



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

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(Nunakput)

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(Great Slave)

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, May 23, 2012****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Moses, Mr. Nadli, Hon. David Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:37 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

---Drum Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain if the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable George Tuccaro, is prepared to enter the Chamber to deliver his opening address to the Third Session of the 17th Legislative Assembly.

Opening Address

COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. George Tuccaro): Please be seated.

Speaker Jacobson, Premier McLeod, Members of the Legislative Assembly, leaders, Chief Superintendent Blake, ladies and gentlemen. I open by congratulating the Members of the 17th Assembly for the leadership you have shown since your election last fall and the vision that you have developed for the Northwest Territories. That vision reflects the hopes and dreams of all Northerners. It envisions strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories. The resilience of our people, the dedication of the public service, and your collective commitment and leadership make this vision eminently achievable.

Completing the Political Development of the North

Springtime brings new life to the North. The North comes alive with the return of migratory birds. New life brings new ways to adapt new ideas for sustainability and a renewed happiness and good living.

My speech today marks a departure from the Commissioner's address this Chamber has become used to. It is not the customary ceremonial welcome. Commencing today it is much more. Similar to other Canadian jurisdictions, my address adopts the practice of laying out your government's agenda for the coming months, while touching on

recent accomplishments and looking forward to future development challenges.

This change is one of many on the territory's road to political maturity. We see it in the evolution of this Legislative Assembly, which saw its beginnings as an appointed Territorial Council advising an appointed Commissioner on how to administer government programs in the Northwest Territories. Over the years that advisory council has become a fully elected body with the power to enact legislation on behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories, led by an elected Premier and Cabinet who are responsible to this House for their decisions and policies.

This evolution tells only part of the story of our territory's political advancement. Another chapter is written in the ongoing devolution of federal programs and responsibilities to the Government of the Northwest Territories. Education, local government, policing, health care, forestry, highways, airports, each was devolved in turn. Each advanced our level of political self-determination.

One of the last remaining responsibilities still to be devolved is also one of the most critical. I'm referring to the authority over public lands, water and resources. This is an authority of utmost importance and one which each province and territory, except for ourselves and Nunavut, enjoys. That includes the regulation of development, environmental protection, land use planning, the setting and enforcement of codes and standards and, importantly, the levy of resource taxes or royalties. It will give Northerners the power to shape what happens in our own backyard, making us masters in our own home, masters of our own destiny.

Much is at stake in the transfer of this final power. Multi-millions of dollars in government revenues depend on it. The health of our resource sector and our environment depend on it. Your government remains as committed to devolution as any before it.

This afternoon I am pleased to inform you that the commitment to devolution is paying off. I refer to the signing of the Devolution Agreement-in-Principle by representatives of the Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated yesterday.

---Applause

The Sahtu will now join with the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and the Northwest Territories Metis Nation in negotiating the transfer of authority over public lands, water and resources from Canada. This development is a reflection of the openness, the vision and the dedicated hard work of many people. I know you join me in congratulating the Sahtu.

The Sahtu's signing makes this a good day for devolution in the Northwest Territories. However, there is still much work to do. We expect to conclude the final agreement before the end of the year. After that, it will take another 18 months to complete the planning required to implement devolution. I know our governments – the public, territorial government and Aboriginal governments – are up to the task, and I look forward to the time when we as Northerners will have the authority to properly manage public lands, resources and water in a responsible, sustainable manner for the benefit of the current and future generations.

Strong Partnerships for a Strong North

My friends, yesterday's signing came about because of efforts your government has made to build strong working relationships with many different groups and people across the Northwest Territories. We are a small territory who will need to work together if we want to achieve our goal of a prosperous, sustainable NWT that provides benefits for all of our people in every community and region. Achieving that goal will take the work and effort of not just your government but also of Aboriginal and community governments, business and industry, environmental and social organizations and all people of the NWT.

As the public government for all residents, the Government of the Northwest Territories is responsible for considering the interests and needs of all of the regions, people and groups in the Northwest Territories during our deliberations. Your government continues to reach out to people and organizations in every sector, to help build the consensus and support it needs to achieve a better future for all of our people.

It began last October, even before this House formally sat, when the entire Caucus of the Legislative Assembly met with leaders from all Aboriginal governments in Detah. That meeting demonstrated the government's interest in a new relationship with Aboriginal governments; one built on the principles of mutual respect, recognition and responsibility. The Premier and Cabinet have continued to follow up on the start made at Detah, with bilateral meetings with Aboriginal government in every region of the Northwest Territories.

These formal government-to-government meetings represent progress toward the establishment of regular ongoing meetings between Aboriginal government and the public government to discuss the issues of shared importance where we can make progress and find ways to strengthen our relationships. These meetings have shown us that while differences of opinion remain, there is, in fact, a strong willingness and much common ground upon which to work together. For example, both the Tlicho Government and the Northwest Territories Metis Nation are working with your government to develop bilateral intergovernmental cooperation agreements that will formalize relationships and set out principles and protocols for the respective governments to work with one another.

This willingness to work together and find common ground forms the basis of advancing the Legislative Assembly's priority of strengthening relationships in a spirit of mutual respect, recognition and responsibility will be expressed in a public statement of your government's key principles and commitments with respect to engaging with Aboriginal governments and communities that will be tabled during this legislative session.

Community governments also have a critical role to play in supporting our residents and their aspirations. In recognition of this, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is implementing an accountability framework to support this very important level of government. The accountability framework acknowledges the shared responsibility our governments have to manage public funds, makes clear how your government will engage with community, and helps community governments report more transparently to their residents on how communities are being governed and how programs and services are being managed.

These meetings and our work on formal engagement processes with Aboriginal and community governments mark a different approach. It is a new approach that has the potential of bringing Northerners closer together across the whole spectrum of human endeavour. It can unite us as a people, strong both in our unity and in our unique differences. It can bring business and government together in public/private collaborations. It can create new synergies by partnering with non-profit organizations, with municipalities, with Ottawa. It can leverage resource development by pooling interests with the mining and petroleum industries. It can foster environmental protection by finding common cause with conservation groups.

While your government continues to build consensus at home, it will also look outside of the NWT for partners it can work with. Chief among these will be the federal government, whose Northern Strategy aligns closely with this

Assembly's own vision. Canada will be an important partner with this Assembly in creating a prosperous, self-sufficient territory and your government will continue to engage them on issues of interest to NWT residents.

Where there is trust and common cause, there is unity. Where there is unity, there is no limit to what Northerners can accomplish. There is a known adage: a single ant can move a grain of sand, but an army of ants working together can move a mountain. I truly believe we Northerners can move mountains. I look to myself, where life has brought me today, and I see first-hand that it really can be done.

Consider our generous resource base, our environment, our vibrant cultural heritage, our natural inventiveness, the youthfulness of our population. Everywhere one turns in the Northwest Territories, one sees the spirit of collaboration and mutual goodwill. This is our traditional way: working together. To quote your Premier: "Our territory is too small to be fragmented by issues that divide us. If we are to move forward, we will need to do it together."

My fellow Northerners, never were those words more true than today. We live in a time of fragile economies, vulnerable world markets and fiscal restraint. The government's resources, which pay for the programs and services that our residents rely on, are limited. We need to work together to make collective decisions about the priorities we have as a territory and the best way those priorities can be realized. The people of the NWT want an opportunity to succeed, to live healthy lives, participating as full members of a prosperous and stable society. It is the job of your government to create the conditions for that success, to put in place the programs and supports that will help our residents achieve their personal and collective aspirations. In the coming months your government will continue to build on the good work that it already does for our people, for our economy and for our environment.

Creating the Conditions for Personal Success

Creating the conditions for personal success means addressing those issues that keep our people from achieving their full potential – poverty, poor health, lack of education, housing challenges. Your government is already taking action in these areas.

We can see it in Building for the Future, a new strategy introduced by the NWT Housing Corporation last month. This strategy responds directly to this Assembly's priority to address housing needs. It was based on the last government's shelter policy review and was informed by extensive consultations with Northerners. This strategic framework builds on the success of existing housing programs and services, and incorporates changes where they are needed.

It extends across the whole spectrum of housing needs from homelessness to homeownership, and across all types of communities. The strategy coincides with a new rent scale for approximately 2,400 public housing units the Housing Corporation operates. The new scale is simpler. It is more predictable. It is fairer and it fosters independence as opposed to dependence. The new rent scale will be implemented this summer.

We can see it in the work your government is doing to develop an Anti-Poverty Strategy. Where there is poverty, one finds addictions, overcrowded housing, hunger, low literacy, ill health, family violence and unemployment. Over the last year the Government of the Northwest Territories held discussions with residents, stakeholders, clients and front line workers on how we can address poverty. What the government heard echoes something we already know: poverty is not something the government can tackle on its own. It is a complex, multi-faceted issue that we all – individuals, families, communities, governments, business, and volunteer and community groups – have a responsibility to work on. Individuals, their families and their communities, other governments, volunteers and community organizations and business all have essential roles to play. Your government is now working with a broad array of stakeholders to develop an Anti-Poverty Strategy that will be tabled in this House before the end of the calendar year.

Education is another key in helping the people of the Northwest Territories achieve personal success. Your government continues to work on that front as well. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment continues to implement the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative, designed to eliminate the education gap that exists between Aboriginal students and the rest of our school-aged population. This 10-year plan takes a long-term, developmental approach and tackles the challenges comprehensively, striving for an increased focus on early childhood development, more Aboriginal educators, higher attendance, greater parental support and better and more appropriate tools. Under this plan the department has provided literacy coaches in each region of the territory and expanded its network of community libraries. The department is also developing new Aboriginal language curriculum, supporting the orientation of teachers in Aboriginal culture, and launched a campaign to increase school attendance. Steps this year will focus on working in collaboration with Aboriginal governments to engage parents more fully in their children's education.

This work also dovetails with work being done by ECE and the Department of Health and Social Services to renew the Early Childhood Development Framework for Action. Ensuring our

children get the supports they need during their critical developmental years will have long-term benefits. Earlier this month the Ministers of two of the departments and the deputy chair of the Standing Committee on Social Programs co-chaired a meeting with Aboriginal and social program leaders to begin consultations on this subject. I look forward to seeing these cooperative efforts bear fruit among our children and youth.

Prevention is the most effective way we have of ensuring our residents lead healthy lives. With that in mind, the Minister of Health and Social Services will be presenting a Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan to guide the territory over the next three years. That plan will position the department to respond to those in need. In a similar vein, the department will soon commence work with its community, regional and territorial partners to develop community wellness plans. This focus on communities is also reflected in work the Department of Justice is doing with the RCMP on the development of community-based policing priority plans with each community in the NWT that will help ensure the safety and security of our residents.

I would also like to mention the Department of Public Works and Services, which supports the delivery of critical programs and services to our residents in all 33 of our communities through its management of the digital communications network. Recent changes to the contract for the digital communications network will ensure that it can better support services like digital imaging, like X-rays, video conferencing for clinical service delivery, faster Internet access for schools across the territory and better support for distance learning applications.

Keeping Up Our End of the Bargain

Ensuring NWT residents are healthy and educated and free from addictions and mental health challenges is only one part of the picture. Government must also keep its end of the bargain, by working to create the conditions for economic success as well. Realizing our vision for our people also means ensuring that there are economic and employment opportunities available throughout our territory.

In response to the mandate provided by you, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment has initiated work to advance two planned and coordinated strategies for the future of mining and economic development in the NWT.

A Mineral Development Strategy, developed in partnership with representatives of the mining industry, will serve to increase industry confidence and expenditures in mineral exploration, and endorse the responsible and productive use of our territory's great mineral wealth, providing jobs and economic prosperity for decades to come.

It will complement the development of a comprehensive economic development strategy that will identify challenges and opportunities for investment and growth, and build capacity in our communities for self-sufficiency among our people in a manner that reflects this Assembly's key values of responsibility and environmental sustainability. At the same time your government will be undertaking an initiative to reduce red tape, identifying and eliminating inefficient processes through internal reviews and consultations with the people of the Northwest Territories.

Investing in territorial infrastructure is another important aspect of your government's work to create the conditions for economic success. As in all areas, the government's economic initiatives are constrained. This demands that the government be scrupulous in how it targets its spending. The government has chosen a strategic approach. On the investment front, that means focusing on those infrastructure areas that will not only address our significant infrastructure deficit but will also improve our service delivery and develop our economy. On the policy front that means planning to ensure development is channelled in an orderly manner most beneficial to Northerners.

The government's infrastructure priorities are laying the groundwork for economic expansion that will create benefits for the people in all the communities and regions, further economic diversification and support northern businesses. They include preparing for the construction of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk portion of the Mackenzie Highway and the ongoing planning for the southern stretches of that same road. These projects will open up vast new resources for development and lower the cost of living in nearby communities.

The Department of Transportation is currently responding to the environmental assessment requirements of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway. That includes geotechnical investigations, surveys, consultations, and studies into fisheries, vegetation, wildlife, archaeology and hydrology. It also means examining procurement options, assessing the project risks and determining how to achieve the best value for money. This information is being compiled into a business case study to address the procurement and financing options.

As for the Mackenzie Highway's unfinished southern portion, the Department of Transportation continues to make progress on this project. Your government has made incremental investments totalling over \$100 million towards the development of an all-weather highway over the last 10 years. The next step is to prepare a comprehensive project description report for use in the project's preliminary environmental screening. That was made possible by the completion of the regional project description reports. These reports were

prepared in partnership with the land claimant groups along the proposed route, including the Pehdzeh Ki First Nation, Tulita District Land Corporation, K'ahsho Development Foundation and the Gwich'in Tribal Council. The involvement of these Aboriginal organizations has given the Mackenzie Highway project new momentum, while ensuring maximum local involvement and buy-in.

This highway project complements and supports another critical infrastructure objective of your government. That's the construction of the Mackenzie Valley fibre optic link down that same valley. This high-tech digital communications system will create tremendous benefits for all the communities along and adjacent to the route, including approved delivery of education, health services and new business opportunities. It will enhance the quality of telehealth, closing the distance between patients and medical experts, cutting the cost of medical travel. It will improve access to clinical results and digital medical files, resulting in more timely patient care and treatment decisions. It will do the same for families and children in the care of social workers.

The fibre optic link is still in the feasibility stage. Studies indicate it could be built in the space of two years for an approximate cost of \$65 million. Your government is currently looking at options for financing the project as a public-private partnership.

Complementing the proposed fibre optic link is the Inuvik Satellite Station Facility. This facility became a reality in 2011 and inaugurated its second dish just last month. While not a government led or financed project, it is an example of how the government can benefit from innovative partnerships between the private sector and other governments. It has the potential to elevate that region from the boom-bust cycle of the activities such as oil and gas, and place it in the high-tech forefront the territory's economy needs to diversify into more predictable, stable and sustainable industries. The Inuvik Satellite Station Facility is an ideal example of this. It has your government's utmost support.

The Northwest Territories also stands to benefit from the proposed Gahcho Kue diamond mine. Your government supports a balanced approach to development that is sustainable over the long term. It is committed to maximizing benefits of this project for the people of the Northwest Territories and will be working towards this goal as part of the environmental impact review process.

That brings me to the largest, most important private sector project of all: the Mackenzie Gas Project. The Mackenzie Gas Project is an enterprise of national scale that could play a key role in pulling Canada out of its economic slump. The Mackenzie Gas Project will contribute \$68 billion to the Northwest Territories economy and

over \$86 billion to the Canadian economy, including 208,000 person years of employment. It would mean the displacement of coal in the generation of electricity, making for a cleaner planet. It would also prompt the development of natural gas reserves along the entire pipeline corridor; reserves that otherwise remain inaccessible. Coupled with devolution, it would spell a new age of prosperity for the people of the Northwest Territories.

For these reasons, your government remains committed to seeing this project proceed in spite of some unfortunate delays. Those delays stem from a decline in gas prices, increased supply and a need for a negotiated federal fiscal framework. Your government has been a source of stability in the unpredictable high-stakes decision-making environment the proponents face. Its Ministers have travelled nationally and internationally in an open-handed effort to broker support for the project. These efforts are a direct reflection of the stated priorities of this Chamber. Much depends on them. I'm confident they will bear fruit.

Access to the financial resources necessary to support our infrastructure investments is critical to our plans. Congratulations are in order to your Minister and Department of Finance, who have successfully concluded negotiations with Canada on a new borrowing limit for the territorial government this past March. The federally imposed limit has been raised to \$800 million from \$575 million. The new limit will help your government to fund other infrastructure priorities identified by you and future Legislatures. Canada has been a cooperative partner in working towards a new borrowing limit and your government appreciates their continuing efforts to support the North and Northerners.

The increased borrowing limit does not alter your government's current fiscal strategy. That strategy is to pay down increased short-term borrowing incurred to support the territorial economy. The new borrowing limit allows you to invest in strategic infrastructure projects that are required to deliver essential programs and services and develop our economy. I know you will use it wisely, with a view to the territory's long-term benefit.

Protecting and Sustaining Our Northern Environment

My friends, one cannot talk about the well-being of Northerners and creating a prosperous territory without talking about the environment. The land is the source of our life and of our wealth as a territory. One of this Legislative Assembly's most important goals is an environment that will sustain present and future generations. That includes the abundant wildlife that we are blessed with: muskox, muskrat, moose, whales, waterfowl, fish, furbearers, caribou and so many other species.

Wildlife is an important source of income and nutrition. It is also intimately tied to culture. The territory needs legislation that incorporates the most current tools for managing that wildlife. This is vital to conserving our animal populations in accordance with your goals. Your Cabinet proposes to use Bill 9, introduced in the 16th Legislative Assembly, as a starting point for consultation towards a new Wildlife Act.

The new bill will incorporate the results of additional consultations, including ministerial meetings with Aboriginal government leaders. Public information materials in plain language will be developed and widely distributed. Public meetings will be held in all regional centres. The objective is to present a new Wildlife Act during your fall session. It will offer an efficient system for wildlife management in the Northwest Territories that respects the rights and freedoms of all northern residents. I look forward to proclaiming this new, important legislation when it is passed.

The environment is larger than the living creatures that make it their home. It is the ice and the snow, the air we breathe, the water we drink, the landscapes that inspire us and places that represent and symbolize our past. Your government recognizes this and is undertaking several initiatives in this area. I refer to the government's Water Stewardship Strategy, its Greenhouse Gas Strategy and its Land Use Sustainability Framework.

Each has far-reaching consequences for the people of the North today and in the future. The Water Stewardship Strategy, for example, establishes a framework for water monitoring. That monitoring, and other activities under the strategy, will assist your government in negotiating transboundary water management agreements. Such agreements are essential for the protection of our northern lakes, rivers and wetlands, especially in the face of development taking place in Alberta and British Columbia. Your government is concerned about the downstream effects of developments there on the Mackenzie River Basin. For that reason, the first priority is a transboundary water management agreement with Alberta. Negotiations commenced this year, continuing through 2013. The departments of Environment and Natural Resources and Justice have been mandated with this important task. I know they will serve our territory's interests well, as do the dedicated employees of every territorial government department.

For many years your government has demonstrated the importance of having a clear understanding and vision for managing the land and resources of our territory. This summer your government will be seeking input from all sectors of the NWT populace on what vision, principles and

objectives should frame the management of lands and resources into the future. The product of this consultation and cooperative approach will be a land use and sustainability framework, and the framework will build on existing cooperation relationships found in the settled lands, resources and self-government agreements, and will allow the people of the NWT to know how their government will manage land and resources in the future.

How development of the North is regulated is one of the most important ways we have of both protecting our environment and supporting economic growth. The Government of the Northwest Territories wants to see an integrated system of land and water management in the NWT based on settled land claims that functions in the public interest and allows for decisions to be made by NWT residents. Canada is currently undertaking a national initiative to streamline and increase the consistency of regulatory processes across Canada. This will affect the regulatory system here in the North. Your government, led by the Department of Executive, is working to ensure that the improvements being proposed by Canada will help streamline the regulatory regime while still ensuring proper environmental impact assessment, and respecting existing Aboriginal lands, resources and self-government agreements.

Public Service; Public Focus

I now turn my attention to the subject of our public service. It is mostly with a view to expressing my gratitude. This government is blessed with an exemplary public service. In hospitals and nursing stations, they care for the sick. On the territory's byways they maintain the roads and keep them safe for our drivers. They watch over aircraft as they land and take off. They count caribou, monitor water quality and answer phones. They manage our finances. When our babies are born healthy, when our graduation rates are increasing, when our economy has weathered the recession, when our government is well run, we have the public service to thank.

Out of respect for its employees, your government will soon be entrusting them with a new moral responsibility. As part of its tentative agreement with the Union of Northern Workers, your government has committed to providing public servants with a way to report potential wrongdoing and will work toward the development of whistleblower legislation for the consideration of this House during the life of the 17th Assembly.

I wish to acknowledge the government workers' unions for helping to give this issue the profile that it deserves. Our public service unions and employee associations are also to be commended for their cooperative approach in collective bargaining. We have both been solid partners in the struggle to maintain fiscal balance, even as they pursue the

very legitimate interests of those they speak for. In the past few weeks, your government has reached tentative four-year agreements with the Union of Northern Workers, the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association and the Northwest Territories Medical Association. When ratified, these arrangements will help provide certainty and stability to our employees and the government both.

Conclusion

Much is worth celebrating as we look to the triumphs of this government, this Assembly and our territory. Yet, there is a singular accomplishment that must be highlighted, and I refer to the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The year 2012 marks the 60th year of her reign. The Northwest Territories has joined with the nation and with the Commonwealth in commemorating this occasion. We are doing so by honouring those Canadians whose lives mirror her own generous spirit of leadership and public service, and I am pleased to be a part of the celebrations to have a role in awarding some of the Diamond Jubilee medals that will be presented this year. This medal recognizes the outstanding contributions of Canadians from all walks of lives to their communities and to their country. Among them will be many Northerners. Our territory is blessed with more heroes and heroines than the limited number of available medals could ever acknowledge. I encourage everyone to nominate a deserving Northerner for this medal and know you will rejoice, as shall I, in each and every conferral.

On a personal note, this past year has been a gratifying one for me. I have visited throughout the territory and spoken to hundreds of Northerners. I have travelled across the country and hosted many dignitaries from outside of the territory. Most notable of those was His Excellency Governor General David Johnston.

I would also like to take time to remember those prominent Northerners who have left us for the spirit world. We will miss them, but their legacy will continue to live on in the lives of all those who knew and loved them.

I have outlined numerous government initiatives this afternoon. Each represents much forethought, careful coordination and tremendous hard work. I have every faith that these initiatives will succeed. Your leadership, our growing unity, and the grace of God, the Great Spirit, make this assuredly so. I commend your deliberations to the counsel of that Great Spirit now.

During this session the Government of the Northwest Territories will introduce the following bills for consideration by this House:

- Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), 2012-2013;

- Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 7, 2010-2011;
- Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 4, 2010-2011;
- Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 1, 2012-2013.

The government considers these bills essential to the good conduct of government business and, as such, I recommend their passage.

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I now declare open the Third Session of the 17th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

Thank you, merci beaucoup, mahsi cho, qunanani, koana.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: If everyone could rise to the singing of O Canada.

---Singing of O Canada

MR. SPEAKER: I'd like to call a recess so we can have a reception in the Great Hall with all our colleagues and members of the community. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

Speaker's Opening Comments

MR. SPEAKER: Good afternoon, colleagues. On behalf of all Members, I'd like to thank Commissioner Tuccaro for opening the Third Session of the 17th Legislative Assembly. I'd also like to say thank you to Pastor Emmanuel Adam from Glad Tidings Mission from my home in Tuktoyaktuk, and to the Fort Good Hope Drummers and the children's choir from N.J. Macpherson School here in Yellowknife, for their contributions this afternoon.

Thank you, as well, to Grand Chief Frank Andrew, Sahtu Dene Council; Ms. Ethel Blondin-Andrew, chair of the Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated; Ms. Betty Villebrun, president of the Northwest Territories Metis Nation; and Mayor Gordon Van Tighem, president of the Northwest Territories Association of Communities, for joining Members on the floor of the House this afternoon.

I'd also like to extend appreciation of the House to Chief Superintendent Wade Blake, RCMP "G" Division; and Mr. Tony Whitford, our Honourary Table Officer of the Assembly, for joining us here today.

---Applause

Of course, a warm welcome to all our guests who are here in the gallery.

I'm happy to inform Members that we'll have Pages from the following schools working with us during this sitting:

- St. Patrick High School out of Yellowknife,

- Range Lake North School in Yellowknife,
- Kalemi Dene School in Ndilo,
- Samuel Hearne Secondary School in Inuvik,
- Diamond Jenness School in Hay River,
- Angik School in Paulauk,
- Alexis Arrowmaker School, and
- Mackenzie Mountain School in Norman Wells.

Welcome to all the Pages.

---Applause

I hope all Pages are as eager to take part in the Assembly's proceedings as we are to have them here. Welcome on behalf of all our Members.

On a sadder note, colleagues, I'd like take the opportunity to extend condolences to all of those who lost loved ones since we last met across the territory. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families.

In Nunakput, I would like to personally extend condolences to the families of:

- Geddes Wolki Sr., who passed away in Sachs Harbour. Condolences to his wife, Lena, and the Wolki family;
- Robin Gruben of Tuktoyaktuk, condolences to his parents, Roger and Winnie Gruben, and family;
- Therese Voudrach of Tuktoyaktuk, condolences to her daughter Karen and to her family;
- Jessica Jerome from out of Yellowknife. Condolences to Tootsie Jerome and Chauna Kikoak, who I grew up with in Tuk, who lost her daughter this past week here in Yellowknife. Our thoughts and prayers go out to you.
- Roy Inuktalik of Ulukhaktok, condolences to his wife, Kate Inuktalik, and family.

Also, we're going to miss a good friend of all of ours in this House, Mr. Ed Jeske. He will be sadly missed here in the House and for our long conversations and coffees with him. I suggest he'll be sadly missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family on behalf of myself and all Members.

Colleagues, I know that we will all give thoughtful consideration to the important work we have before us over the next weeks ahead during this sitting. I ask you to follow the rules and procedures that we have established to guide the proceedings. As your Speaker, I will assist in any way to make your work here as productive as possible.

Another brief announcement before we begin work here today: please join me in wishing our colleagues Ms. Bisaro and Mr. Beaulieu a very happy birthday here today in the House.

---Applause

What a great day to begin a budget session.

---Laughter

Item 3, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 1-17(3): NOTICE OF BUDGET ADDRESS

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will deliver the budget address on Thursday, May 24, 2012. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 4, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DECENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about fairness. This government has an obligation to consider decentralization of government programs and services. We can't change where some things are located, where there is a river, a lake, rare earths, diamonds, natural deposits. We can't change where those things are located and the industry that may spring up around them, but we can certainly change the economic outlook for our regions and for our communities.

Centralization of government is a self-perpetuating problem. The more centralization occurs, the more rationale there is for more centralization. Growth spawns a capacity, and capacity attracts growth. Someone has to have the political will to stand up for what is fair. This is what is fair: that this government, with its resources, use every opportunity possible to bring this question to bear. This is the question: Is this a service, a program, a project, a position, an activity, a meeting or a departmental activity that could be carried out within a community or a region outside the capital?

No one wants to deny Yellowknife its prosperity, but it isn't necessary to sit back, to the detriment to the regions, and watch Yellowknife thrive. Businesses will make choices based on their interests of their enterprises and we do not control that, but the GNWT has the opportunity to consider, within the parameters of efficiency and effectiveness, the goals and mandates of this government to bring this lens of fairness to the decision it makes. Left to the bureaucracy, I am sad to say, I doubt that this kind of decentralization will happen.

I am looking for strong political leadership to put actions to the statements that we say we want

strong and viable regions, communities, and where we have the opportunity to positively affect this, Mr. Speaker, I believe that we as a government have to stop talking and we have to start to see some actions.

Now, I believe this is a government that can do it. I have every confidence that this Premier, this Cabinet, this 17th Legislative Assembly is the government that is going to start to bring real action to decentralization in support of communities and regions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROCUREMENT POLICIES REGARDING HIGHWAY NO. 4 REALIGNMENT

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A couple of months ago I spoke strongly about the procurement dealings of this government on the highway for bypass project. I am returning once again to this House on such topic.

I indicated then, this is not the last time I will be speaking to the House for the ill-fitted Negotiated Contracts Policy and how such policy undermines our territory's ability to protect public first in what is already an established market economy.

You see, few disagree that Yellowknife itself is at full market capacity. As such, things are very competitive in the highway construction industry. All businesses, large and small, strongly depend on the ability to bid competitively on contracts to meet the needs of their workers and overall business survival. Negotiated contracts in what is deemed a market economy do not make sense and, in my humble opinion, goes against the grain of such policy intent.

My broad brush approach on this subject has always been about the policy itself in areas where capacity building is not required, and that any further destruction of the use of such policy in already established economies will do nothing more than create division, and upset the established competitive advantages of the taxpayer.

Interestingly enough, this very community is in a divisive stance right now. The root cause of this community's standoff is occurring a mere stone's throw from this Legislative Assembly and is being fueled by anger, confusion and lack of trust from the government being transparent and open with its people.

For months now I have been asking this government and the Transportation Minister for a Cabinet justification paper on the highway for bypass project. Shamefully, I must indicate to the Members of this House that I received a formal response only this morning, the first day of session.

What I received was not a Cabinet justification paper but reference to a confidential Cabinet decision paper that will not be shared with the Regular Members. Not only is this not fair to the Members of the House and the residents of the NWT, but to the proponent itself who is patiently waiting and wondering why this government has not signed the negotiated contract papers.

One needs to ask: Why the delays? Why the secrecy? Interestingly, an article today in our local paper caught my attention and sheds an even more unique spin to the already controversial subject before us. The writer talks about the Negotiated Contracts Policy in reference to the great Trojan horse style of politics, where metaphorically this government is allowing backdoor, hidden agendas and deals to infiltrate our public purse. Cleverly, the writer envisions that capacity building could also produce an air of ill-fated cannibalism of sorts amongst government oversubscribed companies. In essence, the very aspect of helping build capacity itself will create destruction of others. If memory serves me, let's hope that fate for the people of the Northwest Territories will not fall for this same level of catastrophe as the villagers of Troy.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. DOLYNNY: I will be discussing once again during oral questions with the Minister of Transportation on this subject to make sure that taxpayers and residents of NWT are getting a fair price for this project, that money is being spent in the North and that jobs are truly going to Northerners. In the end, I have said all along that opportunity, not exclusivity, is to be the way of this government, and that transparency and accountability cannot take a backseat for the people of the Northwest Territories.

I ask once again for this government, the Minister of Transportation and the department to come forward with clean hands and to justify why an exclusive highway contract was used in Yellowknife. I believe we owe it to the hardworking taxpayers, a fair and reasonable explanation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NEED FOR CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been a tough six months for our territory. We have lost many of our residents to illnesses, accidents, desperation and old age. We had one recently, as you mentioned earlier. Some we have lost years before their time; some a bit before their time; and some who left us after a life well lived. All had contributions yet to be made. We will miss each

and every one. My heart goes out to the families and the friends of each of them.

The circumstances around each death were different, but one death here in Yellowknife was particularly troubling to many of us. A constituent reflected on that death and on another one, as well, and shared the following: "A few thoughts post-demise of two Inuit women: The lack of culturally relevant services in Yellowknife may be a factor in our failure to effectively assist these women who resorted to desperate acts and ended their lives. In Yellowknife, the locus of control for services to women at risk to harm themselves or others is not within the culture of these clients. Services are provided by Caucasians with political savvy and proposal writing skills. Nunavut is focusing on both language and cultural aspects in these sensitive and difficult areas of service provision. Maybe there needs to be a reallocation of government funds to ensure services are as culturally relevant as possible."

I read that comment and it struck a chord with me. We are blessed with great diversity in our territory and in the North, but that diversity is also an impediment. Our service providers often must deal with people from different cultures, speaking different languages. They do their best, but do we provide them with the necessary training so they are comfortable in their job, comfortable dealing with our diverse population?

People do not always make the effort to understand each other, to accept our differences. It is human nature to take the easy way out, especially if we have no background training or knowledge to help us understand a different culture. As a government, we have to recognize that failing and do something about it.

The RCMP announced recently that they will establish an Aboriginal Advisory Committee here in the NWT. I applaud that move. How we treat each other depends on how well we understand each other. We cannot understand and treat the actions of someone who is not like us, without some effort. That the RCMP has recognized that and is willing to take action to correct the situation is good news.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: For a start, the RCMP wants their members to learn local culture, meet with chief and council and attend a feast soon after they arrive in the community. For our part, the GNWT has to do something similar. We have to recognize the diversity of the clients we provide services for. We have to then educate and train our service providers so they understand the diversity and the different cultures that make up our great territory so our service providers can understand why a client

acts as they do and provide service that is as culturally relevant as possible.

If we don't, as my constituents powerfully stated, the carnage will continue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Colleagues, before we go on I'd like to welcome back former Member, Minister, Premier, Mr. Jim Antoine, into the House. Welcome.

---Applause

The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEVOLUTION PROCESS

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Devolution is the process of taking over responsibility for managing lands and resources. Devolution has been going on for more than 200 years, so it's important to know the history.

Most of the devolution had Britain and then Canada taking over resources from Aboriginal peoples. It has been done subject to the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the Rupert's Land Act in 1868, Treaty 8 in 1899, Treaty 11 in 1921, and into modern times.

Treaty 11 is seen by the Dene as a peace and friendship treaty with the Crown, but the treaty was spurred by the discovery of oil and gas in Norman Wells and the written version included extinguishment of Aboriginal rights to land and resources.

The process sped up after the treaties, when more people streamed into this land bringing disease, famine, hardships, residential schools and reserves. The Natural Resources Transfers Act in 1930 covering the western provinces is another example of devolution without any consultation with First Nations.

Assimilation of Aboriginal peoples in Canada was still a policy in 1969 when it was published by then Indian Affairs Minister Jean Chretien in the aptly named White Paper.

I'm proud to say that in the past 40 years the Aboriginal peoples of Canada and the North have organized and fought back in court in the Berger Inquiry, repatriation of the Constitution, land claims, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and so on. It is a fight to change the fundamental relationship between First Nations in Canada.

Where does the GNWT fit in? It delivers programs and services on behalf of Canada, but now the GNWT wants to take control of lands and resources. This government is unilaterally pushing for devolution to itself; this government has done an end run around the recommendations of the Bourque Commission, the Denendeh Government Proposal, the Western Constitutional Forum and the Constitutional Alliance. It is an approach that

may alienate Aboriginal groups and spur more legal challenges. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
SOLE SOURCING POLICY REGARDING
HIGHWAY NO. 4 REALIGNMENT

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to talk about the market disruption caused by the Minister of Transportation and this McLeod government by sole sourcing the Highway No. 4 realignment, which frankly, Mr. Speaker, wouldn't pass the smell test of ITI's Market Disruption Policy.

As we all know, Minister Ramsay has been consistently critical of sole-sourced contracts as a Member in this Assembly, but now he's in Cabinet, he's reversed his position; because if you listen to the concerns in the community, you would hear people referring to him as Reverse Ramsay now, the new champion of sole source.

Because only Reverse Ramsay, they say, can now justify the meddling in a healthy, well-established environment, local industry. People are asking where is the old Ramsay, as they hang their head low, but now the Minister of Transportation will justify his new founded love for sole-sourced contracts with dismal comments such as they approached us, it's better for the taxpayer, we are building capacity. So accordingly, as the people see it, and as well as they say it, this McLeod government is finally shedding light on what little respect they have for the taxpayers and the local industry. The Minister will try to use the guise of a negotiated contract with sleight of hand, but really he just means sole sourced by another name, and he will talk about community benefits. Sadly, none of these would even matter to Member Ramsay if he was sitting on this side of the House, because I could hear him now screaming as he drives up to the rafters yelling for an RFP.

So just like the children's story book is called, "Where's Waldo," the public is asking where is Ramsay.

The actions of the McLeod government show that they stand behind market disruption as their new policy in our capital area, which is a competitive area; a very vibrant one, I may add. So people ask why are they trying to attract business if they do what they've just done. What about the BIP policy? Does it not matter? Why are we encouraging northern business to invest here if we're just going to do what they're doing?

I'd like to quote Member Ramsay, as he's clearly put on the record a number of times: "My difficulty is when contracts are handed over." Another one: "The public asks us as political leaders to govern in a fashion that is fair, open and transparent. We are

the protectors of the public purse." Here's another one: "Why is this happening when the work should rightfully go to an RFP?" My personal favourite is: "I'm not suggesting that the people who have received these contracts are not competent, I'm not suggesting that they are not offering a fair price. What I'm saying is that there's no way to be sure of either of these things and if we do not use a competitive process like a tender or an RFP..."

So all I'm asking for is do the right thing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
LACK OF GOVERNMENT ATTENTION
TO HIGHWAY NO. 7

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I was thrilled to be part of a small change in our government wherein the Commissioner delivered a throne speech, and this is symbolic because it sets the tone and direction of our government for the future years to come. However, I was dismayed that the address failed to mention two words important to me, my people and my constituency: Highway No. 7.

So it means to me that it is not a priority of this government and I see it as a failure to take care of my people and their needs. I have been trying very hard to get the attention of this government for Highway No. 7 for the past nine years. Never has a session gone by where I haven't done a Member's statement on this subject. I feel like I'm a lone voice crying from the wilderness.

I will continue to raise this issue during this particular session in the House, in Committee of the Whole and in our committee meetings. I'd truly like to see this government put those two words in the next throne speech, and I believe that with the support of my colleagues and support of Cabinet, we can make this a priority of our government and we should not fail the people any further. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
INUVIK GAS CRISES

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to do my Member's statement on a critical situation that we find ourselves in in Inuvik. It's the gas situation. I've had conversations with certain Ministers over this and we are working hard to find a solution in Inuvik and we're looking at trying to get support from this government.

During our most current business planning sessions that we had last month and part of this month, all

the departments recognize the gas situation as something that we've got to take into consideration when they're planning the business plans, how it's going to affect them. What some don't realize is that in Inuvik where we're going through this situation and the cost of living is already high, what I'm concerned about is we're going to start losing professionals from the community. We're going to lose teachers; we're going to lose nurses; we're going to lose caregivers and people who run programs and services, because they can't afford to pay those prices. Businesses are going to be affected very hard. They're going to have to accrue their costs somehow, which means they're going to increase the goods and services that they provide to the residents of Inuvik and it's going to put those residents into a poverty situation, which will impact income support.

The situation doesn't only affect Inuvik, but it's going to have a rippling effect right across the Northwest Territories. You will see it, and if this government doesn't make the commitments to address the issue and look at how we can mitigate them, I know where we are making some of our buildings and turning them over to diesel, but the money that's going into mitigating the effects of this situation could be better spent by investing it into a long-term solution for Inuvik so that later on we don't have to pay the price. Invest now and we won't have to pay later.

Throughout this government, throughout this session I will continue to speak on the situation. In Inuvik right now we see a lot of homes up for sale since the announcement of the gas situation in Inuvik. It's something that we need to address, something that we'd like to get some support on from this government that the residents of Inuvik don't have to go through some hard times here.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NEGOTIATED CONTRACT WITH DET'ON CHO CORPORATION

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This House has debated and put in place a responsible policy that allows for negotiated contracts. It was created to "lead to benefits for businesses or residents which could not reasonably be expected to be achieved through competitive contracting, or contribute to the creation, growth and competitive capacity of Northwest Territories-based businesses." This policy has regularly been applied in appropriate cases across the NWT, with major benefits accruing to our residents and businesses.

A couple of my colleagues have questioned the application of this policy for the Giant Mine bypass road through the Chief Drygeese territory. Rather than attacking the policy, they have attacked this

application. This to me is wrong-headed, achieves little and ignores the benefits the policy was intended to create.

A negotiated contract with Det'on Cho means our NWT tax dollars will stay in the NWT economy. Det'on Cho has invested \$10 million – all spent locally – to purchase equipment that will be used on the Giant Mine road realignment. It's mounted major training programs locally to ensure people are ready and able to get to work. That training, in fact, paid off with an 85 percent Aboriginal hiring rate on the successful Detah road project, which has only been partially funded to date.

The negotiated contract for a small portion of the Detah road was completed on time and on budget, with the participation of an array of locally owned subcontractors. Thanks to that contract, Det'on Cho now has a start on equipment, staff, experience and business partnerships to deliver a cost effective and quality realignment of the trail through Giant Mine.

For the Yellowknives First Nation owners of Det'on Cho, the highway realignment is also part of the long overdue remediation of the environmental disaster inflicted on Akaitcho lands.

Over the years the Yellowknives Dene have lost use and occupation of traditional lands and have suffered the introduction of poisons into the environment they rely upon and cherish. They have not had the opportunity to participate in the development of industry capacity which exists today. The Giant bypass project begins to address some of this harm, by promoting the prosperity of those who have been most affected.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BROMLEY: The Negotiated Contracts Policy exists for good reasons, and I'm glad we've put it to good use here. If there are problems with the policy, let's have a discussion, but let's not wait until the policy happens to be applied in our own backyard to speak out on it.

I look forward to the successful completion of the contract negotiations and the flow of benefits to our local economy that will result. I will have questions for the Minister of Transportation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CENTRALIZATION OF POSITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVOLUTION PROCESS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to add my Member's statement today to talk about the potential benefits to the Sahtu region of the Northwest Territories. I want to say, first of all, congratulations to the GNWT and their negotiating

team for working with the people in the Sahtu and allowing them flexibility, and more importantly, for the Sahtu people to come to a decision to sit at the negotiating table on devolution. This gives them some flexibility to come, as I said in my press release, to negotiate our own faith within the Sahtu and the Northwest Territories.

This is not a done deal yet; however, we can see the benefits of us coming to the table and to take ownership of our own destiny. I wanted to say this first of all in my Member's statement: Congratulations to the leadership and the people in the Sahtu.

I also want to say that as part of this process, and my colleague the honourable Member for Hay River Mrs. Groenewegen talked about, was the issue of decentralization and putting the decentralization process to work. We want to see results where programs, services and, more importantly, the positions are going to go into the regions and not automatically assume that the city of Yellowknife and the buildings here are going to have them. The bureaucracy needs to know that they need to put these positions in the regions and not make it easier for us as government to say it has to go to Yellowknife because it makes more sense. It makes more sense to see the services go to the regions. That's what I'm going to be harping on this government, to hold them accountable and see if your words are real true to us and put these positions in the regions where they make more sense to my people. We'll wait and see that approach for me.

I do want to say that's my forewarning to the Cabinet members; that I will be here, as any other Members, to hold them accountable and transfer them and make sure that government does what it says it's going to do.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HAY RIVER NEW HEALTH CARE FACILITY

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In today's Hub, my local newspaper, I was quoted on a discussion that I had to have with the press about our new health care facility in Hay River. This should be an exciting time for our new facility; however, there are many people in the community that are concerned that this new health care facility will be downgraded from the current hospital that we have today. The residents of Hay River are concerned that they will have to travel to Yellowknife and southern areas to have blood work, patient care and medical services done, because the facility is being downgraded. I know this is not the fact; however, the Department of Health has not been doing anything in this public relations mess.

In response to all the negative press, the two MLAs – myself and Mrs. Groenewegen – have had a meeting with the department to clear up this mess, to hopefully bury this issue. The department indicated that there was no plan to downgrade the service but that the facility would be the future of Hay River and would also be a benefit for 50 years. If it was going to be a benefit for 50 years, the difficulty that I have is the 10 long-term care beds that we have there now are not in the existing design for the new building. How can it be the future for 50 years if it doesn't meet today's needs?

This is a large problem in Hay River. Our population is not getting any younger. Like the rest of Canada, we are getting older. I will have questions for the Minister of Health later today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CELEBRATION OF SPRING

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This afternoon I want to talk about spring, which I know is in all of our minds. This simple word has many meanings, but to most of us it is a celebration. We once celebrated surviving the long, cold winter and also a successful trapping season. We celebrated by travelling to the nearest outpost or settlement and by feasting and dancing with our families, neighbours and community. Today we celebrate with jamborees, and of course we still feast and dance and celebrate our friendships. For the fortunate people who live on the banks of our rivers, we depend on spring to bring us fresh water, fish, and migratory ducks and geese.

I want to remind my colleagues that for me spring is a time to harvest for my family and provide for my elders. That is what my parents taught me. First provide for the elders and those who cannot go hunting, then have enough for your own family.

I also want to remind everyone that we must take precautions during spring. With the ice moving and waters flowing, fast rivers are very dangerous, especially for the little ones who are very curious and want to explore. We need to educate them about the dangers of fast flowing waters. Even experienced hunters need to be careful. We need to wear lifejackets in our boats and look out for our neighbours.

Our government should also be prepared for spring. For example, there is a good chance there will again be some flooding in Aklavik. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should be ready in case Aklavik and other communities need help. The community of Aklavik has not fully recovered from the last big flood, when the

government assistance was not available for the community.

I will have questions for the Minister later today. Have a safe and enjoyable spring, everyone.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to recognize a constituent of mine and mayor of the Town of Inuvik, Mr. Denny Rodgers. Welcome.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to recognize Chief Jim Antoine – welcome to the gallery – and my assistant, Ms. Pearl Norwegian, who is here for this week. Great to see them travelling.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize the mayor of Inuvik, Denny Rodgers, and Chief Jim Antoine, who both have been strong role models for leaders across the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just saw her a few minutes ago; I think she's still up there. I'd like to recognize Sandra Taylor. She's the president of the Yellowknife Seniors' Society. I, too, at this time, would like to recognize the wise elder Jim Antoine.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Pastor Emmanuel Adam. He's not my constituent, he's yours, but I appreciate the good work he does in Tuktoyaktuk. Often when my husband has visited up there, he's stopped in at the church and I do not think we can underestimate the good spiritual leadership provided by our pastors here in the North.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. I, too, would like to welcome Pastor Emmanuel Adam from Tuk. Thank you for coming down and taking part in our opening day today here in the House. Mayor of Inuvik Denny Rodgers, a good friend too. Welcome to the House. Everybody that's here,

welcome to the Legislative Assembly's proceedings.

Item 6, acknowledgements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 1-17(3):
ETHEL BLONDIN-ANDREW –
WISE WOMEN AWARD

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to acknowledge all those ladies who were recognized with regional Wise Women awards this year. This is a very prestigious group of women who in their regions deserve to be recognized at a territorial level. It is my pleasure to acknowledge our selections this year.

Mrs. Ethel Blondin-Andrew has been chosen for many reasons, and for many reasons I will not list them here, only to say it was a wise choice. I want to say thank you to Ethel, and continue to lead where no man dares to lead.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 1-17(3):
BENEFITS OF NEGOTIATED CONTRACT
FOR HIGHWAY NO. 4
REALIGNMENT PROJECT

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In following up on my Member's statement, my questions are for the Minister of Transportation. I want to note that the development of the Giant Mine never delivered economic benefits to the people of the Drygeese territory. It crippled the subsistence wealth of their traditional lands and left a legacy of poisons to deal with. If Giant were a new mine being developed today, an economic benefits agreement would certainly be in place as a first order.

Suppose that this mine were being developed today, based on his experience over the last 12 years of diamond and other mining developments in the territory, what economic benefits would the Minister see as the basic opportunities made available for the YKDFN economic participation?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. David Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In answering the Member's question, I think the Northwest Territories has come a long way when it comes to developing mines in our territory. We have resources like the Mackenzie Valley Resource

Management Act, and certainly back in the 1930s, a property like Giant, the Aboriginal community at the time wouldn't have access to impact benefit agreements. There was no such thing as a socio-economic agreement with the government of the day.

Nowadays, when we develop new mines in this territory, there are such items like IBAs and socio-economic agreements where Aboriginal governments and companies can avail themselves of opportunities from resource development in our territory. That includes business opportunities, education, training and employment opportunities. Certainly, with the advance of diamond mining in our territory, many of our communities, especially in the North Slave region of our territory, have benefited tremendously from the development of our resources here. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister for those comments. As I've noted, some critics of this negotiated contract underway right now claim that we already have a full, competitive complement capable of this project. I don't disagree with them on that point. Yet, as I said, YKDFN's Det'on Cho Corporation is taking root today because that First Nations' participation was never promoted when the mine was developed.

I'm wondering what are the Minister's views on ensuring that Det'on Cho is enabled to join the ranks of our successful First Nations and other development corporations and finally get an opportunity to join the competitive capacity of industry on their own traditional lands. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Certainly, through the Detah access road program that Det'on Cho was involved in, they have proven themselves. I believe this will just benefit Det'on Cho and the Yellowknives Dene tremendously, in that it will give their members more opportunities for employment, for education and for training their own people and advancing their capacity.

As I mentioned, with Giant Mine being on the very doorstep of Chief Drygeese territory, I think having the Giant Mine Liability Fund fund the work of the realignment of Highway No. 4, it's the very least this government could do to help the Yellowknives Dene on Chief Drygeese territory.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister for those comments again. The Detah road, as the Minister mentioned, is actually an unfinished project because of lack of government funds, and I'm hoping we can find some. But it's a prime example of the good work being done by Det'on Cho. I'm wondering if the Minister can outline some of the local and territorial economic benefits resulting from this negotiated contract, assuming that there's some monitoring of those benefits.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Certainly, I talked about the employment opportunities that came as a result of the \$6 million negotiated contract between the government and Det'on Cho on the Detah access road. We have to identify further funds to allow that project to continue, and we will be continuing to look for further funding opportunities to continue the work on the Detah access road.

But specific to opportunities, I know Det'on Cho provided a great deal of training in partnership with Flemming College, and also with the Mine Training Society here in the NWT. The quarry was used for field training, drilling and blasting, and it resulted in numerous employment opportunities for First Nation members of the Yellowknives Dene on that project.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to just follow that up by stating that I am aware that there are a number of local and regional corporations who have expressed an interest in participating with the Det'on Cho on this project. As part of the negotiations for establishing the contract, what steps is the department taking to ensure a full complement of local subcontractors are included in the Det'on Cho Giant bypass work?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, the negotiations will be concluded here shortly, but certainly the Det'on Cho proposal will include a wide variety of local and northern businesses that will help Det'on Cho as they work to construct the realignment of Highway No. 4. They also will need some support in the areas of administration and management and other areas, and we look forward to seeing a finalized negotiation with Det'on Cho that will include that wide array of northern businesses that will help Det'on Cho achieve the work that's there.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 2-17(3):
DECENTRALIZATION OF
GOVERNMENT POSITIONS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As most people in this House know, Hay River is an entrepreneurial, resilient little town that has bounced back from many losses; thinking back not so far to the loss of Pine Point as our neighbours, and we have continued to hold our own. But it's time, although we try to stay very positive, it is time to sound the alarm. I feel the pain of my colleagues from Inuvik, as well, with what they're facing. The Mackenzie Gas Project is being deferred, it would appear. Electricity rates are going up. There are lots of things pressing in upon us, and we now look

to the government and say what can the government do to help us get through this difficult time. Of course, in the backdrop are the ever looming global economy issues which we see on the news.

I'd like to ask the Premier if the government has a position or a stance at this time on the significance and the issue of decentralization in the interest of fairness. Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can tell the Member that she can count on us. We are supportive of decentralization and we are beginning plans to take that under consideration. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I'd like to ask the Premier, is he prepared to, I guess, issue a decree as the leader here in the North to his Cabinet colleagues and to the people in the bureaucracy that this is something we are serious about. Not to do things that are insensible, but to seriously analyze opportunities to do things in the regions, in communities outside of Yellowknife wherever possible. Is he prepared to put that message out in a way that we can recognize it and see it? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: At the start of the 17th Assembly, one of the priorities that was identified by this Caucus or all the Members was decentralization. We are starting work in that direction. We are looking at doing inventories on what's available in the communities. We are looking at it from a deputy minister level, to identify those programs and positions and divisions that could be considered for decentralization.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I want to say that Hay River has capacity. We have affordable homes. We have space available. We have schools that need more children in there to populate our schools. We have capacity. There's nothing infrastructure-wise that we need to add to be able to absorb some of the government.

One of the biggest decisions that came out of the program review office was to build another \$40 million office building in Yellowknife. Maybe it's time to re-profile the program review office to analyzing department or government-wide opportunities for decentralization. Perhaps we should change their mandate. Is that something the Premier could support?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: One of the commitments we have made to committee is that we will work with them as we deal with decentralization, and I'm quite prepared to look at the program review office, if that will assist us in dealing with this initiative of this government.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Your final, short supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that there are a lot of skills contained in that office and certainly we don't want to make rash moves without sufficient analysis before we would make moves in the area of decentralization, but I just want to say that I do appreciate the Premier's public commitment here today and his willingness to look at this. I thank him very much. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: In looking at other successful initiatives on decentralization, generally it works best when you make fast decisions and move quickly on it, so we are working very closely with the committees on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 3-17(3):

RECOGNITION OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF GNWT PROGRAMS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Human Resources. I would like to follow up on some of the thoughts in my Member's statement. I spoke about the diversity within our territory and the need for our service providers to have an understanding of the diversity that exists, of the different languages and the different cultures that exist within our territory. I feel that we as a government have to change our mindset and we also have to change our mindset as workers. What programs exist now that go to training our service providers to be culturally aware so that they can provide culturally relevant service to our clients? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To date there is no standardized GNWT training available to staff to make sure that they are aware of the different cultures and are prepared to deal with those situations here in the Northwest Territories. But in our strategic plan, 20/20, building a public service, we are committed to actually pursue that training and put that training into place.

To that end, a request proposal for Aboriginal cultural awareness training has just been concluded. We are about to award that contract and develop appropriate culturally relevant training here in the Northwest Territories for GNWT staff so that they can be aware of the different cultures here in the North, just like the Member is suggesting.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I appreciate that we may not have anything at this point and he is going to work towards something, but in the

interim we have nothing. We put people into a job where they are required to deal with clients, particularly in Yellowknife where they are dealing with an extremely diverse group of clients. In the interim, until we get this training that we are going to do, what does the Department of Human Resources do to help our client service providers?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, we have done an RFP and we are concluding that right now. We will have training. We are planning to roll out a pilot in the fall of 2012 that will be available to employees in the Northwest Territories of the GNWT so that they are aware of the different cultures and aware of the realities that they have to deal with here in the Northwest Territories.

As far as other departments, other departments have different programs, depending on the types of programs they are responsible for. The Department of Justice does have cultural sensitivity training as part of their corrections officer training in the facilities. So different departments have different types of training, but the Department of Human Resources doesn't have, as I indicated, a territorial-wide program and that is what we are working on now.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. Everything I have heard is in the future. I'm looking for something that is going to happen a little sooner than the fall of this year, although I'm glad to hear that there will be something even though it is a small thing and it's a pilot.

The people who come to our service providers are very often in pain, they are struggling, they are at wits' end. If they are not adequately understood, we see the horrendous ramifications that we have experienced in the last several months, particularly here in Yellowknife. I feel that the Department of Human Resources should be taking the lead on training for all of the government. They certainly provide training in many other areas. Does the Minister recognize that this is an area – and I would hope he would say yes, because he is going to develop a territorial-wide policy – but can we not do something now that will assist our client service providers, even though it's not a fully developed training program? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, obviously we agree. Obviously this is something that is important and needs to be done, but it does take time to develop appropriate training. We can't snap our fingers and have this done overnight. We need to engage the Aboriginal groups. We need to look at the different Aboriginal groups throughout the territory and make sure the training is specific to all the different regions in the Northwest Territories and then we have to put it into place. We have committed to have something in place. We pilot it in

the fall. I stand by that commitment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Final, short supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. Again, everything is in the future. I would hope that the Minister would recognize that the need is now, and yes, we can plan and develop and put frameworks in place, but again I would ask the Minister if he would commit to try to develop something for our service providers before they start the pilot in the fall. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, we will have a program in place in the fall to be piloted. I can't create something with a snap of my fingers. It takes time. We have to consult with the different Aboriginal groups. We have to make sure we have proper input. We have to make sure that the program is going to work. We can put something in place overnight, but I can pretty much guarantee that it's going to be a failure.

Give us a bit of time to get this done right. The fall is not that far away. It's May. Summer is here. We will have something ready in the fall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 4-17(3):
REGIONAL ADDICTIONS
TREATMENT CENTRES

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to have a question for the Minister of Health today. In our Caucus priorities, we mentioned enhancing addiction treatment programs using existing infrastructure. Last year during the Forging the Future Youth Conference, they recognized as the number one recommendation was regional treatment centres, with the end goal of creating a full treatment centre for people of the Northwest Territories.

On March 26th I read an editorial that says, the Minister of Health says that a new addiction treatment centre might not be the best option. It raised a little bit of concern for me and a few other constituents that I have. We are not looking at creating a new treatment centre. We want to provide a service, using what we have right now in the Northwest Territories for the people that need it.

What is the Minister's plan in looking at creating these treatment centres in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was responding to a piece of infrastructure that possibly could be used for the treatment of youth. What we have discovered is that a youth treatment facility is youth going into a treatment facility may not necessarily work the best. Most youth that enter treatment are forced into a treatment facility. That is why most of the youth that go to a residential treatment facility end up going to the South. But I was suggesting that maybe there is something that can be developed that is community and culturally specific so that the youth can attend treatment closer to home. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: Last session I asked and got a written question asking for buildings in three of the northern communities, Fort Simpson, Norman Wells and Inuvik. I only received the one for Inuvik and that is a start for this government to move forward to look at these three buildings that can be used as a treatment centre, as the Minister of Health is willing to look at these buildings in Inuvik and look at creating some type of programs. The people in our region – the Beaufort-Delta region, the Sahtu region – that need the treatment have some place to go, that they are comfortable in the environment and that they will have the support of family and friends. Is the Minister committed to looking at those buildings as a possible treatment centre for the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, we are prepared to look at those buildings. When we travelled into the communities, that was something that the community suggested, that perhaps without an in-depth analysis of any sort, the community suggested that maybe this building would be good for a youth treatment facility.

We are prepared to look at that, but first we want to do wellness plans. That is working with the communities, going to the communities, getting some information from the communities so that the communities will tell us what they think will work in the area of treatment of youth and adults, of course. Yes, I think we are prepared to look at the buildings that are suggested, such as the one that was suggested in Inuvik. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: With that said, we've got the buildings in Inuvik, we've got the O and M costs. In one of our previous sessions we passed a motion to look at the Old Crow model for programs, which is similar to any community across the Northwest Territories. We've got the programs, we've got the building, can we somehow put it together and start moving on this so our people who are suffering from addictions and that need the treatment and the help that they need can have someplace to go? Can I ask the Minister where is his department with that motion that we passed here in the House in the previous session?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The department is responding to the Members in the House and responding to the people of the Territories. We are going to be tabling a Mental Health and Addictions Plan this session, and within that plan it talks about the various ways that we're going to attempt to treat individuals suffering from mental health and addictions.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the tabling of the document this session, when can we start seeing some action put on that document so that people in the Northwest Territories have an idea of when they can start seeing some services in the communities and in the Northwest Territories? So, can he commit to a time frame of putting that action into place?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: It's a three-year plan, so we're going to have to do something very quickly. Within this coming budget that's approved, we've got some money put in there. The Standing Committee on Social Programs has asked us to add more money into prevention and treatment, so we're looking at that. So we don't have a long, long period to contemplate this. We're going to start actioning the plan as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

QUESTION 5-17(3):
SERVICE LEVELS AT
HAY RIVER HEALTH CENTRE

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I was discussing the new health care facility in Hay River. My questions today would be for the Minister of Health, pertaining to the new health care centre and our existing hospital. My first question would be: Can the Minister explain to me what the difference between a hospital and health care centre are and is Hay River being downgraded?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The Minister of Health, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What is being built in Hay River is a modern health centre, and the term "hospital" often refers to what is being provided. Tertiary care is being provided in there. In the health centre we will be providing other types of services. We're going to have acute care beds in the health centre and emergency beds. Essentially all of the services that are being provided by H.H. Williams will be provided in the health centre. Some of the things that may move offsite could be social services, public health and administration, finance and so on. Aside from that, all of the services that are being provided in the

hospital in Hay River now will be provided in the new health centre. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: In our briefing about the new health care centre, the department indicated that the 10 long-term care beds were not in the current facility design. Will the Minister commit to replacing those beds? We have more demand than we have beds currently in the long-term care facility. So will the Minister commit to that?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Long-term care is not really an appropriate place to be housed in a hospital. The hospital, I guess, is not really an appropriate place to house long-term care, is what I'm trying to say. So what we're looking at is we do want to take the 10 long-term care beds in the current hospital and move them as part of the overall long-term care units that are being provided in Hay River now.

Right now we are going to be doing a midlife retrofit of the Woodland Manor long-term care facility and that's going to happen between 2015 and 2020. This hospital is scheduled to start construction this fall and finish over the next couple of years. So we're trying to time it so that these 10 beds are covered off within Hay River. At the end of the day, those beds will not be lost to the community. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: My only concerns are he indicated that the facility would be completed before their midterm review for the upgrade of the facility at Woodland Manor. So there's a year or two where these beds are going to be out in the cold, or these people. Where would we be putting them? I know at Woodland Manor we currently have a wait list. So we're talking about 10 beds that we're currently supplying at the hospital and we have a wait list of five. So our demands are at least 15, and like I indicated in my Member's speech, the aging population in the Northwest Territories and Canada is growing. So our demands for this facility will be higher than what is currently planned for the department. I guess my concern or my question is: How will the Minister close that gap of those dates when the new facility is completed and the upgrades are not completed at Woodland Manor?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The modern health centre in Hay River is scheduled to be completed 100 percent by 2015. We're going to put into the capital plan, prior to that, the work that is going to be going into Woodland to expand Woodland to accommodate that. So in between I can see where the Member would indicate that there would be some gap. We will be discussing this further with the Members and also with the authority, the local health and social services authority, to close that gap so that people are not out in the cold and those people are accommodated right through the process so that there will always be someplace for them to go, and then eventually lead into the

expansion at Woodland or a facility built on the Woodland Manor site that's closely affiliated with Woodland Manor. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my speech, this is important to Hay River, and to seniors that require these long-term beds it's very important. Can I get the Minister's commitment of when the department will attend a public meeting and explain to the public of Hay River what is going on with this facility?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The department and I will be going into Hay River before the end of June to have a public meeting and provide the information to the public. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 6-17(3):

DECENTRALIZATION OF TRANSPORTATION POSITIONS TO THE SAHTU REGION

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister of Transportation, I've heard the exchange between Premier McLeod and the honourable Member for Hay River, Mrs. Groenewegen, on this decentralization. I want to ask the Minister of Transportation about one issue that's been bugging me for awhile.

As you know, the issue of the Tulita district, Norman Wells and Tulita, that there seems to be some interest by some oil companies to look at some of the work that could possibly happen. So I wanted to ask the Minister in terms of the decentralization issue – the Premier is saying you can count on us – if the department can look at plans moving their transportation office that will serve the Sahtu, moving it out of Fort Simpson's regional office and Inuvik's regional office so that it makes sense. It just makes sense to move those regional offices to the Sahtu rather than have that outside-looking approach where the two different regions are taking care of what we could take care of ourselves. Is the Minister looking at that concept where maybe one day he can convince his Cabinet colleagues to make that move for us?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. David Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As things progress in the Sahtu – and we're very excited about the prospects that are there – it certainly is something I think that would be in the mix as we look at the opportunities that are there. It's something that the government certainly should take into consideration and we will do just that.

MR. YAKELEYA: I'd like to ask the Minister when we can have some serious discussions where this government can say let's make a move in the Sahtu, let's look at moving some of the transportation responsibilities to the people in the Sahtu. When can we do that? When can the Minister provide this House and me with some discussion paper that this is the right move to make for this government?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: In the Premier's response to Mrs. Groenewegen, that work is going to start. We're going to take a look at some of the decentralization and positions that may in fact find their way into the regional centres. Certainly in the case of the Sahtu, that would figure into that mix.

Again, it's a process that has only just begun. As far as the timeline goes, I wouldn't want to take a guess at that, but sooner rather than later.

MR. YAKELEYA: Last year in the Sahtu the oil companies spent \$80 million in the Sahtu just for looking at oil and gas exploration. They are expected to do double that this year. Further on they're supposed to do a little more. We know there is business happening in the Sahtu. We're asking this government, we're willing to help the North, will you help us and start by putting some of these regional offices such as transportation? I know sooner sounds a lot better to me than later. Can the Minister, within the three years of this government, at least start seeing some shift of the regional transportation being moved into the Sahtu? Now we're asking you to help us. I'm hoping that with the Premier's work you can count on us that we can take that to the bank. Will the Minister look at something that we can do within the next business plan?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Yes, and I think again as things progress in the Sahtu, government has to realize that we're going to have to look at capacity there. Not just in transportation but in business development and tourism and other things that are just going to be natural for us to be looking at should the population expand there, should the infrastructure expand there, and opportunities are there. We will have to certainly pay attention to that, and again, on the transportation and having an office in the Sahtu, that is something that we will consider.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister assure me or the House that he's bringing these types of discussions to the Cabinet level where they'll have some discussions? It just makes sense and makes it right that we do, looking at decentralization of a Transportation department and make it into the Sahtu. Will the Minister then provide me with some concrete information saying

that we're going to have this discussion with the Cabinet? Can the Minister do that for us?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I can assure the Member that I have had those discussions with both my deputy ministers both in Transportation and at ITI. For me we're going to have to see how that fits into the government-wide initiative when it comes to decentralization and where our resources are based. We will get to that work.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

QUESTION 7-17(3):
CONCERNS REGARDING NEGOTIATED
CONTRACT FOR HIGHWAY NO. 4
REALIGNMENT PROJECT

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today will be for the Minister of Transportation. There's no doubt that there's been a lot of flurry of activity in the media lately regarding the Highway No. 4 bypass here in Yellowknife, and for good reason. There's obviously a lot of concern out there. Contrary to what was reported by the media spokespeople by the Department of Transportation on this highway project and the Negotiated Contracts Policy, there has been more than just one company that's come forward. There have been many companies that have come forward to seek an interest and, more importantly, an opportunity to bid on this contract.

Can the Minister of Transportation indicate to this House and to the Members here what was said and what was done with these hardworking Yellowknife taxpaying companies who did not get an opportunity to do an RFP?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. David Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There were two other companies that had expressed interest and the Department of Transportation had written to both of those companies. I believe the Member was copied on both of those letters.

MR. DOLYNNY: Yes, we did receive those letters and, again, obviously there will be probably some more future questions on that.

Moving on to my next question to the Minister, I need to know, and I think a lot of people need to know here, what is the government's position on future road construction projects in the greater Yellowknife area with respect to this Negotiated Contracts Policy. What is this government's message moving forward and to the business community here in Yellowknife?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The message moving forward is future highway contracts in the Yellowknife area are intended to be tendered.

MR. DOLYNNY: That's good news to hear. I guess my next question has to do with, as I think was mentioned in my Member's statement, this government's position when this Yellowknife region reaches full market capacity, which we see today, especially in highway construction, how will this government deal with overcapacity. In essence, how are they going to deal with the cannibalization of businesses competing desperately to stay alive and what is this government going to do when businesses start to close down when there's lack of work?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I see it much differently than the Member, obviously. I don't see cannibalism. I see capacity building for an Aboriginal development corporation that is going to supply opportunities for jobs, training and development of the workforce there.

I believe that going forward, as I mentioned in response to the previous question, we will be tendering future roadwork in the Yellowknife area. Because this money is coming from the Giant Mine Remediation Funds, this is at the very doorstep of Chief Drygeese territory and nobody asked the Yellowknives Dene for 237,000 tonnes of arsenic trioxide to be stored at the very foot of the Chief Drygeese territory.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final supplementary, Mr. Dolyunny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the Member and the Minister here. Obviously this is money for remediation, but this is also public money from public tax dollars. So again, there's no real earmarking here.

My last question has to deal with if this policy is being done in the way that has been indicated to the House and Members here, and if the proponent was meeting the needs of this policy, and obviously construction of this road is in dire need, and there's a timeline sensitivity to this road. My question is, and also of the proponent, I'm sure, who's waiting in the wings: Why hasn't this government signed this contract already? I think a lot of us really want to know that ultimate question.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The details are still being worked out. We hope to have the negotiation concluded by the end of this month and construction would start shortly thereafter.

Again, and I will reiterate this, we are looking at Det'on Cho and the number of companies that they will be bringing in partnership on the construction of this realignment project. Those companies are northern and they will be northern. We have yet to see a finalized negotiated agreement. We will be

getting that shortly and make an announcement after that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 8-17(3):
URGENCY OF REPAIRS REQUIRED
TO HIGHWAY NO. 7

MR. MENICOCHE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again the lone voice will be crying out about Highway No. 7 here. I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation some questions. I raised it in the House upon my re-election about making Highway No. 7 a priority within our government. He's had time to meet with the federal Transportation Ministers and God knows how many Cabinet meetings. I'd like to know when it is going to become a priority of this government and when can I get those two words in a throne speech.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. David Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I've heard the Member on numerous occasions going back to the last session on the need to look at Highway No. 7. As I mentioned back then, and I'll mention it again today, this government is going to require upwards of \$200 million for a complete retrofit of that highway and that's money that today we just don't have. Going forward we are going to try to identify capital funds that will get us at least the money that we need on an annual basis to maintain that highway. I think the Member can look forward to that as we go into the next set of business plans later this year.

MR. MENICOCHE: I certainly look forward to that business planning session and to see if indeed this government will provide resources for Highway No. 7. My point is that this government hasn't identified it as a priority in the government and it is in none of their documentations. The Ministers just got a mandate letter from the Premier and Highway No. 7 doesn't even appear in there. I'd like to ask the Minister how and when Highway No. 7 will become a priority for him and our government.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Without the capital dollars to attach to it today, it's hard for us to put it in a speech like we heard earlier today. Going forward, this government is going to try to identify capital dollars for Highway No. 7 and we can look forward to getting there through the business planning process that will take place later this coming year.

MR. MENICOCHE: I believe it's easier to put them in the speeches. It's just two little words that I've been asking for for nine years. If it's not a priority of this government, then those words do not end up in any of our documentation. I'd like to ask the Minister to fight for my people, my constituency and

the highways that I represent. There has got to be some government documentation to make it a priority and to recognize to my people that it is a priority to have a safe transportation infrastructure.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Certainly going forward, Highway No. 7 is a red flag project. It is going to be a priority of this government to try to identify capital dollars to keep that highway maintained at a safe, safe clip.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. How is this Minister keeping Highway No. 7 a priority with his deliberations with his Cabinet colleagues and the federal Ministers?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: My Cabinet colleagues are well aware of Highway No. 7. It's a discussion that comes up time and time again. I have committed to the Member some time during this session that the Member and I will drive Highway No. 7. I want to get a look at it firsthand. I know it's experienced a great deal of precipitation in the past week and I look forward to going with the Member to take a look at the highway. Certainly it will be a priority as we go forward.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

QUESTION 9-17(3):
NEXT STEPS IN
DEVOLUTION NEGOTIATIONS

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask several questions to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. As you all know, the GNWT and the Sahtu have signed on to the Devolution Agreement. I understand that three out of at least seven or eight groups have come on board. I just wanted to ask the Minister if he can provide us, this House, an update as to the progress or the next steps of the devolution negotiations. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now we are negotiating a final agreement with the Government of Canada and the participating Aboriginal governments. We are keeping the other Aboriginal governments that have not signed on the AIP, we are keeping them informed by regular detailed updates on the negotiations, and we are also in discussions with four Aboriginal governments to see if we can find common ground with regard to devolution and other Aboriginal issues. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: As negotiations unfold and as the public kind of observes this process, at some point it is inevitable that conflict will arise. I want to ask

the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs if there are mechanisms in terms of arbitration or mediation that perhaps this government will consider as this progress towards a final agreement progresses. At some point perhaps there could be an anticipated juncture where conflicts will arise.

Is the Minister and the negotiations team aware or even considered, perhaps, where there could be mediated measures or arbitrated measures to ensure that the progress is made but at the same time the common interests of all groups are maintained? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As the Member is aware, the framework agreement that was signed by all three parties, which guides the Dehcho negotiating process, points out that both the federal government and the Dehcho have different understandings on the interpretations of treaties 8 and 11, and our preference is that the Aboriginal and treaty rights for the Dehcho be negotiated through the land and resources agreement.

As I talked about before, the Dehcho understand that devolution is based on a modern land claim treaty and they don't agree with the written version of the treaties. Their view is their oral version where they had not given up any Aboriginal rights or land under their treaties. Right now the Dehcho are negotiating a final agreement which will take precedence on anything that's negotiated, so we are using the negotiations as the process. We did get correspondence from the Dehcho in 2006, where they concluded that devolution would not affect their lands and that they wished us every success in our devolution negotiations.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Your final, short supplementary, Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I like the term "common interest." At some point, I know there's progress, and negotiation is an agreement-in-principle and it's non-binding on the parties. I wanted to ask the Minister if at some point, with the two parties at the table – and of course, with the interests of the GNWT to treat the whole Northwest Territories as one main body – has there been discussions with the groups in terms, perhaps, principle agreement to the concept of a central government working with the regional government and how those governments will be sustained through resource revenue sharing.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are trying to do that through bilateral discussions with the Aboriginal governments. We have been meeting with the Tlicho. We have been meeting with the Dehcho and, unfortunately, we were weathered out on a meeting this Thursday. It's our intention to meet with them to see if we can find a way forward, and we are planning to have some high level discussions.

Similarly, with the Akaitcho we had a meeting planned for this past Tuesday but one of the elders from the Akaitcho passed away, so those meetings were deferred. It's our expectation that we will continue to have discussions to try to find some common ground.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

QUESTION 10-17(3):
COMMUNITY FLOOD RELIEF FUNDING

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you may all know, Aklavik is an isolated community. Last year the only road to safety up to the foothills was washed out and the community was left to use their capital funding to pay for those costs. My question to the Minister of MACA is: What emergency assistance does MACA have available for communities that face flooding, such as Aklavik? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We look at it on an individual basis and see where the money would be best put. In Aklavik's case, I know a couple of years ago they had used some money to fix up a lot of their roads in town. One of the things that we've just recently done during our meetings with other Ministers of emergency measures from across the country is Canada's rolling out a Disaster Mitigation Program which would go towards mitigating situations such as the ones that we're facing in Aklavik. If there's an opportunity there to access some of the money – they're still working out the details right now – this would be one of those projects that would be ideal for this type of program once the details are ironed out. Thank you.

MR. BLAKE: Will the Minister have emergency funding set aside for the community of Aklavik in case the community faces a flood this year?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Again, Mr. Speaker, I say we will look at it on an individual basis and if there is a lot of flooding in some of the communities, we have to look at it on an individual basis and see where we can best assist the communities.

The communities themselves are well prepared to deal with a lot of emergencies that come their way. I think 29 of the communities have emergency plans put in place, so as far as the financial part of it, again, we'll have to look at it on a case-by-case basis and see – going back to the Disaster Mitigation Program – how that rolls out as there may be opportunity for some funding there.

MR. BLAKE: At this time I have no further questions.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 11-17(3):
CONCERNS REGARDING NEGOTIATED
CONTRACT FOR HIGHWAY NO. 4
REALIGNMENT PROJECT

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my Member's statement today, I was concerned about this process, about the new found love for sole sourcing, or as the sleight of hand may call it, a negotiated contract.

Mr. Speaker, my concern is strictly about the process and not about who's getting it. Although there seems to be an undertone trying to describe it as that's the issue, and by no means it is. Mr. Speaker, I, too, speak in favour of the virtues cited about training skilled development, local employment and Aboriginal involvement, so you won't hear me speak against that. It's the process. Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, here this is the issue. What's stopping the McLeod government for allowing Highway No. 7 to go out for an RFP that recognizes all these great virtues that we talked? That's directed to the Minister of Transportation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, it's Highway No. 4, not 7, and secondly, Mr. Speaker, I know the Member, for having been a Member of this House for the past eight years, I would think that he would know the difference between a sole-sourced contract and a negotiated contract.

Mr. Speaker, if he's going back in Hansard, I challenge him to find one example of where I stood up as a Member of this House and said one thing negative about a negotiated contract with an Aboriginal company in this territory. I challenge him to find that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKINS: Clearly, we can see how thin skinned the Minister is by turning it into an issue like that. As I said to start off, my issue, quite frankly, is the process, but if it hurts his feelings, I mean, I can rephrase my question.

I have to actually admit I liked his quote, and that will be my question, which is it's not about the competency or the fair price, but his question was: How can we guarantee these things without going through an RFP process? Mr. Speaker, that is the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Before we go on, Members, I want to make sure that we

are here for a reason. It is to represent the people. We have the question and answer. Respect one another. In regard to your little shots that you are taking here, I am not liking it right now. Keep it in order. Mr. Ramsay, you have the floor.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with you on the respectful dialogue that has to happen in this House, but if the Member is in one statement he uses terms like "sleight of hand, little respect for taxpayers, embarrassment, insult, shameful, back door, dismal and cannibal," that makes it very difficult to have a respectful dialogue with a Member that is conducting himself like that.

Let's just stick to the issue. The issue is we are negotiating a contract with Det'on Cho Corporation, the business arm of the Yellowknives Dene and Chief Drygeese territory.

Mr. Speaker, I take very seriously the allegations that we are insulting the public's intelligence, that we are doing things nefariously. Mr. Speaker, we are not. We are being as transparent and open as we possibly can with Members of this House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Point of order has been called. Mr. Hawkins.

POINT OF ORDER

MR. HAWKINS: I would like to do a point of order on 23(i), imputes false motive. The Minister is suggesting a nefarious conduct or suggestion by me. That is not true. I also follow that up under the same issue under 23(j) and 23(k), which falls under charging an MLA with some type of falsehood, as well as insulting and bad language that causes disorder of this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, nefarious is quite a strong word. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I will take it under advisement and I will get back to the House sometime next week. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question about the new love affair for the Department of Transportation for a negotiated contract, how many sole-source negotiated contracts or similar types of documents have been signed under this Minister's watch since taking the helm of the Department of Transportation last fall? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, on an annual basis, 80 percent of all contracts that the Department of Transportation has are tendered. Twenty percent would be negotiated. If the Member wants detail in the past year, I can provide that for him. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take that particular detail as the Minister had

offered. What better learning experience could any particular company get from a potential contract by actually applying themselves in a constructive way by actually tendering documents to try to win? If we are talking about capacity building, bidding on contracts is one element of capacity building. That is the question, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, much like the Member's press release, I don't really understand the Member's question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 12-17(3):

YOUTH ADDICTIONS TREATMENT CENTRES

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up on the questions that were raised by my colleague with respect to addictions treatment facilities. Mr. Moses indicated three communities where there were buildings that he thought perhaps the government could look at for addictions treatment.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services if the Hay River Hospital, currently scheduled for replacement within a few years, is a building that could be considered. There are a lot of young people in the Northwest Territories that are obviously addicted to drugs and alcohol. I think this building, although it may not be good for a hospital anymore, certainly is good enough for a youth treatment centre. I would like to add Hay River hospital to the list of buildings that may be considered as treatment facilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a considerable amount of work that has to take place in order to use a piece of infrastructure specifically for a youth treatment facility. Like I indicated, almost 100 percent of the youth that attend treatment are forced into treatment. There's not a whole lot of youth from the Northwest Territories that are going into treatment at this time. There's not a whole lot of youth identifying themselves to have alcohol or drug addiction issues at this time. So until we have a program developed that addresses youth treatment, it is very difficult to commit to using any facility for youth treatment. But we would look at any facility that could be used for treatment. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: So let me understand; the Minister is not denying that there are many youth in the Northwest Territories that could benefit from treatment, but there are not youth that are coming forward, identifying themselves as candidates for treatment and the ones that we are

sending to the South are being forced into treatment because they've come in contact with the law or have been referred there kind of as a desperate measure. So we have a drug and alcohol problem amongst our youth and we don't really have any way to get them into treatment. They don't really want to go do treatment. So they're coming out and looking for a facility in which to treat them. Wow! We're deferring a problem. We're deferring a problem until later.

I actually have the statistics right here, and I'll table it later, on the number of youth in the Northwest Territories referred for treatment. In the last three years it's like five, four and three. That is like a sad, low number.

Does the Minister have any idea of how we could encourage, any program that could encourage these young people that are addicted to drugs and alcohol to seek help and seek treatment at an earlier rather than later stage in their life? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. There is the problem, the fact that there are five, four and three youth going to treatment. It's very difficult to have a facility that services that type of number.

What we're looking at with the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan is we're going to the communities and we're trying to find ways where the youth can get treatment using one of the things that the communities asked us to do, is use the elders. Take the youth and the elders out on the land and see if that works as a treatment option. Because if they are self-identified, those are the numbers we have. If they're being forced by the justice system or their parents, those are the type of numbers that we have at this time. It's very difficult to put youth in an infrastructure type of residential treatment.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: As MLAs we've heard the desperate cry of parents who have children that are addicted to drugs and alcohol that are turning to us as a government and saying what can you do for my child. Is there any mechanism through the Department of Social Services, through community wellness workers? Is there any tool that this government has access to that could work with these youth to encourage them to seek help, to help them self-identify as having a problem and seek help? It's almost unbelievable to me that we have this big a problem with drugs and alcohol and yet we as a government say hey, we've got no need for treatment facilities because they don't want to participate. Is there a mechanism within the department through our existing staff that could help with this? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Right now the department, working with health and social services, is spending about \$8 million targeted at treatment, mental health and addictions. But as

people know in the House, a lot of that is for adult treatment; \$2 million to Nats'ejee K'eh for adult treatment and \$6 million to community counselling programs. That's targeted to everyone, including youth. This is what we have. But the community wellness plans that we're hoping to develop, that we will develop and that will complement our action plan, hopefully will identify ways that the community will see or advise us how they see their own youth being treated.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister raises the Nats'ejee K'eh Treatment Facility on the Hay River Reserve. That is an underutilized, to a large extent, facility. They do have co-ed treatment. They have men's programs; they have women's programs. Is there any chance of taking that existing infrastructure, the counsellors and the folks that are already working there, and having some time designated for youth treatment? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, I think we can do that if we talk to the centre. As we talked about trying to do some specific alcohol treatment in that facility so that we're trying to utilize it more. We can talk to the community about specifically putting one of those blocks of time in for youth. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, petitions. Item 10, reports of standing and special committees. Item 11, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Abernethy.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 1-17(3):
GNWT RESPONSE TO MOTION 19-17(1),
COMPLETION OF AN
ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, titled "GNWT Response to Motion 19-17(1), Completion of an Anti-Poverty Strategy." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Hawkins.

TABLED DOCUMENT 2-17(3):
COMMISSIONER'S OPENING ADDRESS:
CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table the following document, titled "Commissioner's Opening Address: Creating Conditions for Success" that was delivered earlier today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 12, notices of motion. Mr. Hawkins.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 1-17(3):

REFERRAL OF COMMISSIONER'S OPENING ADDRESS TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, May 25, 2012, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Tabled Document 2-17(3), Commissioner's Opening Address: Creating the Conditions for Success, be referred to Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 13, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Lafferty.

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 1:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ACT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I give notice on Friday, May 25, 2012, I will move that Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, be read for the first time. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 14, motions. Item 15, first reading of bills. Item 16, second reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Thursday, May 24, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.:

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

14. Petitions
15. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
16. Tabling of Documents
17. Notices of Motion
18. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
19. Motions
20. First Reading of Bills
21. Second Reading of Bills
22. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
23. Report of Committee of the Whole
24. Third Reading of Bills
25. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, May 24, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:52 p.m.