

# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Session**

**Day 1**

**15<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Tuesday, January 20, 2004**

Pages 1 - 20

**The Honourable David Krutko, Speaker**

**Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories**

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**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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, I would like to remember Dennie Lennie who passed away January 13<sup>th</sup>. 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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): 40<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup>, 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 6<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup>, 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 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly. A decision was made to leave it empty for the life of the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly, because it was anticipated there would be a broad review of governance of boards and agencies at the start of the 15<sup>th</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 22<sup>nd</sup>, 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

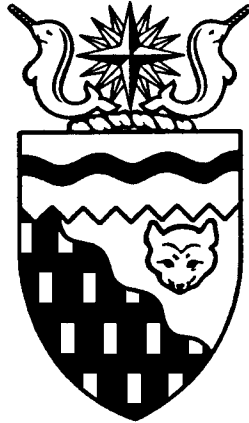
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Petitions
10. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
11. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
12. Tabling of Documents
13. 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.



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Session**

**Day 2**

**15<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Wednesday, January 21, 2004**

Pages 21 - 38

**The Honourable David Krutko, Speaker**

**Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories**

**Members of the Legislative Assembly**

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(Mackenzie-Delta)

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(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

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**Mr. Paul Delorey**  
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*Government House Leader*  
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**Mrs. Jane Groenewegen**  
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*Minister responsible for Persons with  
Disabilities*  
*Minister responsible for Seniors*

**Mr. Calvin Pokiak**  
(Nunakput)

**Mr. David Ramsay**  
(Kam Lake)

**Hon. Floyd Roland**  
(Inuvik Boot Lake)  
*Deputy Premier*  
*Minister of Finance*  
*Minister of Public Works and  
Services*  
*Chairman of the Financial  
Management Board*

**Mr. Robert Villeneuve**  
(Tu Nedhe)

**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**  
(Sahtu)

**Hon. Henry Zoe**  
(North Slave)  
*Minister of Municipal and  
Community Affairs*  
*Minister responsible for the Public  
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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Wednesday, January 21, 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):** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Roland.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 5-15(2): Budget Process Update**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide an update on our budgetary process and some brief comments on our fiscal situation. Despite the fact that the NWT is one of the fastest-growing economies in Canada, the Government of the NWT is facing a growing gap between its expenditures and revenues. Resource development is placing large pressures on our expenditures. We need to provide infrastructure, we need to prepare the people of the NWT so they see a positive benefit from development, and we need to counter the less positive effects of development which can cause social disruption in our families and our communities.

At the same time, the Government of the Northwest Territories has to cope with critical issues in the areas of health care, education and social support. The demands of the expanding economy are competing with these needs for the government's limited financial resources.

Furthermore, the government is trying to meet these needs with inadequate federal funding arrangements. Changes imposed by the federal government in the past mean that our formula financing arrangements with Canada no longer meet their original goal of filling the gap between our expenditure needs and our ability to raise our own revenues. In the absence of resource revenues, the economic development that is putting such pressure on our expenditures generates little in the way of new revenues to allow us to cope with that pressure.

These are the circumstances that our fiscal strategy must address. Since we took office in December, we have reviewed our fiscal position and outlook. We have talked about our options and the measures we are prepared to take with respect to revenues, expenditures and borrowing. As the Premier stated yesterday, difficult choices will have to be made. He indicated that we need to take a hard look at our spending and also at our revenue options. How much money we have to spend, how much we are prepared to raise in new revenues, and how much debt are we prepared to take on, all set limits on activities and initiatives. The Premier stated that it is important that we work together to make changes; we want to make these changes with careful forethought and consideration. We have to work hard to achieve balance.

Fiscal strategies are based on considerable uncertainty over exactly how much money we will have, so we have to

make some assumptions, set some priorities, develop short, medium and long-term plans and then be ready to review and revise these plans as new information becomes available.

For example, we still do not know what our formula financing arrangements for 2004-2005 and beyond will look like. The previous Prime Minister made a commitment last February to find solutions to our long-term funding needs. While we are confident that this commitment will be met, the issue is still unresolved and presents a significant source of uncertainty in our planning. I will be approaching the federal Minister of Finance in order to try and resolve this critical issue.

Mr. Speaker, I will be presenting the Government of the Northwest Territories 2004-2005 budget when the Legislative Assembly meets in March. This budget will present our plan for the upcoming fiscal year and outline our strategy. Although we have begun to look at some medium and long-term plans, we need to start today to begin to build a sustainable future for the people of the NWT.

Given the relatively short timeframe, we are limited in the measures we can implement for 2004-2005. This budget, therefore, will be a stepping stone toward achieving our medium and longer-term goals. For 2005-2006 and beyond, we will have to develop longer-term plans. These plans may include changing the way we, as a government, do business so that we can implement the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly's vision, priorities and plans in a fiscally responsible way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Zoe.

**Minister's Statement 6-15(2): Tlicho Final Agreement And The Establishment Of New Community Governments**

**HON. HENRY ZOE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report to Members that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has been able to assist the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council in the development of new community governance structures which will be established as part of the Tlicho Final Agreement. Municipal and Community Affairs is committed to assisting and supporting Dogrib Treaty 11's elected leaders and appointed officials in preparing for the implementation of this important agreement.

Since the Tlicho people ratified the Tlicho Final Agreement, a strong partnership has developed between the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council and Municipal and Community Affairs. We are working to prepare the four Tlicho communities for implementation of their agreement.

The Dogrib Treaty 11 community government implementation team and my departmental officials are meeting regularly. They are planning to co-host a workshop this month for all the senior administrative officers and band managers. Community consultations and information sessions for all the Tlicho communities are currently underway and are being organized jointly with Dogrib Treaty 11 Council. As well, Mr. Speaker, a comprehensive training plan for the community government is being developed cooperatively between Municipal and Community Affairs' School of Community Government and Dogrib Treaty 11 Council.

There are a number of legal instruments that are required to affirm and implement the Tlicho Final Agreement, both at the national and territorial levels. Along with other government departments, we are working closely with Dogrib Treaty 11 to develop the draft Tlicho community government act, to be brought forward to this Assembly for consideration and passage soon. The purpose of this legislation is to establish the four community governments and outline their powers and responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, all of these actions establish some of the fundamental building blocks for implementation of the first self-government agreement in the Northwest Territories. I am pleased that we are working cooperatively with the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council in preparation for the implementation of the Tlicho Final Agreement by working to make the new Tlicho community governments a reality. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Minister's Statement 7-15(2): National Non-Smoking Week**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is Weedless Wednesday during National Non-Smoking Week. I would like to make use of this opportunity to recognize the work that is being done so that our territory can eventually become a smoke-free society.

Mr. Speaker, there are numerous examples of people and communities working to a common goal of a smoke-free society:

- A growing number of NWT communities have now enacted progressive smoking bylaws that protect their residents against the health risks of secondhand smoke;
- Citizens, tobacco action groups and community health professionals have come together to help raise awareness of tobacco issues;
- Schools are teaching about tobacco addiction in their health curriculum;
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Quit and Win contest, sponsored by the NWT/Nunavut branch of the Canadian Public Health Association, provides incentive for people to try quitting; and,
- through the groundbreaking action of the Workers' Compensation Board of the NWT and Nunavut, workplaces will soon be smoke free.

It is important to continue this work, Mr. Speaker, because recent statistics show we still have a long way to go. For example, almost half of NWT youth between the ages of

15 and 17 smoke and the average age when children start to smoke is 12 or 13.

If we are to reduce these alarmingly high rates of smoking in our youth, it is clear that we must take action to reach children before they start smoking. We must convince children to make the decision to stay smoke free. That is the age group that needs to hear our message the most. If we can create a smoke-free generation of youth today, Mr. Speaker, they will become tomorrow's smoke-free generation of adults.

With this in mind, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services is working with Education, Culture and Employment on a communications strategy that targets children between the ages of eight and 14. The aim of this strategy is prevention: finding ways to encourage our children to remain smoke-free. The strategy will roll out over the next two years.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, students across the North are taking part in an initiative called Smoke Screening. Students from grades 6 to 12 are watching a dozen of the best anti-tobacco ads from around the world. Some are funny, others are shocking and still others are very sad. Students vote on the ad they like the best, and the most popular ad will be aired on local TV. This initiative is designed to get young people thinking and talking about what smoking does to their bodies.

Mr. Speaker, I met with Heather Crowe last week. As Members may know, Ms. Crowe is dying of cancer from secondhand smoke. Although she was never a smoker herself, she developed lung cancer because of other people smoking around her at her place of work.

Her dedication to the fight against tobacco is commendable. She has set a great example for the rest of us, and provides a powerful reminder of why we need to take action against smoking. It is estimated that secondhand smoke kills 3,600 Canadians every year. It is time to change that.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services is proposing tobacco legislation that will complement the Workers' Compensation Board's regulations banning smoking in the workplace, and to back up community, regional and territorial efforts to create a smoke-free society.

It is important the Members of this House support these efforts, Mr. Speaker. Our communities look to the leadership demonstrated in this Assembly to reinforce their grassroots actions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Zoe.

**Minister's Statement 8-15(2): 2004 Arctic Winter Games**

**HON. HENRY ZOE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to inform Members about our Northwest Territories Team for the 2004 Arctic Winter Games, which are being hosted by the regional municipality of Wood Buffalo in Fort McMurray, Alberta, from February 28 to March 6, 2004.

Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories has been an active participant in the Arctic Winter Games since their inception in 1970. These games are an important celebration of sport and culture for youth from the circumpolar region. We are once again proud to send a team to this event.

Team NWT will join athletes and cultural performers from Alaska, Yukon, northern Alberta, Nunavut, Greenland, Nunavik, the Russian provinces of Magadan and Yamal, and northern Scandinavia.

Mr. Speaker, Team NWT will consist of over 350 athletes, coaches, cultural performers and mission staff. Final selections for team members will take place at the territorial trials being held over the weekend of January 29 to February 1, 2004, in the communities of Fort Simpson, Inuvik, Hay River, Fort Smith, Rae-Edzo, Detah, Ndilo, Fort Resolution and Yellowknife. I want to pass on my congratulations to all the participants who have tried out for Team NWT. Whether you make the team or not, you are already a champion because you have demonstrated your commitment to active living and have tried your best.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my thanks to the Sport North Federation, the territorial sport organizations, regional coordinators and the many hardworking volunteers who are leaders in our sport system. Without their hard work and the thousands of hours of time they give, the Arctic Winter Games and many other sporting events would not take place.

The Arctic Winter Games are an important part of our sport system. Every two years, our youth look forward to the opportunity to share in friendly competitions and cultural exchanges and I am confident that our youth will once again benefit from this experience in Fort McMurray. Friendships will be formed and our young people will return with many lasting memories.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories, I would like to wish Team NWT the best of luck at the 2004 Arctic Winter Games. I would like to reaffirm to them and to all young northern athletes how proud we are of their healthy and active lifestyle choices. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

**Minister's Statement 9-15(2): Minister Absent From The House**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Charles Dent will be leaving the House early today to attend the federal/provincial/territorial Ministers of Labour meeting in Banff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Member's Statement On Appointments To The Aurora College Board of Governors**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to use my Member's statement today to recognize the appointment of Mr. Jackson Lafferty and Dr. Yacub Adam to the Aurora College Board of Governors.

Mr. Lafferty is a constituent of mine. He's a member of the Dogrib Nation and has played a number of leadership roles in the Dogrib region. Mr. Lafferty has long had an interest in advancing the NWT post-secondary education system's ability to prepare people for new economic opportunities, something this government must pay strict attention to. I would like to wish both men well in their roles with the Aurora College Board of Governors.

While I'm on the topic of education, today all across Canada, people are writing the National Registered Nurses Exams. This includes a group of northern nursing students at Aurora College and I wanted to wish them all the best of luck with the exams and look forward to having them working for the health and well-being of all the residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

**Member's Statement On Condolences On The Passing Of Delorme Family Members**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a quick statement today. I just want to express my sincere condolences and the condolences of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly to the Delorme family and Deninu Kue, who have lost three family members in the past three years. The last member that they lost was just over the last Christmas holidays. Mr. Speaker, I just want to let the family know, and their many friends and relatives, that we are aware of the loss that they're suffering and that our thoughts and our prayers go out to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Condolences to the family. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**Member's Statement On Access To Justice And Legal Aid Concerns**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my riding of Yellowknife Centre has come forward to express that they have many concerns with the swiftness of access to justice through the legal aid system, whereby access to this justice seems to wear lead shoes. Mr. Speaker, reading past Hansards shows many questions have been put to the government, yet it also shows very few real responses.

Mr. Speaker, later today I will be bringing some of the concerns forward of the people of my riding. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe we're truly taking care of our people and later, during question period, I will be taking those questions directly to the Minister. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**Member's Statement On Environmental Reviews Of Deh Cho Bridge And Miramar Con Mine**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act is a very powerful piece of federal legislation that was created a number of years ago. It sets up two fairly powerful boards that regulate the development of non-renewable resources here in the NWT. We're facing a couple of situations right now that I think are kind of unusual and I want to bring them to the attention of the legislature.

The first one, Mr. Speaker, regards the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board, which is now considering a request to take the Deh Cho Bridge proposal to a full environmental hearing. This bridge is a much-needed part of the infrastructure for Yellowknife and the North Slave, Mr. Speaker, but this hearing, which has come up quite recently, could cause a considerable delay in this project.

What is really quite unusual about it is that it is the federal Department of Fisheries which I understand is proposing this move, but it is not on behalf of the fish in the Deh Cho river, Mr. Speaker, it's for economic reasons put forward by the NWT Chamber of Mines. I think it's a bit unusual that a federal department is advocating the interests of mining, but the territorial government has a major investment in this piece of infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, and should be advocating for the interests of the people of the whole North Slave region and should be seeking to expedite this process.

The other situation that I find unusual, with regard to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board, is the matter of the Con Mine abandonment and reclamation plan. Last summer, I and other MLAs asked the board for a more open, public process so we could see and perhaps have input into what was going on for shutting this mine down. We've heard nothing since then. While the mine, Mr. Speaker, has played a significant role in Yellowknife's development, its closure is also going to have a significant impact on the development and the environment of this city for a number of years to come. Here, too, is where our government, I believe, should be taking a strong position in advocating for the interests of the public.

During question period, I'm going to be asking Ministers for their comment on these situations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

**Member's Statement On Tax Exemptions For NWT Residents**

**MR. ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the last several weeks, I've raised several issues in relation to tax exemptions which may be applied to residents of the Northwest Territories which this government can use as a tool for economic development. There are a number of documents available to peruse that would lend to my comments, Mr. Speaker. My constituents of Inuvik Twin

Lakes have asked me to question why the government would not consider tax exemptions as its tool.

A report called, "Sorting Out the Issues: Tax Exemption – A Tool for Economic Development for First Nations," prepared by Dr. Fred Lessar, strongly urges the introduction of such a tax model as well as Bill C-48. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, Dr. Lessar documents that if this were the case, the financial gain experienced by Canada through a reduction of the need for social services would fall our way. It would be a win-win for Canada and the indigenous people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, if the tax exempt policy was adopted for the Northwest Territories, we too should also experience a win-win for the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, my objective in pursuing this very important issue reflects the composition of the riding of Inuvik Twin Lakes in the socio-economic report on Inuvik Twin Lakes which I tabled in this Assembly. It indicates that many of our residents still rely on some form of social assistance, including indigenous Inuvik residents who occupy 225 public housing units.

Mr. Speaker, later today I will ask the Finance Minister some pertinent questions on whether there could be substantial savings to the NWT in providing programs and services, as well as improve upon the economic status of our residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

**Member's Statement On Health Services Provided To Aboriginal Seniors**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to address an apparent inequity in our health care system; that being that our First Nations people -- particularly our First Nations seniors -- are not receiving the same level of service from our government that non-native seniors are receiving in the area of health care benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I have often said in this House that access to adequate health care is a fundamental right of our citizens. However, it appears that that may not be the case. Mr. Speaker, for example, an aboriginal senior who requires a prescription must have their prescription approved by the non-insured health care benefits or NIHB department of the federal government. The NIHB program is very restrictive about exactly what it will and will not cover. Mr. Speaker, if the NIHB program will not cover for a senior First Nations person, then the senior is left with no alternative but to pay for the prescription out of their own pocket or not get it filled.

Conversely, Mr. Speaker, if a registered Metis senior needs a prescription, they forward that prescription to the Metis program administered by our government. If that prescription is not covered, is not approved by the Metis benefits program, the Metis senior can then apply to the GNWT seniors health benefits program for payment of the prescription.

Mr. Speaker, the same procedures apply to non-aboriginal seniors. They simply have all of their prescriptions forwarded to the GNWT seniors benefits program for payment.

Mr. Speaker, the inequities lie in health care benefits provided to First Nations people. Unless they have a private health care plan, these people do not have another option other than NIHB or no recourse, period. Mr. Speaker, this does not only apply to seniors. The Metis benefits program follows the same formulary as NIHB. However, Metis clients are also eligible for extended health care benefits, or EHB, as it is referred to as well. So once a Metis client has applied for benefits under the Metis plan, they can then access the EHB plan for whatever the Metis plan won't pay for. Not so for First Nations clients. First Nations clients are not eligible for coverage under the EHB program that is administered by our government.

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 may conclude your statement, Mr. Delorey.

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. First Nations clients are not eligible for coverage under the EHB program that is administered by our government. There is something inherently wrong here, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this government to do the right thing and afford aboriginal clients the same level of health care benefits that all other Northwest Territories residents enjoy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

#### **Member's Statement On Acknowledgement Of Contributions To Youth Sport Programs In The Sahtu**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to acknowledge the contributions that the people in my region have made to youth and to sports and what a positive difference they have made in our communities. Many people donate their valuable time and talents to children who need support and encouragement so that they can have the opportunity to excel in their sports.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge the many coaches and athletes from Deline for reaching out on both regional and territorial levels. Also, I would like to acknowledge the athletes from Tulita who have competed with a lot of other children in the Dene Games. Just recently, Mr. Speaker, the communities of Fort Good Hope and Norman Wells increased their support to assist youth so they could compete at regional games like the ice hockey tournament last month. I join with those communities and applaud the hard work which goes into such events. I want to send my heartfelt thanks to the school of Colville Lake for sending their children to Tulita last November for the volleyball tournament.

Mr. Speaker, for our youth, hockey tournaments for regional games and competition at all levels are so important and this means that we have to acknowledge those who make it happen, either with or without government support. Sports are very important in the

communities; they help produce successful people like Mr. Roger Allen, Mr. Ernie Lennie and the late Mr. Floyd Kelley. Today I want to celebrate all northern athletes who put our territories on the map, both nationally and internationally. So my statement is to look out for our future northern athletes. Mr. Speaker, I do hope that as a government we can continue to support and promote sports within and outside of our schools and keep our athletes striving to attend competitions down south, to reap the rewards so that we can sponsor the next generation of great northern athletes.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment if he intends to work with the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs to create more athletic opportunities for our youth in the Sahtu. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement On Income Support Concerns In Hay River**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since my constituency office reopened after the new year, we have had an extraordinary number of constituents contacting us regarding concerns with income support. I think all of us can attest to the fact that December is a higher-than-usual month for expenditures. First of all, it's the middle of winter. Utilities and many other costs are at the highest they will be throughout the year. It's also Christmastime and it's difficult for anyone not to overextend themselves at this time of giving and sharing with family and friends. It's no different for families on income support.

I have had numerous constituents report that their income support has been cut off for various reasons in January. Some of them received IBA payments in December which were clawed back in January. Some of them received gifts of cash from family to buy gifts for their children. Apparently, these are both treated as income under current policies and guidelines. I've heard concerns from landlords who haven't been paid their January rent because income support clients who are tenants are struggling to work out January payments due to a variety of reasons like the ones I've mentioned. Some clients have had family and friends visiting over the holidays who are then deemed to be living with them. Those visitors had income, thus affecting the eligibility criteria of the client.

If the clients aren't happy with decisions made by income support workers, they can appeal, but the response to an appeal can take up to 30 days. That is a very long time to be denied access to basic necessities. I think it's time to revisit the approach that we take to income support. We've heard a lot about productive choices, but the array of circumstances that can affect a person's life and ability to act on productive choices also needs to be taken into consideration. It can't be a purely numbers approach. People are complex and there are many different challenges which may need to be addressed to assist them in becoming able to independently support themselves and their families.

We need to take a holistic and long-range approach to the needs of income support clients instead of assessing

everyone and everything on a month-to-month basis. Without supplementary supports in place, dealing with the system can create stress actually working against the path to self-reliance. We need counsellors who can work with clients on issues such as access to job training, addictions counselling, money management and life skills. I'm not advocating for anyone abusing the social security safety net we have in place, but if we seriously want to see progress in people's lives, we need to deal not only with their basic need of food, shelter and clothing, but other needs that contribute to their dependency on the system.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to request unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. We need well-trained and compassionate people acting on commonsense and compassionate policies and guidelines dealing with people in need in our communities. Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

#### **Member's Statement On Parks Use Policy**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to raise an issue that my constituent has asked me to bring to the attention of the Minister of RWED. This is a recurring issue that I have raised with the previous Minister of RWED and something that the current Minister of RWED -- who is also an MLA for Yellowknife -- is very familiar with. It has to do with the department's policy or directive that the department has with the contractor that manages the territorial parks around the city which limits the time of overnight stays for any given family to a maximum of two weeks per year.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that the rationale for this policy is to encourage and support the visitors from out of town that we receive every summer and I think the residents of Yellowknife are willing to do their part to accommodate our welcome visitors. What is frustrating for our residents is when -- and the Minister is well aware of this because we get these complaints every year and this year it's only January and I've already received a phone call, so I can just see the traffic coming -- these families who have maxed out their two weeks see the vacant camping spots sitting there, but they're not able to access them because they've maxed out, but there are no visitors.

What I would like to ask the Minister is to use a sense of reasonableness and fairness and to fine-tune this policy and to improve it so that perhaps we could have a tier system where visitors are given first priority and the residents who have not maxed out two weeks could have the next available spot and for the rest of the spots people could have a waiting list. Especially for the families with small children during the height of summer, these spaces are very important. Repeated requests to the Minister of RWED previously have not resulted in any action. Knowing that the Minister is very well aware of this issue

and knowing that he's a very reasonable and fair-minded person, I would like to call upon his wisdom to please take immediate action to revise and improve this policy because it may not be the thing that changes this world tomorrow, but it is very important for residents of Yellowknife who, for whatever reason, would like to stay closer to the city and especially make use of the park at Long Lake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Dent.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize my constituent, Ms. Karen Hamre, as well as another Karen, Major Karen Hoeft, in the gallery today.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the well-known local artist and musician and broadcaster, journalist Mr. Paul Andrew.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Welcome to the House. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ramsay.

#### **ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **Question 11-15(2): Staff Morale At North Slave Correctional Facility**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are going to be directed at the Minister of Justice and they centre around the issue of staff morale at the Yellowknife Correctional Centre. It's something the Minister is aware of; I spoke with him before about this issue. I know yesterday, my colleague, the Member for Range Lake, had questioned the government action towards the arbitration decision that was handed down last week, and I echo her sentiments exactly, that I think the government should do the right thing. Whether or not that improves the morale at the Correctional Centre who knows, but that's something the government should take up, and take it up soon.

My question for the Minister today is in the past 18 months, have leaves of absence, sometimes referred to as stress leave, been on an increase over the previous period of 18 months? Thank you.

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

##### **Return To Question 11-15(2): Staff Morale At North Slave Correctional Facility**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories does not record stress leave. Sick leave is provided to employees, but there is no requirement for employees to

disclose the reasons for their absence. This would be an unreasonable invasion of the employee's privacy. This is well established through labour relations law and it's not permitted under the collective agreement. So I can't answer the Member's question. FMBS has advised us that we're not able to collect that information, much less disclose it.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 11-15(2): Staff Morale At North Slave Correctional Facility**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary question to the Minister of Justice, and I can understand where the government is coming from with this, but I find it hard to believe that the raw data can't be provided. If it can't be provided for YCC, perhaps raw data from department to department. I find in today's day and age of PeopleSoft that the Minister and the government can't come up with some raw figures at the very least, and I question the Minister again whether or not I could get access to raw data, figures of extended periods of leave for the Department of Justice as compared to the other departments of this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 11-15(2): Staff Morale At North Slave Correctional Facility**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, in fact we could probably collect that kind of data, as long as it was for the department as a whole. The problem is that if we released it for one single unit in the department, like YCC, it would make the figures too small so that employees could likely be identified. I can tell you that we could collect that kind of data for the department and offer comparison data to other departments in the Northwest Territories for the Member. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 11-15(2): Staff Morale At North Slave Correctional Facility**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks for that, Mr. Minister. I'm wondering if the Department of Justice recognizes this as an area of great concern and perhaps the Minister can address that question. I know it's an area of concern. I've heard from a number of constituents and a number of individuals that it is a concern, and I'd like to hear from the Minister that it's a concern of this government: the instances of extended periods of leave at YCC in particular. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 11-15(2): Staff Morale At North Slave Correctional Facility**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can't answer that question directly without in fact appearing to release information that I said I couldn't. Therefore, I will say that any time we hear concerns about morale among employees, it is an issue that we want to address. The Member has raised the issue with me. I listened carefully to Ms. Lee's statement yesterday, and I

think that as early as tomorrow FMB will likely deal with that situation. I hope that overall we will be able to deal with any issues of staff morale that we may have within the department, but we can't confirm that it's seen as an area of concern right now.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Hawkins.

**Question 12-15(2): Access To Legal Aid For Family Law Matters**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today the Minister of Justice will have the pleasure of receiving my questions regarding my concerns with legal aid access when it comes to family law issues. Mr. Speaker, concerns have been brought forward to me by someone in my riding.

I've only recently learned that in fact if you are a person accused of a crime, you have the appointment of a lawyer immediately. However, Mr. Speaker, if you're a mother of two who is desperately struggling to put milk and butter on the table and attempting to get legal custody of your children and you need to make an application in order to get financial support, to request legal aid assistance you have to wait three to six months for your first appointment to start dealing with this tormented circumstance. Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Justice is does the Minister believe, in his opinion, that a three to six-month waiting period is reasonable access to justice for a first appointment to discuss this family law issue with a lawyer?

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

**Return To Question 12-15(2): Access To Legal Aid For Family Law Matters**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would think that in the best of all worlds the wait would be considerably less than three to six months. It would be better if it could be only a couple of weeks, but the fact is that we can't find enough lawyers in the Northwest Territories to practice family law who are willing to take on these cases. The rate of pay for the Northwest Territories for legal aid lawyers is the second highest in Canada; only Nunavut is higher. But there are very few lawyers who are interested in taking on family law cases, and because of that there has been a growing backlog. We have increased the staff lawyer component to try and deal with this, but it is still a problem area that we recognize.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**Supplementary To Question 12-15(2): Access To Legal Aid For Family Law Matters**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for your answer. Mr. Minister, my next question to you is what are you prepared to do in a reasonable sense to help assist with this access, so that people can access family law services much sooner? Is the Minister prepared today to reassure me that he will take steps so that all approved legal aid files will receive at least a first-base meeting within 30 days?

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

**Further Return To Question 12-15(2): Access To Legal Aid For Family Law Matters**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish I could make that promise, but as Minister I'm not allowed to provide any direction directly to the Legal Services Board because it is an independent body. The limits are the appointment and revocation of appointments of the members of that board. That's the only action that the Minister can provide, other than providing funding. I can tell you that we have not cut our funding to legal aid at all in the recent past. As I said, we have tried to increase the staff lawyer component to deal with the backlog. I've talked to the federal Minister of Justice within the last week. He committed to me that he would continue to fight for the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and the Yukon to receive funding that is not tied to per capita so that we will continue to receive a disproportionate amount of funding and that we would see no cuts. But it's a situation where we are doing what we can, given the financial resources that we have to work with, and especially since we don't have enough lawyers who are willing to practice family law in the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**Supplementary To Question 12-15(2): Access To Legal Aid For Family Law Matters**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the Minister for pointing out the independence of the board. The independent board is very important. Although it cannot be overlooked, the board is also accountable to the Minister. Mr. Minister, can I get your commitment today that you would make statistical information available to the Members of this Assembly regarding typical workload breakdown of legal aid files within the system from where they start as they enter, to where they get their first meetings, and when they come to a relative close, and if you could tie this together with other regions in comparison to the Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 12-15(2): Access To Legal Aid For Family Law Matters**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that I could provide that information. I will check with the Legal Services Board and see how much statistical data they can provide to us and how quickly, and we'll endeavor to distribute that to all Members of the Assembly as soon as I can get it.

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

**Question 13-15(2): After School Youth Programs In The Sahtu**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my Member's statement, I have a question for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment with regard to the future of our youth in the Sahtu region. I wanted to ask the Minister if he would enter into a discussion with the Minister of MACA to create opportunities for our youth, between education and MACA, for after-school programs to support our children and to get them off the streets and to give them an

opportunity to have a good, positive life and all the good things that go along with the Minister's statement?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**Return To Question 13-15(2): After School Youth Programs In The Sahtu**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to commit to work with my colleague on this issue. It may interest the honourable Member to know that as recently as yesterday, the staff of Education, Culture and Employment and Health and Social Services were meeting to discuss healthy living and active living activities. They have agreed that we will work together a bit more formally to try to pull together a plan, so that we can work within existing budgets to stimulate community-level activities particularly aimed at focusing on youth in the communities across the North. I would endeavor to also bring in our colleague, the Minister of Youth, to this group now and make sure that the four of us are working towards a plan that we can announce perhaps as early as this June.

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

**Question 14-15(2): Training Required For Income Support Workers**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister what kind of training and credentials are possessed by and required by people who work in our communities as income support workers. Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 14-15(2): Training Required For Income Support Workers**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I'm not entirely familiar with the educational requirements for those positions. I suspect that they may not have specific training requirements to begin with. I know that in the past we have approached community organizations, bands and so on, to offer the program, because it has been seen largely as a fairly simple project to fill in the blanks on a form to determine whether or not income support is available. So I suspect that there may be more training that's required, but I can't answer the question in terms of specific training that's required.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 14-15(2): Training Required For Income Support Workers**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it's very important that we nail that down and figure that out, because the people who come into income support offices do need a lot of assistance and are in a very vulnerable situation most of the time. I'd also like to ask the Minister what support services do these workers have at their disposal, and are they required to refer clients to those services in the communities, such as the ones I referred to in my Member's statement, so that

they might not just be back on income support forever, that they might get the kind of help that they need? What kind of services do they get referred to; income support clients? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 14-15(2): Training Required For Income Support Workers**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, having answered the question about the training required for income support workers, I think it's also important to say that the expectation is that the workers will take a case management approach. In other words, they're supposed to work with other resources in the community; for instance, the social worker with Health and Social Services who may make available some counselling services. The social worker may have access to psychological assistance if that's necessary, or other tools that may be available. We don't have the comprehensive program we used to. The Member will probably remember from the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, we had the life skills program called Investing in People. Unfortunately, that program was cost shared with the federal government and when the funding was ended by the federal government, this government didn't have enough money to carry on on its own. So we don't have that kind of comprehensive program, but individuals are still supposed to be able to access counselling that is necessary in order to help them improve their chances of being successful.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 14-15(2): Training Required For Income Support Workers**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Also in keeping with the comment that I made in my Member's statement, I was quite shocked and appalled to have learned from income support clients who had received gifts of cash to buy gifts for their children over the Christmas holidays, that when they deposit that in their account and their bank statement is provided to the income support worker, that that was in fact also treated as income and clawed back. I just want to get it on the record from the Minister, is a cash gift at Christmas considered income to a low-income family for the purposes of assessing income support payments? Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Shame.

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

**Further Return To Question 14-15(2): Training Required For Income Support Workers**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Do I hear Scrooge? Mr. Speaker, one way to indicate to Members...The way the program works is kind of like a glass of water. Everybody needs this much water in their glass. If you start with half a glass, then the program will top it up, but all of the water in the glass is counted. So as you have resources, no matter where they come from, they are counted as part of what you bring to the table. The income support program is offered as a...

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Shame, shame.

---Laughter

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Enjoy your glass of water now. Income support is offered as a program of last resort, it's not a guaranteed income. It is a program that I'm prepared to discuss its administration with the committee and discuss how it should be examined and reviewed, and then we can maybe move from there. But in its current format, it is a program of last resort, and all of your resources, all of an individual's resources that they have, whether that comes from legal winnings or a cash gift, are counted as something in your pocket and all that is provided is then a top-up to get to what is absolutely needed to survive.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 14-15(2): Training Required For Income Support Workers**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Also with respect to other sources such as IBA payments, I'd like to ask the Minister what is the status of the government's deliberations on determining whether income benefit agreement payments should be considered as income, or compensation or restitution for land and resources of the people that receive them? Is it income or is it compensation? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 14-15(2): Training Required For Income Support Workers**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Education, Culture and Employment has been advised by Justice that the IBAs are private contracts and we do not have access to them, so we are unable at this point to determine the answer to whether or not they are compensation or cash payments as a gift or whatever, income. I am prepared again to review the entire income support program, and would be happy to discuss that with the Standing Committee on Social Programs. But I am reluctant to make any one-off changes. I would like to take the opportunity to spend some time, work with the committee to review the program, and then if we are going to make changes, make them in a comprehensive manner.

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

**Question 15-15(2): Environmental Assessment Of The Deh Cho Bridge Project**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My question this afternoon is for the Premier with respect to his position for the Deh Cho Bridge portfolio. In my statement, I outlined a situation where the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board is considering taking this project to a full environmental assessment. The GNWT is a major player in this project; the major player in this project, Mr. Speaker. What is the GNWT's position on the move to go to a full environmental assessment for this project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Premier Handley.

**Return To Question 15-15(2): Environmental Assessment Of The Deh Cho Bridge Project**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Environmental Impact Review Board will be doing a full assessment, is my understanding of this project. Certainly, as northerners, we do take the protection of the environment very seriously, so as a government we are not going to try to intervene in a way to try to stop this process. In fact, we will do what we can to provide information that we -- and the bridge corporation are of the same mind -- provide good information that they have already collected to ensure that this is a good environmental review and that we all enter this project with the best information. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 15-15(2): Environmental Assessment Of The Deh Cho Bridge Project**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the Premier that we should never short-circuit the environment. The circumstances really seem to be unusual; that it is the Department of Fisheries that is advocating this on economic grounds. I have seen the Department of Fisheries' application to do this. It really seems to be unusual and unwarranted. I would ask, does the Premier agree that the reasons for the application going through really don't have much to do with the environment at all? Are they appropriate? Are they still appropriate or are they unusual or unwarranted? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Premier Handley.

**Further Return To Question 15-15(2): Environmental Assessment Of The Deh Cho Bridge Project**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, sometimes it's very difficult to understand reasons why people would put forward an application for an environmental review. My understanding is that the concern was expressed by the NWT Chamber of Mines because of costs to the mining industry. That then triggered a letter from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, who forwarded it to the land and water board and then we were into the process. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to try to interpret the thinking by the Chamber of Mines, but certainly this has added an uncertainty and a potential increased cost for the bridge, if it's delayed as we go through an exercise to look at the cost to one sector of our economy. For example, if the interest rates were to rise in the next year while we are doing the review, that's going to be an added cost onto the bridge and, therefore, could potentially increase the cost to not only the mining sector but to all industries who are using the bridge for heavy traffic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 15-15(2): Environmental Assessment Of The Deh Cho Bridge Project**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I feel compelled to press my case here because the circumstances of going through with this review and the potential consequences are of some significance. What actions are we taking, Mr. Premier, to expedite the approval and construction of a bridge project? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Premier Handley.

**Further Return To Question 15-15(2): Environmental Assessment Of The Deh Cho Bridge Project**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned before, both ourselves and the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation will do everything we can to provide information we have as quickly as we can to the environmental review board as this project is assessed.

In addition to that, I intend, as Minister responsible for the bridge, to meet with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and see whether or not there is some construction activity -- perhaps we could begin stockpiling material -- that would be allowed before we have the environmental review. I give that as an example. I don't know whether it would be allowed, but if there is a way of speeding up the review and the design, getting ready for construction, we intend to do that to make sure that the people in the Northwest Territories benefit from this project as quickly as possible. Thank you.

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

**Question 16-15(2): Health Coverage For Aboriginal Seniors**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Michael Miltenberger. Mr. Speaker, I hope that in my Member's statement I didn't confuse Members as to how our health benefit program is working in the Northwest Territories. When I started looking into it, it was certainly confusing to me. Maybe the Minister has an example like the water glass to make it simple for everybody here.

As I alluded to in my Member's statement, I don't believe that our government is doing everything it can to provide adequate health care coverage for aboriginal seniors who are covered under the non-insured health care benefits program of the federal government. Can the Minister please indicate if he is aware of the disparity that exists for aboriginal persons as far as their coverage under the NIHB program versus coverage offered to Metis and non-aboriginal seniors? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Return To Question 16-15(2): Health Coverage For Aboriginal Seniors**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that the system of supplementary health benefits that we have has been with us for some time and it is patchwork of programs such as the non-insured health benefits which, in itself, is another program we administer for the federal government that we have significant problems with, along with our colleagues in Nunavut. Through the review of supplementary health benefits and with the meetings with federal health Ministers, and most recently Minister Pettigrew, we once again raised the issue of the need to sit down and look at non-insured health benefits. There were meetings last week in Ottawa with officials meeting once again on health benefits and health concerns. Yes, I recognize the issues in that area and others, and that's one reason we are doing the review and we want to continue. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 16-15(2): Health Coverage For Aboriginal Seniors**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Metis program of health benefits was instituted in 1997 to offer Metis people similar benefits to status persons, but it wasn't 100 per cent coverage. Since April of 2002, Metis persons have since been provided 100 per cent coverage under this program and it's administered through our government. Will the Minister please state in this House if there are any negotiations -- and he just mentioned the federal government -- underway to enable our government to provide the same level of health care coverage to status persons that is currently provided to Metis people? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 16-15(2): Health Coverage For Aboriginal Seniors**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sorry, I apologize, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Metis health benefits are the benefits provided under non-insured health benefits. The one big benefit that we do have in the Northwest Territories is we don't have the cumbersome federal bureaucracy and rules and payment process that is in place with non-insured health benefits. So we have ours administered through Blue Cross. We have an arrangement with them for the administration and processing. The Metis benefits mirror the non-insured health benefits.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 16-15(2): Health Coverage For Aboriginal Seniors**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's very confusing. I can see why it's so confusing for seniors when they are trying to see where their benefits come from. Is there any move on the government's part to bring in a program where all seniors or all people are treated equally under the health care plan? Right now, there are about four different ones that seniors especially are trying to find out where they fit into. Is there any move to try to bring everybody under the same umbrella? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 16-15(2): Health Coverage For Aboriginal Seniors**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I referenced earlier, the supplementary health benefits review that's underway, its sole intention is to try to rationalize and consolidate those services that we now provide where there are inconsistencies that developed in an uncoordinated and a patchwork manner. So this is to level the playing field. We must keep in mind that on the non-insured health benefits side, that is a federal program. It is tied to aboriginal First Nations people, Inuit people. It's a program that is very sensitive when it comes to making changes. We are working with the federal government and we will work with

the aboriginal governments to look at what we can do to improve the non-insured health benefits. On the territorial programs, we definitely want to move towards a more rationalized, consolidated system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 16-15(2): Health Coverage For Aboriginal Seniors**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just to put a little bit more perspective on this subject, if I understand this correctly, a non-aboriginal senior, for example, can move into the Northwest Territories after not having lived there ever before in their life, and after three months of residency, they qualify for full health care benefits under the GNWT seniors program. That seniors program covers everything from prescriptions to mobility aids right down to multivitamins and band aids. Conversely, an aboriginal senior who may have lived here all their life is not entitled to apply for GNWT seniors health care benefits. Their only option is to apply for NIHB, which does not cover near as much.

If that is correct, Mr. Speaker, does the Minister not think that it's time that we have a look at this and do something in the very near future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 16-15(2): Health Coverage For Aboriginal Seniors**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, yes, if that was correct I would agree that we want to look at that very specific issue. I recognize that there are inconsistencies in the program, but once again, my information is that when it comes to seniors, benefits are intended to mirror the services provided by the non-insured health benefits. That was the baseline that we used. But I do recognize, as the Member has pointed out in his questions, that we do have problems in the system that is currently there and we intend to look into that and ways that we can rectify it for all northerners.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 7, oral questions. Ms. Lee.

**Question 17-15(2): GNWT Parks Use Policy**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the Minister of RWED, further to my Member's statement earlier today. Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister whether or not he has had a chance to review this department's policy or directive to the contractor and whether or not he has considered changing this policy? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Minister of RWED, Mr. Bell.

**Return To Question 17-15(2): GNWT Parks Use Policy**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** I thank the Member for the very good question, Mr. Speaker. It's one I do recall putting to the former Minister of RWED myself. I am familiar with it, both in that capacity and in my new capacity. I have had a chance to review it. I should first state that this is nothing unique to the campground at Fred Henne Park. This is a regulation that applies to all territorial parks. But the particular pressure point has been the lack of capacity

here in Yellowknife. It is something that we're looking at. It is something that I am prepared to come back to committee and discuss. I think we all want to see something, a regulation that is flexible enough and allows us to make sure that tourists have a place to stay when they come to the city or to the NWT. We don't want to see tourists turned away because we don't have the space.

I think the long-term solution is not about the regulation, but it's about finding adequate RV parking in particular around the city of Yellowknife. I'm aware that that's something the City of Yellowknife has been discussing. I hope they continue to do that. I believe the Fred Henne Park is inadequate in this regard, at any rate.

But, yes, we need regulations that make sense and will accommodate tourists and yet still allow locals to enjoy our parks. So it's something that I'm prepared to sit down and discuss with committee Members. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary. Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary To Question 17-15(2): GNWT Parks Use Policy**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister's answer. At the same time, I do believe this is a first test for the Minister. Often we have Members who cross the floor. They're very well aware of the issues that we bring up and I know that the Minister is very well aware of this issue. So far, he's answered in length without making any commitment at all.

---Laughter

I believe, Mr. Speaker, there is plenty of room for action that he could take immediately. I know he understands the need for extra space; this is not an unusual thing. But for right now, this summer, for many of our residents there is something that he can do to fix this and that is to make sure that any available spaces, after the visitors and all the residents who have not taken their two weeks have taken their lots...There should be no empty spaces that residents should not be allowed to use. So would the Minister please change that immediately? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Minister of RWED, Mr. Bell.

**Further Return To Question 17-15(2): GNWT Parks Use Policy**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought I was doing pretty good by committing to come back to committee. I thought that in itself would reassure the Member, especially after the nice things she said about me in her Member's statement today.

---Laughter

However, I can see that's not going to get it done. We will have that discussion, I hope. I hope committee is prepared to sit down and come up with something that does make sense. I think the problem really is that during the week there are all kinds of vacancies at Fred Henne, typically. By the weekend it's very full. It's over full. The problem is that if we were to make a regulation that allowed people to stay during the week and ask them to leave on the weekend if it was full, you would be in a position where you would have to go around the campground and ask people to leave. I don't think that would be workable or fair.

If we allow local residents to take up those spots because no one is in them, what do you do when somebody shows up at 8:00 at night after a long trip up Highway No. 3 and is looking for a camping spot? You've got to make allowances that still let local people enjoy the campground while making sure we can accommodate tourists.

We have opened up additional spots this year at both Prelude and Reid Lakes. I know that may not reassure the Member. That may not take care of everybody's concerns, but we are looking for solutions. There are a number of possibilities we can discuss. It's possible at the peak times in the middle of summer we need to still keep these regulations, but we might look at relaxing them during the shoulder seasons when we're not as busy. I'm prepared to discuss a whole range of options with committee and see if we can't come up with something that would work right across the territory. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary. Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary To Question 17-15(2): GNWT Parks Use Policy**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that the Minister needs to bring this to committee for discussion. I do believe that the Minister is already aware that the previous Minister has been reviewing this policy for at least three years, at least three summers. The Minister already knows all of the issues pertaining to that policy. What I'm looking for from the Minister is, will he consider a tier system, a category system where priority is given to the visitors, but wherever there are vacancies the local people can take them and not have to drive by and look at empty spaces that they want overnight? I need a yes or no answer. He doesn't need to do any more studies on this. I don't think it's relevant to any other Members other than Yellowknife Members here. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Minister of RWED, Mr. Bell.

**Further Return To Question 17-15(2): GNWT Parks Use Policy**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you. We may like to think that it's only relevant to Yellowknife, but I know this is an issue in Hay River, as well. It's something that's been raised with the department. We have to come up with a solution that works across the territory. We don't want to see people drive by the park and look at vacancies and be told that they can't camp. We've got to be reasonable. There has to be some way to accommodate tourists and locals in the same regulation. I'm prepared to come up with a regulation that will work.

If the committee is not interested in that discussion, we can do this internally, but I think this is something that makes sense for all committee Members to have some input into. I am prepared to come up with something that makes sense and works and allows us to accommodate both tourists and locals and, as I've said, we can discuss a number of systems. I'd be interested in hearing more about the tiered approach that the Member has referred to, but I think there could also be a shoulder system developed that would alleviate some of the pressure. Really, the problem is in the heat of summer. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Final Supplementary. Ms. Lee. Keep it short.

**Supplementary To Question 17-15(2): GNWT Parks Use Policy**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm aware that I cannot speak for the committee and I understand that our committee Members would like to see changes to regulations brought to them first. What I'm saying is that my experience has been that when a Minister says he wants to consult and review, that is just an excuse for inaction.

I'm telling you that allowing for more than two weeks' stay in shoulder seasons, between May and June when there is still snow on the ground or in August to September when all the kids are back in school, is no good to us. What I'm interested in knowing is what is his intention with regard to this policy or is he just using the age-old formula that every other Minister uses, which is that they would just study and review issues to death? I want to know his intentions. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Minister of RWED, Mr. Bell.

**Further Return To Question 17-15(2): GNWT Parks Use Policy**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you. Clearly, my intentions wouldn't be honourable if I was going to sit here and tell you that the shoulder season was mid-winter, but that's not what I'm going to do. I'm going to go back to the department, ask them to develop some regulations that would incorporate the shoulder season in the spring and fall when people are still camping at the park. But we've got to recognize that in the middle of summer, until we have the capacity to handle all the RV traffic that we see locally, there's going to have to be some compromise. I think the constituents that I spoke to in the last Assembly understood the rationale, but were looking for a more workable solution, something that was more accommodating and flexible. Nobody I spoke with thought that it made sense to clog up those sites with locals and ensure that tourists had nowhere to camp when they arrived.

So I certainly will commit to the Member that we're working internally to develop some regulations that make sense. I'm aware of the concerns. I have the same concerns as the Member and we're going to work to alleviate those. I will come back to committee with a proposal and hope to get support from committee and then we'll move forward quickly. Thank you.

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

**Question 18-15(2): NWT Tax Exemption Options**

**MR. ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I took a vested interest in listening to the Finance Minister's budget process update and feel that, with the number of problems he encounters in the revenue and expenditure section, I've made a few comments on how we should encourage the government to introduce tax exemptions to improve upon that kind of development for our residents of the Northwest Territories. So my question to the Minister is whether he is prepared to introduce new tax exemption mechanisms and, if so, how does he intend to implement this new initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Minister responsible for FMBS, Finance, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 18-15(2): NWT Tax Exemption Options**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated, the government is going to have to look at the whole expenditure side, as well as the revenue side, to try to come up with a balance of how much debt we're going to carry and go forward from there. Mr. Speaker, there are some options that are out there that we can look at. Mr. Speaker, our problem right now is that we don't have enough revenues to deal with our fiscal situation. So we're going to have to look at how we can come up with revenues, and if Mr. Allen has some suggestions for areas that we can look at that would create some more revenues then we would gladly take that into consideration.

In reference to Bill C-48 that was dealt with by the federal government and responds to concerns raised by the industry in the resource sector. They have undertaken some initiatives and I'm not very familiar with that area, but we'd have to look at that. My immediate concern in preparing for our next step in bringing main estimates forward for this Assembly is to look at the level of expenditures versus our revenue side. As I stated in my Minister's statement, in fact we do have a problem and the gap is widening between the revenues we have and the expenditures.

So right now we haven't looked at any specific exemptions. We have looked at a number of other areas, but not any exemptions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary. Mr. Allen.

**Supplementary To Question 18-15(2): NWT Tax Exemption Options**

**MR. ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I acknowledge the fact that we had a briefing on the statistics of the Northwest Territories and some of the costs that are related to that. It leaves no doubt that our communities, Mr. Speaker, are in a sad state of economic and social development today. Again, I would ask the Minister of Finance if he is willing and able to formulate tax policy that would stimulate that systemic change to the economic and social development of this territory. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 18-15(2): NWT Tax Exemption Options**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Definitely, I would be interested in looking at our tax policies and see how they could spur some further economic development, for example, or how they could impact on social wellbeing of residents of the Northwest Territories. But we must also understand that there's a cost to doing some of these things and because our revenue base isn't a very large one, those have an immediate impact on other programs and services. I'm willing to look at tax solutions out there that could lessen the impact to the residents of the Northwest Territories, but at the same time we must balance that off with what level of expenditures we're willing to make in other program areas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary. Mr. Allen.

**Supplementary To Question 18-15(2): NWT Tax Exemption Options**

**MR. ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be tabling a couple of documents later this afternoon. I would make reference to the fact that we have the ability to introduce some tax exemptions that would help us facilitate social and economic growth in the Northwest Territories. Again, I would ask the Minister if he would elaborate for the benefit of the people of the Northwest Territories if he's willing to adopt new tax initiatives that would be part of the strategy to improve operational efficiencies in economies throughout the North? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 18-15(2): NWT Tax Exemption Options**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, I would be glad to sit down and look at the information provided. We are, as government, looking at a whole number of options to enhance our budget or look at creating and stimulating some development in the Northwest Territories, provided that we do not lose from our revenue base and impact other programs and services that we deliver as a government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Final supplementary. Mr. Allen.

**Supplementary To Question 18-15(2): NWT Tax Exemption Options**

**MR. ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect, I know the difficulty that the Finance Minister is faced with, considering our fiscal situation. But would he now assist in facilitating a number of tax reform meetings specific to Inuvik and perhaps if we could coordinate jointly a tax reform forum in Inuvik to get some further ideas? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 18-15(2): NWT Tax Exemption Options**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would gladly meet with Members of this House in their communities or in committees to discuss options that are available to us as government that could enhance the programs and services we have available or lessen the impact of the cost of living in the Northwest Territories. At the same time, we must look at the whole picture as a government and see what balance we can strike. I would gladly meet with the Member and discuss the initiatives he's discussed and see how we can move those along. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

**Question 19-15(2): Non-Resident Mining Industry Employees**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland. I know everybody has been hearing a little bit more back room grumbings about the growing inequities in the employment within the mining industry of aboriginals and northerners; that the mining industry is reaching a point

where they're just barely meeting their quota for northern employment. With the growing number of mines that are going to be opening in the future, I think this gap is going to keep growing. My question, Mr. Speaker, is that I've been hearing some concerns from some employees of these mining industries that some non-resident employees are taking advantage of our northern taxation policies. I know changes in these policies are also being hindered by the Government of Canada's taxation harmonization policy. That's why we're having a hard time recovering more dollars from non-resident employees and making it more fair and equitable for our northerners.

The issue I want to raise with the Minister is that I know that a lot of the non-resident employees of these mining companies are starting to take up residence just north of the NWT border in areas like Hay River, Enterprise and Fort Smith. That makes them qualify for these northern allowance benefits. Every two weeks there's a mass exodus going south after the shift changes. People are just taking addresses and filling them out on their application forms to the mines that are situated in these communities, which qualifies them for the northern benefit allowances.

I just want to ask the Minister what measures he is going to make to ensure that the northern allowance benefits are taken advantage of by northerners only, and not by southern employees who do not reside in the NWT on a full-time basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 19-15(2): Non-Resident Mining Industry Employees**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Member for that question. It's an area that has been a bit of an issue through a number of Assemblies from the day the payroll tax was put in place. Many northern businesses felt that it was an added cost to them. The government itself wanted to ensure that we tried to encourage employees who were working from other jurisdictions to live in the Northwest Territories so we could benefit in a number of ways by them taking up residence in the Northwest Territories, and also to encourage businesses to hire northern residents and put them into gainful employment.

There are things that we have done. It's admittedly in an area that has some issues. We have looked at a number of issues across the board around the payroll tax and how we're affected by harmonization of tax policies across the country, but it is an area that we see as one of the avenues to try to...If we can't have employees working at the mines living in the Northwest Territories, then we will keep this tax in place and look at enhancing it, possibly, as one of the ways to try to bring some money back to the North that we're not getting through royalties, for example, or other areas. There are a number of options, but in the area itself of payroll tax, it has its problems. It's something we need to continue to work out, but it is based on residency in the Northwest Territories. So if someone works for a mine or a company in the Northwest Territories and does take up residence in the Northwest Territories, they would qualify for that rebate, for the credit, depending on the income that they make. So if they've moved to the North and taken up residence here,

that benefits us in a number of ways. One, it increases our grant from Canada because we have a higher population but, as well, most of the money would stay in the North. If the Member is referring to the fact that people are taking up an address but not really living at it, that's something we need to follow up on and get more detail on. If the Member has some specific information he'd like to meet with me on, I'll gladly meet with him. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

**Supplementary To Question 19-15(2): Non-Resident Mining Industry Employees**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that the payroll tax is something of an unknown for this government in making any real change in it because of this harmonization policy. What I'm getting at, Mr. Speaker, is I'm just wondering how the Minister intends on making some positive policy changes that would curb the practice of employees in the mine, like you would get 10 or 20 employees with the same address. They're all living in the NWT but they all have the same address. It basically just goes to show they've found a loophole in our taxation policies, and I'm just wondering how the Minister plans on addressing that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 19-15(2): Non-Resident Mining Industry Employees**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To address and do audits, it would come down to follow-up on that kind of information. If in fact there are a large number of people at one residence, it's something that would trigger an enquiry and is it in fact being used by a multiple number of people who fly in and use that address as a mailbox. That's something that has been raised in this Assembly. We don't have right now something that we can pull out besides more inspections or more audits on files.

The other side of it is if we are going to enhance that area, I would have to look at increasing staffing levels to ensure that we follow through on the submissions made to ensure that people are where they are; if they're actually living in the North or if they're using that and trying to gain benefit at that end. That would affect not only the payroll tax -- if they're using a northern address and qualify for NWT health care -- that would also impact on the cost of government. So it's something we have to look at and ensure that we're doing the best we can. I'll admit now we're not doing enough in that area, but that goes back down to the resources that we have as a Department of Finance to try to catch all of these things that are in place. Thank you.

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

**Question 20-15(2): Abandonment And Restoration Of Miramar Con Mine**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is a follow-up to my statement. It's for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Bell, and it's about the situation regarding the plans for the abandonment and reclamation of the Miramar Con Mine. Mr. Bell, along with myself and some other MLAs, as long

ago as last summer, had written to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board and asked for more public access to a review process for how the company was going to shut down this property. I haven't heard anything from the board since then, and I would like to stress again that the issue is access to the review plans for shutting down the mine. My question, Mr. Speaker, is what is the GNWT's stand on improving public access to the review of Miramar's abandonment and reclamation plan at Con Mine? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Minister of RWED, Mr. Bell.

**Return To Question 20-15(2): Abandonment And Restoration Of Miramar Con Mine**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I should say that there are ongoing meetings. The working group continues to review the abandonment and restoration plan that was submitted by Miramar Con Mine, submitted on the basis of their existing federal water licence. We are a part of that working group. I think we have two seats at the table. There are folks from our environmental protection service at the table. They're looking at the obvious things that you'd suspect, they're looking at the demolition of service structure, historic tailings, contaminated soils, site monitoring, water management, and I believe they continue to meet at least once a month. The Member is right, that as regular Members we were concerned about what we perceived as lack of public process. There has always been the ability for the working group, under the terms of reference that were established, to call for any members of the public or interested citizens to participate in the process. That avenue has been there. It's my understanding now that the Water Board has scheduled a public meeting, I believe it's the end of April. They want to hear the concerns that the public may have. So I'm encouraged to see that, and I think that that will go a long way in assuring residents of the Northwest Territories that they will be able to have their say in how this A and R plan rolls out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 20-15(2): Abandonment And Restoration Of Miramar Con Mine**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm encouraged to hear that the board is taking some steps to open the process up. I guess I would hold any further comment until I get some more detail. A public meeting, if it is as the Minister has said, I think falls far short of what I would call adequate public access. I'd like to ask the Minister, for the representatives that we do have in this process -- and it is a closed door process, from my understanding of it -- is there any requirement for those representatives to report back to the Minister, and then consequently to the public? Do we have any access to those people's reports? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Minister of RWED, Mr. Bell.

**Further Return To Question 20-15(2): Abandonment And Restoration Of Miramar Con Mine**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First I would say that I'm interested myself in more detail as to what the public meetings will comprise at the end of April, and I'll get that information and commit to provide that to

all Members. I think it's important that we understand exactly what the process is. The Member is certainly aware that there was an application made by the city for an environmental assessment. It was made to the Impact Review Board, not the Water Board. That decision just came down in January from the Impact Review Board, and they indicated there was no mechanism for a full environmental assessment because they are operating under the terms of the existing licence. I will endeavour to determine how information is coming back to the department. I do know that at this point the department seems satisfied that work is progressing in the manner and in the order that it should. So I will determine what the reporting is like internally and get back to the Member on what additional detail I can provide. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question 20-15(2): Abandonment And Restoration Of Miramar Con Mine**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess the issue here is that while the Minister may be satisfied that our people are satisfied that everything is being done, the public doesn't know. We don't have access to this kind of information. To my understanding, the only information that has been released is a rather sketchy plan that was put out last spring of what the company plans to do; there is really not a lot of detail attached to it. So the public needs access to be satisfied that the plan is indeed a good one. That's what we're looking for, reassurance. Will the Minister undertake some proactive steps to urge the board to engage in as open a process as possible? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 20-15(2): Abandonment And Restoration Of Miramar Con Mine**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To be sure, it is the board's process, we're not adverse to public involvement. In fact, I think we'd be happy to see as much involvement as is possible. I think the kinds of information the citizens need to and should be able to see will be made available at the public meeting. At least that is my hope through the public process in that regard, but I will find out the scope of the public meetings to happen at the end of April. I just now learned that they have been scheduled for April 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. I will find out what kind of process will be undertaken at that time and what kinds of information will be made available to the public. The Member has hit on it and this is the board's process and we will provide input in that regard and are sitting at the table, but this federal board will make decisions about what type of information they are going to release. I will find out what we have access to. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The time for question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Mr. Ramsay.

**ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**Written Question 1-15(2): Human Resource Issues At North Slave Correctional Facility**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my written questions today are for the Minister of Justice who has left us, but I will put them on record anyway.

1. Have exit interviews been granted for employees leaving the Yellowknife Correctional Centre over the past 17 months? If so, what percentage does this represent?
2. How do the instances of extended leaves of absences at the Yellowknife Correctional Centre compare with other sections of the Department of Justice?
3. Can the Minister provide the raw data on extended leave for the Department of Justice? How does this compare to other government departments?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Ramsay, just a reminder, you are not allowed to mention the Members who are not in the House. Just for future knowledge, that's not allowed. Item 7, written questions. Mr. Allen.

**Written Question 2-15(2): Smoking And GNWT Employees**

**MR. ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My written question is addressed to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Would the Minister undertake a study on how many GNWT employees are users of tobacco products and, secondly, can he provide to the best of his knowledge, any costs related to GNWT employees who are diagnosed with respiratory problems or other medical conditions caused by smoking? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, petitions. Item 10, reports of standing and special committees. Item 11, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 12, tabling of documents. Mr. Allen.

**ITEM 12: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS**

**Tabled Document 5-15(2): Income Support Issues: Inuvik Social Assistance Appeal Committee, May 21, 2003**

**MR. ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two documents I would like to table today. The first document is income support issues, Inuvik Social Assistance Appeal Committee dated May 21, 2003.

**Tabled Document 6-15(2): Tax Exemption: A Tool For Economic Development For First Nations - Executive Summary**

I would like to also table the Executive Summary, Sorting out the Issues, Tax Exemption: A Tool for Economic Development for First Nations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 12, tabling of documents. Mr. Roland.

**Tabled Document 7-15(2): Interactivity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As required by Section 32.1(2) of the Financial Administration Act, I wish to table the following document entitled List of Interactivity Transfers for the Period April 1, 2003, to January 19, 2004. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 12, tabling of documents. Item 13, notices of motion. Item 14, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 15, motions. Item 16, first reading of bills. Item 17, second reading of bills. Item 18, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Item 19, report of Committee of the Whole. We don't have Committee of the Whole today. Item 20, third reading of bills.

At this time, I would like to recognize the Pages in the House. They are from the William McDonald School, Grade 8. I would like to thank you for your participation and the help that you have provided us with here. Thank you.

---Applause

Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain if the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Glenna Hansen, is prepared to enter the Chamber to prorogue the Second Session of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

**ITEM 21: PROROGATION**

**COMMISSIONER HANSEN:** Mr. Speaker, Premier Handley, Members of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, as Commissioner, I would like to take this opportunity to personally salute the many young men and women who will compete next week for the right to represent their community and region and our territory at the Wood Buffalo Arctic Winter Games in Fort McMurray, Alberta.

As all Members are aware, the Arctic Winter Games provides a powerful and positive showcase of NWT talent, culture, skills and athletics. They would not be possible without the ongoing commitment and support of parents, coaches, staff and volunteers who work year round to ensure their success. I would like to express my appreciation and best wishes to them all.

Prior to proroguing this Second Session of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, I would like to advise you that the Third Session of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly will convene on Tuesday, March 16, 2004, at 1:30 p.m.

Until that time, I wish you Godspeed and travelling mercies.

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I hereby prorogue the Second Session of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Mahsi.

---PROROGATION

The House prorogued at 3:15 p.m.

