-causing components in the water system. You are telling me you don't have the resources, but we have a report here which says there are cancer-causing components. When will we be able to find the resources to deal with it?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Deputy Premier.

Further Return To Question 211-13(3): Quality Of Drinking Water In Fort McPherson

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, the review is not yet complete. I share the concerns of the Member. Once the review is completed, I will, along with input and consultation

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with the Member and the community, review the situation and go through the appropriate process.

February 23, 2000

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine. As referred to in my Member's statement, I am concerned about the issue of water quality, which has been a

problem in the past, most notably a sensitivity to the smell, the colour and the taste of the water in Fort McPherson.

It has now become more of a health concern with the discovery of THMs, which is a cancer-causing component traced to bladder cancer, especially in eastern Canada. If you had the opportunity to watch the National during Christmas and New Years there was a major broadcast on the number of bladder cancers in the smaller communities in eastern Canada. They were all traced to this particular chemical, which is THM.

Because of that I feel this situation Fort McPherson finds itself in is at a crisis level. That is why I have spoken to the Minister of Indian Affairs as well as our Member of Parliament. The community of Fort McPherson is taking steps to resolve this as soon as possible.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs to tell me what his department has done to date to try to resolve this issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 15-14(2): Fort McPherson Water Quality

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the issue of water quality in Fort McPherson has been an issue for a while here, and the department has been involved in trying to resolve it. I know it has been outstanding for a long time with the colour and the smell and the liquidity of the water.

I have been in Fort McPherson and they gave me a glass to drink, but I would not drink it. I am aware of the situation. In trying to resolve it, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has been working with the health board in the Inuvik region, as well as Public Works and Services.

We discussed this with the community in December. The area of THMs, which is now a health concern, has come to light. As a result of that, we tried a number of solutions.

We tried to fix the water containers and clean the pipes, but it is still not good enough. The department has issued filters as an interim measure. To date, I understand there have not been any complaints received from the community about the water quality since the introduction of the filters.

Last week, on February 15th, the acting deputy minister was in Inuvik and Fort McPherson, and held a series of meetings to discuss the water issue, including the status of the water supply and improvements. I am told Deepwater Lake has been identified as a new source of water and this project is a priority.

The department is working to try to rearrange the project financing to allow for the use of Deepwater Lake. We have an application to the Gwich'in Tribal Council for access to Deepwater Lake, since it is on the Gwich'in lands. We need to apply to have access to it. This is what the department has been doing to date. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

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MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, could the Cabinet Minister indicate exactly what the next steps his department is going to take to ensure that this project does come to light and is done in a speedy manner? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 15-14(2): Fort McPherson Water Quality

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this project of having a new and better water supply for Fort McPherson was a P3 pilot project and that has been flipped into the conventional capital projects. We will have to work towards rearranging the project financing through the normal process. This will be done through the help of the department. The department will need to arrange that and with the help of the standing committees of this House, we will have to look at that.

At the same time, since Deepwater Lake is on the Gwich'in tribal lands, and based on the discussions with the president of the Gwich'in Tribal Council last week, we anticipate the negotiations could begin on access and use of Deepwater Lake as soon as possible.

We have to prepare a management plan for the Deepwater Lake watershed as well, and a design will be carried out concurrent with the negotiations with the Gwich'in Tribal Council. Trying to acquire the permission to have access to the lake with the Gwich'in Tribal Council is going to start very soon, and refinancing internally within the department will start as soon as it can.

This takes time and we will be sure it is a priority. The health of the people in Fort McPherson is a major concern to us. We will try to move as fast as we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko, second supplementary.

Supplementary to Question 15-14(2): Fort McPherson Water Quality

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell me if there will be any activities regarding the upgrade of the water treatment plant in Fort McPherson so that that work can continue? And will that work take place this summer?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 15-14(2): Fort McPherson Water Quality

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Mr. Speaker, through the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and working with the Public Works and Services department, we will continue to make changes to the treatment, including installing holding tanks to increase the effectiveness of the treatment chemicals.

We have been testing the Brita filters in households for several months.

These are just temporary measures. The end goal is to eventually have access to Deepwater Lake to have a good supply of water. These measures at this time are interim measures and we are trying to provide good water to the community. These are the initiatives we are doing now. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Antoine. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.
Supplementary to Question 15-14(2): Fort McPherson Water Quality

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With my final supplementary I would like to ask the Minister has he worked with his counterpart, the Minister of Health and Social Services, to see what the health implications of this chemical are on the residents of Fort McPherson? In my statement, I made reference to the concerns that were raised in eastern Canada where this has been determined to cause large cases of bladder cancer. It showed that people in smaller communities in eastern Canada had more cases of this cancer, especially in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Can the Minister tell me if he has had the opportunity to speak with his counterpart to see what the health implications are?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Honourable Minister Antoine.

Further Return to Question 15-14(2): Fort McPherson Water Quality

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the different departments in this government have been working together in this case, at the regional level as well as the headquarter level.

At this point in time, I am not fully briefed on the implications of the health effects regarding chemicals that are in the water. As soon as I get that kind of information, I will share it with my colleague across the floor here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Antoine. Oral questions, the Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

February 23, 2000

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement today is about something we all take for granted - water. Water, water, everywhere, and not a drop to drink. I think we take for granted the ability to pick up a glass of water and drink it without having any second thoughts as to what is in the water and where it may have come from.

Mr. Speaker, this is an issue I have raised in this House over the last four years, the issue of the water quality in Fort McPherson. I have not spoken publicly on this issue in some time, but I believe it is now more grave than ever. There is a chemical in the water system in Fort McPherson called THM, or trihalomethane.

The concern comes when the water is mixed in with chlorine, because it causes a reaction. As everyone here knows, all water in Canada has to be treated with chlorine. The community of Fort McPherson has made statements publicly on this concern through the airwaves, and the newspapers.

I have been doing my best to ensure that this issue is dealt with through the means that I have. I have raised this issue with the Minister of Indian Affairs, and with our Member of Parliament, the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, and with the newly elected Premier, the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, along with the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

To try to find a quick solution to deal with this problem, and to ensure this will be done with our best efforts, realizing that we do have some restrictions and restraints in the process of reaching a conclusion, I would like to make the public and the people of Fort McPherson aware that this issue is high on my agenda. It has been brought up with the Minister of Indian Affairs, who, along with the federal department of Indian and Northern Affairs and this government must work to ensure that this public issue is dealt with as an emergency crisis.

With that, I will be asking the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs questions on this matter later on. Thank you.

February 28, 2000

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. It is regarding the questions I asked last week of the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. I am speaking of the large numbers of THMs, or trihalomethanes, which are known to have an effect, especially when consumed over an extended period of time, on public and private health.

There are federal standards in place that allow for 100 parts per billion. Those are the federal guidelines. Yet the tests that have been taken on the water in Fort McPherson have exceeded the national standards.

Mr. Speaker, last week, large amounts of THMs found in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland have set off alarms. They are a group of chemicals suspected of causing bladder cancer, colon cancer and the possibility of still-births. THMs are in that group. I would like to ask the Minister, how seriously is her department taking this issue? What is her department doing to ensure something is done on this matter? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 64-14(2): High Volume Consumption of THMs

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct. During the past two years, THM levels in Fort McPherson's water supply have been above the national guidelines for community drinking water quality of a limit of 100 parts per billion.

Fortunately, we do not have any evidence that THMs are causing ill health to the people in Fort McPherson. However, Municipal and Community Affairs, the Department of Health and Social Services, and the regional governments are working together. All parties agree that a long-term solution is to develop an alternative water source.

There are agreements that need to be put in place in order for that to occur. Municipal and Community Affairs has been working with the Gwich'in Tribal Council to develop Deepwater Lake as a new water source for the community of Fort McPherson.

The work has been ongoing. It has not happened as quickly as the department would like to have seen. There have been some obstacles. In the meantime, temporary measures for the residents are in place, such as

drinking bottled water and filtering drinking water with a Brita home filter. If drinking water was obtained from sources outside of the community supply, the water should be boiled prior to drinking. Mr. Speaker, these are the interim measures that have been taken to address this problem. Indeed, a long-term solution is necessary. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 64-14(2): High Volume Consumption of THMs

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister made reference that there is no evidence as to what THMs are doing to the people of Fort McPherson. How do you detect that? Do we have to have a number of deaths in the community? Or still-births? Is that the type of detection the Minister is waiting for? How will you detect that this is a public health concern?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 64-14(2): High Volume Consumption of THMs

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is again correct. Recent studies have reported associations between THM levels and certain types of cancer, as well as an adverse affect on pregnancy outcomes.

These studies are, to date, inconclusive. A national task group was established in 1998 to comprehensively assess the risks of THMs. To our knowledge, none of the side effects of THMs have been identified to date in Fort McPherson. However, the department is going to be interested to continue to monitor that situation. Hopefully, the long term solution will come about before we ever get to the point where we are having recorded cases of anything related to the drinking water.

Mr. Speaker, the roles of the Government of the Northwest Territories departments that have been acting on this matter are as follows: Municipal and Community Affairs has taken the lead role and provides the funding in this area; Public Works and Services provides the technical support; and Health and Social Services acts in an advisory capacity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 64-14(2): High Volume Consumption of THMs

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to know if the Minister's department has made any attempts to find out about the incidents that are occurring in eastern Canada regarding the THM readings in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland?

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 64-14(2): High Volume Consumption of THMs

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the statistics from Nova Scotia and Newfoundland with respect to THM levels. I know the Government of the Northwest Territories, through our department, keeps a registry of certain types of illness, such as cancer. Certainly, the statistics for Fort McPherson could be made available to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.
Supplementary to Question 64-14(2): High Volume Consumption of THMs

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister what attempts her department is making to ensure the people in Fort McPherson can be assured this is going to be monitored, and the health of the people in Fort McPherson will be checked on a regular basis to ensure this does not become a problem? That we do not find, down the road, this was the cause of major increases in cancer cases or birth defects?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Groenewegen.

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not certain I fully understand the Member's question. Is it what measures has the department taken to ensure there will not be any negative outcomes in the future? Was that the question?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mrs. Groenewegen, I will ask the Member if he could repeat his question for clarification. Mr. Kutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is that I want some assurances from the government that there will be ongoing tests, so people in Fort McPherson will be monitored to ensure there are no major increases in cancer cases or birth defects?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Tests and monitoring, Minister Groenewegen.
Further Return to Question 64-14(2): High Volume Consumption of THMs

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services, through their tracking of incidents like the kinds of illness Mr. Krutko is referring to, will continue to report and register these illnesses.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

February 29, 2000

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I placed a question yesterday to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. I would like to continue that line of questioning relating to THMs and the drinking water for the residents of Fort McPherson.

The Minister stated yesterday she is aware of the problem and there is an urgency to find solutions to the problem. Regarding an article I tabled yesterday in the House in MacLean's magazine, a similar problem was identified in Nova Scotia. They also had THMs in their water system. That article states the alarm bells were ringing because this group of chemical by-products are suspected of causing bladder cancer, colon cancer and possibilities of still-borns.

Mr. Speaker, one of the concerns I have is the whole method we have of monitoring cancer statistics, and what not is done through the cancer registry. Usually, at that time, it is too late. You have to have cancer in order to be on the registry.

I would like to ask the Minister, is there any possible way her department, which is responsible for the health and well being of the people in the Northwest Territories, can find a method that will address the concerns of the people I represent? Can they find a method that will give them some comfort that there will be the necessary preventative measures taken, especially with the technology we have, x-rays, mammogram machines and so on? Can they make an effort to go to the community and ensure that there will be an ongoing monitoring program? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the ongoing monitoring of the health concerns of the people in Mr. Krutko's community of Fort McPherson will be dealt with through their visits with their health care practitioners and the professionals who work in that community.

I am not sure if there is any other way to monitor the health concerns the Member speaks of. We are confident as a department that this is somewhat being done with the use of Brita water filters, which every member of the community was given. That particular situation continues to monitor the drinking water in Fort McPherson for THMs on an ongoing basis. We found the monitoring has been very successful. There has been a reduction of 70 percent of the THMs in the water, just using this method.

Mr. Speaker, the Member is speaking of potential health problems. The question is somewhat hypothetical. There is no evidence at this point in time that there will be health problems in the future. I want to assure the Member again the parties that are working on this situation realize it is of great importance to the community. My department will continue to work with the other departments involved to ensure this is addressed as soon as possible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Groenewegen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the region I represent asked for a public inquiry because of the health care service we receive in our communities. Yet we have to wait a month to see a doctor. Many times,

people go to the health centre time and time again, and are later diagnosed with cancer.

If you think the simple thing is to go to the nursing station and they will take your blood...we do not do that. We have to either fly to Yellowknife or go to southern institutions to get this treatment. I would like to again ask the Minister if she would seriously consider looking at a preventative measure program to be implemented immediately in the community of Fort McPherson, to ensure the residents this government is seriously considering the preventative process we have in place so THMs will not cause cancer down the road? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to work with the Member to discuss any screening or monitoring he feels his constituents do not have access to through the health care services provided in their community. I would be happy to hear what he might propose. Specifically, what the Department of Health and Social Services should do to address his concerns. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not avoiding the issue. The question I asked is talking about the THMs in Fort McPherson. I think that is not being dealt with here. Through the research I have done to date, there is a major concern, because no one really knows the long term effects of this chemical.

The solution of using Brita filters...we are talking about little, portable filters you put about half a gallon of water in and stick in your fridge. That is what the people have in their community. The Brita filters we have in place are only good if we are making sure they are monitored to ensure the filters are changed on a regular basis.

The water they have in the houses are placed in 200 gallon portable units, which are inside the house. That is where the THM sits until you take it out of a tap. I think the Minister can state that the Brita filters prevent it, but I would like to know from the Minister, can she guarantee the residents of Fort McPherson that the guidelines that are in place to ensure these Brita filters are continuously changed so they will serve their

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intended purpose? If they are not changed, they are not doing any good to anybody.

I would like to ask the Minister where did she get her advice on the Brita filters and how productive are they if you do not change the filters?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I receive my information from the chief medical officer of the Northwest Territories. Ongoing analysis of Fort McPherson's drinking water indicates Brita filters are very effective in removing THMs. Prior to issuing the THM health advisory on November 30th, 1999, the Environmental Health Services of the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Board made arrangements for testing the effectiveness of Brita filters with Fort McPherson's drinking water.

A series of samples were analysed, which compared the THM levels of water from the treatment plant before and after it was passed through the Brita filters. The results indicated an approximate 70 percent reduction in THM levels in the water that was passed through the Brita filter. This reduced the THM level well below the interim maximum acceptable concentration of 0.1 milligrams per litre, established in the guidelines for Canadian drinking water quality.

Based on these results, staff at the Inuvik Health and Social Services Board advised residents of Fort McPherson, during a public meeting held on December 9th, 1999, to filter their drinking water with a Brita filter, and to follow all filter flushing and replacement instructions to maintain water quality. Municipal and Community Affairs distributed Brita filters to community residents and ongoing weekly testing of the effectiveness of Brita filters continues to indicate they are very effective in lowering the THM levels in water. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko. Supplementary to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is great they have done this test. I would like to know what happens to these Brita filters after you use them for three weeks in the fridge? What if you have a family of seven, all of whom are using these filters consistently after three or four weeks? What kind of guarantee can this Minister provide the residents of Fort McPherson that by using the Brita filter system, you will have a 100 percent guarantee after three weeks of use? Can the Minister provide this?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 90-14(2): Addressing the Health of Delta Residents

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate to the Member that this is a matter of concern, not only to my department but also to the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, it is important for the residents of Fort McPherson to carefully follow the instructions that have been provided with the Brita filters. The Brita

filters are an interim measure until a new water source can be accessed for the community. It is the best we can do in the interim. I would encourage residents to follow the instructions carefully.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult for me as a Minister to guarantee residents will do this. If there is any further information or public awareness we can provide in the community, we are certainly willing to take a look at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 91-14(2): Independent Testing of Fort McPherson Water

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. I would like to ask the Minister if he would consider looking at an outside professional to perform tests regarding the water problem in Fort McPherson? Someone who is outside the Government of the Northwest Territories, or existing laboratory services we have? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 91-14(2): Independent Testing of Fort McPherson Water

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Health and Social Services, and Public Works and Services are the three departments involved with the community right now, trying to resolve this issue. They are trying to establish a long term solution of getting a good, fresh water supply.

In the interim, we are trying to clean up the existing system by using the Brita water filtering system. There are a number of tests going on. I will try to identify who is doing the testing, and we will see if there is a requirement to bring in an outside agency, as the honourable Member is requesting. I would like to assess what we are all doing in terms of testing the water. I know there are serious concerns in the community of Fort McPherson about the quality of water. If there is a health hazard, we certainly want to identify it. I will seriously consider the suggestion made by the honourable Member here today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The time allocated for the extended question period has expired. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

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ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 8-14(2): THMs in Fort McPherson's Drinking Water

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My written question is regarding THMs in the Fort McPherson drinking water.

During the second session of the 14th Legislative Assembly, the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services noted the urgent problems that residents of Fort McPherson were having with their drinking water.

I referred to an article in MacLean's magazine, January 24, 2000, which indicated the community of Endfield, Nova Scotia, has also had problems with trihalomethanes (THMs). That article stated that alarm bells were ringing because this group of chemical by-products is suspected of causing cases of bladder and colon cancer and possible stillbirths.

The Minister responsible for Health and Social Services is requested to:

- 1) Advise how she plans to make available to the residents of Fort McPherson all necessary preventative technologies, like x-rays and mammograms, which will allow for the possible early detection of these types of cancers.
- 2) Provide residents with guidelines for the effective use of Brita water systems.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

March 21, 2000

March 21, 2001

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Return to Written Question 8-14(2) asked by Mr. Krutko to the Minister of Health and Social Services concerning THMs in Fort McPherson's drinking water.

Return to Written Question 8-14(2): THMs in Fort McPherson Drinking Water
I am pleased to respond to questions regarding trihalomethanes (THMs) in Fort McPherson's drinking water.

1. Availability of necessary preventative technologies for early detection of cancers

Screening against cancer is a core program of the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Board. All NWT residents have access to necessary preventative technologies for the early detection of cancers.

In Fort McPherson, well woman and well man clinics are held weekly to enable people to come for regular check-ups. In addition, the community health representative calls people on their birthday to come in for a check-up. If any problem at all is identified, the nurse offers to do a clinical examination or refer the person to the doctor, who visits monthly, if this could help them feel more comfortable. If a problem is identified in the nurse's examination, the patient will be referred to the doctor or sent to Inuvik for further investigation. Every effort is made to ensure that opportunities are available to residents to help them monitor their health.

2. Provide residents with guidelines for effective use of BRITA water filters
Environmental Health staff of the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Board prepared guidelines for home treatment of drinking water, including the use of BRITA water filters. These guidelines were provided to all residents

who were issued a BRITA water filter by the hamlet office. In addition, the BRITA filter system and replacement filters come with instructions on the effective use of this particular filter system.

March 23, 2000

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to commend my colleague at the end of the table for his perseverance. My final two questions are will the work that is being done address the issue of THMs? Are other projects being deferred to accommodate this? If so, what would those projects be? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are going to have to go through a supp on this one here. We do not anticipate any cuts in other areas. The re-profiling of the dollars that were going to be slated in the five-year capital plan for this project, our intention is not to cut other programs to accommodate Fort McPherson. Yes, it would eliminate the THM problem. The water we are getting from Deepwater Lake is clean, fresh water. We anticipate it will eliminate the THM problem once we start accessing Deepwater Lake. Thank you.

June 26, 2000

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is about the environmental side when it comes to water contamination. In my riding, there have been traces of THMs in the drinking water of the community. There were alerts given by the Department of Health and Social Services. What role does the environmental protection group play with the environmental health people when you have situations like the THM problem in Fort McPherson?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):

Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY:

Mr. Chairman, the responsibility for water issues rests with the federal government. When it comes to water quality, then our department, through environmental protection, monitors the water quality. It is not directly our responsibility. The provision of clean water to homes does fit within Health and Social Services' responsibilities. This is largely still a federal responsibility. Thank you.

November 6, 2000

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I made reference to the unforeseen circumstances that we find ourselves in Fort McPherson with the high cost of operating the existing water system. It has increased by some \$220,000 to \$442,000 this year and a projected \$400,000 next year. Knowing, Mr. Speaker, that the main cause is the THM problem in Fort McPherson with regard to the contamination of the water system that we

have, because of that, the hamlet has no way of being able to recoup a lot of these costs. Yet, Mr. Speaker, this is an emergency and this has been recognized as a priority of this government. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, is there any possible way that the community of Fort McPherson could receive emergency funding to offset the costs that have doubled in the last year? Can the Minister tell me, is there a possibility of receiving supplementary emergency funding for this program?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 205-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Supply

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am certainly aware of the Member's community problems with the water. It has been an ongoing issue. We had the liberty of meeting early this afternoon trying to resolve some of the problem areas. We are certainly on the path to some kind of resolution of the problem areas. Though it is going to take some time, I just wanted to advise the Member that we will continue to consult with the parties that are dealing with this matter.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 205-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Supply

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in plain English, can the Minister go forward to Cabinet and ask for a supplementary appropriation to access funding to offset the costs to Fort McPherson?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 205-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Supply

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not prepared at this time. I made a commitment earlier this afternoon to consult with all parties involved to verify the expenses and perhaps some expenses that were legitimate in the context of an original agreement. I have committed to that process and I will continue to work with the Member and also His Worship from Fort McPherson. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 205-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Supply

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has programs in place to assist municipalities when they are in trouble financially or they find themselves in a deficit and also with regard to unforeseen circumstances. So can the Minister tell me does the municipality of Fort McPherson fit into any of those categories where they can receive funding from this government?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 205-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Supply

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have been working very diligently to address some of the key problems in the municipalities. We have introduced a new formula financing agreement, or at least a proposal, to provide another method of funding to the municipalities that would encompass other fiscal problems. Their intention, of course, is for the department to make it much more flexible so the communities have the ability to deal with some of those problems. At this point, we are still working on it and I am going to keep all Members informed of our progress. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Allen. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 205-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Supply

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the present time, the municipality's original budget was \$220,000 to maintain funding in their budget. Almost half their budget right now is going to the cost of this increase to the water problem in Fort McPherson. Again, I would like to ask the Minister, will he make an effort besides just saying he is going to meet, to actually do something to deal with the problem in Fort McPherson?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 205-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Supply

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are undertaking a lot of work at this point and I do have a plan of action in place. We will continue that plan of action. Hopefully we will have that resolved in due time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

November 9, 2000

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, everybody knows the Minister is new, but this item is not new. It has been around from the 13th Assembly until today. It was made a priority of this government in regards to the THM contamination with the water system in Fort McPherson, so it was this government that made it a priority to spend \$2.5 million to try to find a way to get through the process. However, that \$2.5 million that is being expended is to try to find a new water source. That will not be coming on stream for another year or so due to the timing problem. We are dealing with the problem today, which is the increased cost because of the contamination with the existing facility. Again, I will ask the Minister, will the Minister be doing anything on this matter or will he just basically tell the community of Fort McPherson that he does not have the willpower or the ability to do anything?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Two questions there. You may deal with either one or both.

Further Return to Question 258-14(3): Request for Emergency Funding

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have gone to great lengths in trying to ratify this problem. We have communicated that back to the municipality and hopefully they will agree to the method in which we are trying to achieve the objectives here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 258-14(3): Request for Emergency Funding

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe there is a supplementary appropriation coming to this House within the next days or weeks. There is an avenue for this Minister to deal with this problem that he might not think is a crisis situation, but it is having a major impact on the residents of Fort McPherson and the Hamlet of Fort McPherson to carry out their duties. When you have a cost of delivering a particular service taking up half of your budget to administer a community, that is a crisis. Because of these crises, will you consider bringing it forth through a supplementary with regard to approaching the Minister responsible for Finance and making sure it is in there?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 258-14(3): Request for Emergency Funding

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am trying to establish very clearly the legitimate reason for supplementary appropriation. The question was raised earlier in regard to the health and to the quality of water. We will take that into full consideration. I must advise the Member that we will undertake all endeavours in trying to resolve this problem. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Allen. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 258-14(3): Request for Emergency Funding

MR. KRUTKO:

Mr. Speaker, could the Minister tell me if he has any timeframes that he sees this problem being resolved in? I would like to see this resolved as soon as possible. Does the Minister have any idea how long it will take to resolve this issue?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Allen.

Further Return to Question 258-14(3): Request for Emergency Funding

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, I refer back to the answer I gave yesterday. We will have our senior staff work with the municipality to try to come together with a quick plan of action that will resolve the problem.

Hopefully we can settle the issue. That is my answer. Thank you, Mr.

Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Allen. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions.

Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Krutko, you had your hand up under what item?

MR. KRUTKO:

I have a written question to the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Krutko, I had passed it. You can seek consent to return, but I had passed it already. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 7, written questions.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 7, written questions. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Krutko, you may return to written questions.

REVERT TO ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 15-14(3): Fort McPherson Water Quality

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a Written Question for the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. Why are the residents of Fort McPherson having to pay more for water that is contaminated with THMs and the people do not trust the water that comes from their taps? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

February 22, 2001

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Governor General, in her Speech from the Throne on January 30 of this year, made several commitments on behalf of the federal government concerning clean water. They include the following:

The federal government will:

1. Fulfill their direct responsibility for water, including the safety of the water supply on reserves and federal lands.
2. Commit to developing stronger national guidelines for water quality through enhancement of scientific research in collaboration with partners.
3. Strengthen the role of the National Water Research Institute of Canada.
4. Find improvements in municipal water and waste water systems through the federal, provincial and municipal infrastructure Canadian programs.
5. Invest in research and development, and advance the information systems enabling better land use and the protection of both surface waters and ground water supplies from the impact of industrial and agriculture operations...

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Krutko, may I have a question? Mr. Krutko.

Question 365-14(3): Update on Clean Water Initiatives

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question is to the Premier. When can we receive an update from this government's contributions to the federal government's initiatives on clean water, especially in relation to the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi. The Premier can exercise his prerogative to ask any other Ministers to respond, but I have to hear it. Mr. Premier.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, in response to the first question, I indicated for all matters dealing with questions regarding water, the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development is the lead Minister and will be responding to the questions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Premier. The Chair hears a lot of questions and in this case, it was directed to the Premier. I just wanted you to instruct the Chair. In this case, it will be directed to the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 365-14(3): Update on Clean Water Initiatives

HON. JOE HANDLEY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, through the Council of Ministers of Environment, there are efforts to deal with water issues, one of them being bulk water. Since it is very difficult to get a consensus among all jurisdictions across Canada, we have not made final agreements on that front. Since that time, during the last year, the federal government has started what they refer to as a water forum. That is a forum for all political jurisdictions to discuss various water issues. Some of them are certainly in the area that Mr. Krutko has referred to on national water guidelines and research, safety and so on. All of those are being discussed within that forum. The forum had one meeting last year. There is a second meeting scheduled for March 16th. The Government of the Northwest Territories will continue to participate in the water forums along with other jurisdictions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 365-14(3): Update on Clean Water Initiatives

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the provinces and territories are expected to receive an additional \$2.65 billion over the next six years as part of the infrastructure Canada program. Of that, \$600 million is allocated towards the National Highway Strategy. How much money will be directed
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to the Northwest Territories so that we can develop our infrastructure?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 365-14(3): Update on Clean Water Initiatives

HON. JOE HANDLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I do not recall the exact amount that would be allocated to the Northwest Territories under the infrastructure program. That one is separate from the transportation program, but I believe the number is somewhere between \$3 million and \$4 million over the next two years. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 365-14(3): Update on Clean Water Initiatives

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with regard to the healthy environment -- especially since it is an essential part of a stable economy, the quality of life for Northerners -- what efforts has this government made in the life of this Assembly so far towards strengthening laws, research efforts and other measures to ensure that the safe drinking water and the water and sewage treatment is up to date and is operational?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 365-14(3): Update on Clean Water Initiatives

HON. JOE HANDLEY:

Mr. Speaker, as I had indicated earlier, our responsibility in water is very limited. We do have some responsibilities that are held by our Department of Health and Social Services and some responsibilities at the municipal level by our Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. So the actions we have taken have largely been through those two departments. I think we have done some good work in communities like Fort McPherson.

The overall responsibility for our water rests largely with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, but there is also some responsibility with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Through Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, we do continue to work with those federal agencies in carrying out their responsibilities. We also are fairly active in bringing matters to their attention and urging them to get on with needed research and so on. We participate in a Northern River Basins Study Board. We are a party on the Mackenzie River Basin Transboundary Waters Agreement. We are trying to work out bilateral agreements, so we have been very active in an area where we have very limited responsibility and we will continue to be active because we appreciate the importance of good quality water to our residents. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 365-14(3): Update on Clean Water Initiatives

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In light of the national drinking water report card that jurisdictions were evaluated on as to whether or not they required people and agencies, what changes have been done to ensure the delivery of safe drinking water is in place by training and certifying these individuals? I would like to ask the Minister, can this government provide a copy of the certification policies and prove that our drinking water meets the standards set by the national guidelines? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 365-14(3): Update on Clean Water Initiatives

HON. JOE HANDLEY:

Mr. Speaker, that question is one that is certainly getting outside of my jurisdiction as Minister for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and I have to take it as notice. It is either MACA or Health, but I am not certain. Thank you.

February 22, 2001

MR. NITAH:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we need better staff training, continuity and upgrading of water treatment plants in the Northwest Territories. We should be looking at properly installed filters for water taps. In order to protect the public, Health Canada advocates continuing the practice of disinfecting drinking water. It also supports reducing THM levels. Health Canada is working with the provinces to assist the need to reduce the THM levels. As our population grows into the next century, there will be more stress placed on our natural resources and drinking water.

It is important that we ensure that our drinking supplies continue to be safe for the public. There are a couple of things that could be done to eliminate THMs. By leaving drinking

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water in the freezer or fridge overnight eliminates this, but that is not practiced too often. Using charcoal filters also helps. I think the government should look at providing these instructions to people in the Northwest Territories or set up a program to have filters put on tap waters for the bathtubs and the drinking water for the consumption and use of water in the Northwest Territories. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Mahsi. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement on Taking Steps to Protect our Water Resources

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, water pollution has a wide-ranging impact on our lives, the health and well-being of the people we serve and the economy of Canada. I know from the personal experience I have had dealing with my home community of Fort McPherson, the whole area of contamination is on our doorstep. Talking about THMs and also the community of Aklavik, where there is a doctor's request for a total review and testing of all residents of Aklavik to look at H. pylori, which is a carcinogen which is in the water system of that community.

Mr. Speaker, I just received a letter from the Inuvik Regional Health Board to the Department of Public Works stating that the department is not complying or has received a non-compliance order from the Department of Health with regard to the Tsiigehtchic water supply. Yet, Mr. Speaker, these toxins come through the air, flow through our water systems and also are a major cost and effect the well-being of our people.

With regard to the cancers and other diseases, many of the toxins are affecting the well-being and lives of the people that we serve. Knowingly, in most cases, it is much too late, people have already died. While Northerners are affected by the quality of our drinking water, the most important aspect is to ensure that the ineffectiveness of managing our water resources and to ensuring that we do all that we can to protect the water commodity and the resources we have.

The greatest people who are affected by this are the children and our elderly. Most of all, the effects it has on the community as a whole knowing that this has a long-term impact on the community and knowing what that is going to be.

Mr. Speaker, this government needs to take more responsibility to clean our drinking water and to ensure that our water resources are protected and that we are living up to the standards and conditions that we set for ourselves, the Canadian drinking guidelines that we have. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There being no nays, Mr. Krutko, you may continue.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated, this government has to do more to ensure the well-being of the people in the Northwest Territories. Yet, Mr. Speaker, as Canadians, we have all seen the effects of Walkerton, the effect of THMs on the residents that I serve in Fort McPherson and the doctor's request for tests on people in Aklavik. The other community in my riding is now having effects. We are not immune to this problem.

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the federal government has announced additional funds last June, \$2.65 million for infrastructure in Canada over the next six years. With that, I would like to know exactly how much of that money is going to be going to the Government of the Northwest Territories and exactly what is this government going to do to improve our water crisis in the North. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Déclaration de député. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

October 29, 2001

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. It is regarding the long-awaited decision for the Fort McPherson water treatment improvement system to be enacted. It was supposed to be completed in July, yet the snow is falling, the ferries have been pulled out and the rivers are freezing. I would like to ask the Minister exactly what date does he have for final conclusion of the water project in Fort McPherson so we can have some safe drinking water?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 147-14(4): Fort McPherson Water Treatment Project

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I am pleased to provide the Member with the details. We are fairly confident that the new water system will be in effect, operational at the end of November. I hope there are no further delays. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Minister Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 147-14(4): Fort McPherson Water Treatment Project

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me what action is being taken by his department to ensure that the THM contamination at the treatment plant that presently exists, what is the department doing to ensure the public that treatment would be flushed out or cleared or before any new water is provided to that treatment facility?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 147-14(4): Fort McPherson Water Treatment Project

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I understand that all the preliminary work has been completed here. I am not sure at what stage it is at the moment, but from my understanding and with the knowledge from the department, all work-related plans are being conformed with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 147-14(4): Fort McPherson Water Treatment Project

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me if they have informed the residents of Fort McPherson that they will also have to take action to clean out their existing water tanks in their homes so that they are not contaminated?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 147-14(4): Fort McPherson Water Treatment Project

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will ensure that the department informs all residents that one of the first steps will be to clean out their own water tanks. If there is any assistance required, we will then work with the Departments of Health and Social Services and Public Works and Services to put out a communication strategy that would address that key question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.
Supplementary to Question 147-14(4): Fort McPherson Water Treatment
Project

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me exactly when did he intend to carry out this activity? Is it going to be before or after the new facility has come on-line?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.
Further Return to Question 147-14(4): Fort McPherson Water Treatment
Project

HON. ROGER ALLEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that we develop a communication strategy that would permit a brief transition period where we would be able to commission the water supply and, in between, have the houses drain all their water tanks, do the tank cleaning and then we will be able to begin to deliver fresh new water sources to the residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

