



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**3<sup>rd</sup> Session**

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**14<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

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## **HANSARD**

**Wednesday, November 1, 2000**

Pages 655 – 672

**The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker**

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2000****MEMBERS PRESENT**

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Honourable Jane Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Jake Ootes, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

-- Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Good afternoon. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 22-14(3): Annual Take Your Kids to Work Day**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today, November 1<sup>st</sup>, is Take Your Kids to Work Day across Canada. The Northwest Territories is an enthusiastic supporter of this annual event designed to help students in Grade 9 to begin thinking about life after school. Last year, more than 400 grade 9 students joined their parent, a family friend, or a willing host for a day in the workplace. Once again this year, as in past years, several students have joined us here at the Legislative Assembly for a closer look at how government operates. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome them all and to thank their sponsors.

Mr. Speaker, Take Your Kids to Work Day helps students make the connection between what they learn at school today and the challenges they will face in the future, when they enter the world of work. A day spent together on the job can strengthen the bond between a parent and a child and between the school and the community. That is important, because the students of today are the workforce of tomorrow.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize all of the students who have taken the opportunity today to look toward their future by spending a day on the job. I would also like to thank all businesses and offices who support Take Your Kids to Work Day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS****Member's Statement on Board Funding in the Dogrib Region**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, within the Dogrib region, we are taking steps towards self-government. Over the past ten years, boards within my region have been evolving to the point where they are responsible for

delivering educational programs and health and social services. As these boards have been restructured to take on additional programs, their funding needs have changed. As Legislators, we need to make sure that when we are creating new boards, we plan for success. When we turn over services, we need to ensure that the infrastructure is in place and that adequate funding is provided. At the appropriate time, I will have questions related to board funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Member's Statement on Trapping Industry Revival**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today being November 1<sup>st</sup>, this time of the year, I always get nostalgic. Traditionally, today is the day trapping season starts in the Northwest Territories and most of Canada. It is a time when trappers look forward to and set forth their plans that they have been working on for a few months now. Today I rise to speak on this important matter.

This is a critical year if we are to reverse the downward trend in the fur industry, Mr. Speaker. The market is starting to make a comeback, especially in Europe and the United States. One auction house in Vancouver had an inventory of 300,000 skins at this time last year. This year, they report they have no skins left. The demand for northern fur is exceeding supply, Mr. Speaker. I believe the time is right to resurrect this industry, especially in communities with depressed economies in the North.

There are many areas where we could be involved, but we are not, Mr. Speaker. The fur trade contributes about \$800 million to the Canadian economy annually. That includes harvesting and manufacturing. Other areas are fur farming, retail and related services. The fur industry provides income for more than 85,000 Canadians. In the Northwest Territories last winter, there were 1,004 harvesters. The value of furs sold was \$838,000, not including furs sold privately.

Mr. Speaker, the fashion industry is once again finding new and more ways to use furs for their garments. The fur trade is making a comeback. Knitted furs are another option. New quick-kill traps are accepted by northern trappers and people around the world as a humane way of trapping. Market prices for marten at one Vancouver auction house have increased by 20 percent, Mr. Speaker, and lynx prices are expected to increase next season.

Another untapped area is taxidermy training. Manufacturing and merchandising of fur garments is another avenue largely unexplored in the Northwest Territories. Through training opportunities, trappers can upgrade their knowledge and skill. In a community with a depressed economy such as Fort

Resolution, this is an area where I believe RWED can help. In past years, Fort Resolution was one of the highest producers of furs in the Northwest Territories. I suggest that RWED look at providing additional funds to trappers in communities with depressed economies. These funds could be used for further training equipment and supplies, supply upgrades and increase promotion of trapping as a source of income. That...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Nitah. Order, please. Order. Your time has expired and I was trying to remind you of that. None of what you said in the last 30 seconds was recorded, so your time had expired. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Nitah, you may conclude your statement. I would advise you to back up.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will start with the community of Fort Resolution, which has been the highest fur-producing community in the Northwest Territories for the past number of years. It is in a very depressed economic climate. In that area, I suggest that RWED look at providing additional funds to trappers in communities with depressed economies such as Fort Resolution, Mr. Speaker. These funds could be used for further training, equipment and supply upgrades and increased promotion of trapping as a source of income. That way, trappers can again benefit from new development in the industry and preserve a very healthy way of life. In other words, Mr. Speaker, let us see some furbies with furs. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. A very important statement. I am glad you concluded. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

#### **Member's Statement on Northern Writes 8**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the Northwest Territories Literacy Council for producing Northern Writes 8. This publication is a collection of stories and poems written by people in the Northwest Territories. It includes 60 winning stories and poems written by youth and adults living in 18 of the communities. They are written in English, French and Chipewyan. Northern Writes 8 is a good example of one of the ways the Northwest Territories Literacy Council successfully supports and promotes literacy in all of the official languages of the Northwest Territories. Northern Writes 8 is produced in partnership with News/North and the National Literacy Council, and is sponsored by NorthwTel. I am pleased that four of the winners with entries in Northern Writes 8 are from the Weledeh constituency. I wish today to acknowledge the work of Marianne Bromley, Kate Covello, Jaya Bastedo, who had two stories in the publication, one in English and one in French, and Nimisha Bastedo. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### **Member's Statement on Fort Smith Health Care Concerns**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, like my colleagues across the Northwest Territories, I have significant concerns about health care and the operation of our various health boards. In the last week, I met twice with the health board in Fort Smith and they, like all other health boards, are facing financial problems. They are attempting to deal with a \$400,000 deficit, which they are going to do because that is part of the deal. To keep the surplus, you have to eat your deficit.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, they are engaged in the transfer of the personal care facility from the town of Fort Smith to the health board. They are looking at the additional cost of \$150,000 to \$200,000, which they were told they have to absorb. You are looking at about \$180,000 worth of extra costs for physicians. They have a 150-person waiting list to see the eye team, which comes in two days of the month.

Mr. Speaker, we have it on very good information that many of the smaller communities are telling the people coming from other communities to school in Fort Smith to hold off on their concerns with health issues until they get to Fort Smith because Fort Smith has better services than in those communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister is not new to these issues. She hears them everywhere she goes. With a lot of the specifics of the concerns from Fort Smith, I would like to make it very clear that there was a commitment by this Legislature and the government to protect programs and service levels in the communities. I would ask the Minister to look at these particular issues. We will accept the \$400,000 but the other costs, if they have to be absorbed by the health board, are going to result in significant program reductions in our community, which I do not think are acceptable to any people in my constituency or myself, as they would not be for any other MLA or their constituents.

This is a difficult situation. The pressures are there from all sides, but we have to honour the commitment we made as a Legislature at the start of the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

#### **Member's Statement on Arctic 'A' Airports Employees**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to raise the issue of Arctic 'A' airports employees. Mr. Speaker, back in 1995, this government signed an agreement with Transport Canada on dealing with the employees that were transferred from Transport Canada in those affected communities. Those affected communities were Cambridge Bay, Inuvik, Iqaluit and Norman Wells.

In that agreement -- which was signed by the Government of the Northwest Territories of the day -- there was a bridging agreement to allow Transport employees to continue with the entitlement they had under the federal government regime.

That was in the area of vacation travel allowance that allowed them to have two VTAs for employees under the federal government program that were transferred over to the Northwest Territories.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have been working on this issue with the Minister responsible for FMBS and to date have not managed to convince him to turn it around and allow those employees the funds they were entitled to when they came over to this government. Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that needs to be dealt with, especially in light of comments made by the Premier when he referred to employees of the Northwest Territories.

I refer to unedited Hansard, page 1417. In reference to a question asked by Mr. Miltenberger, the Premier stated:

"If we are challenged to protect and defend the rights of employees of this government, we will. There is no trying to soft peddle that. It has been my view that every employee has a right to be defended by the Ministers and the Premier of this government."

So taking that response to another question, we are dealing with government employees. I hope that the Minister responsible for FMBS will take that message now and will allow employees to receive what they were entitled to when they were transferred to this government. Thank you.

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

#### **Member's Statement on Public Safety on NWT Highways**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to address a concern that has been brought to my attention by a number of my constituents. It is a matter that has concerned me for quite some time. It concerns the safety of the travelling public on our highways in the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker.

Over the past 30 years, I have had the opportunity to travel over most of our highways a number of times. One of the questions that keeps coming up to me as I am driving, when I am 100 miles from somewhere and have not met a vehicle in an hour, is, what would happen if I came across an accident and somebody was seriously injured? There are no signs along our highways that tell the travelling public who to phone, who to get a hold of. It gives me a great deal of concern.

It was strongly brought to my attention last winter when travelling back to Hay River. About halfway between Fort Rae and Fort Providence, I came across an accident. Luckily, there was a big truck that came along that had a phone so we could contact someone, but the fact remains that two and a half hours after I got there was when the ambulance and the RCMP showed up. This, Mr. Speaker, is unacceptable. I know that the distances are great and it would be very expensive and probably impossible to put phone lines in and have contact throughout our Territory. That does not take away from the fact that it is incumbent upon us to do everything we can to protect the travelling public.

Far too often, Mr. Speaker, we tend to put in laws such as reducing speed to try and put the onus on somebody else if they break a law. I would suggest that accidents on the

highway do not always happen because somebody has broken a law. To some of us, this may not be a very important issue. However, I would suggest that if we have a member of our family or a dear friend of ours that is involved in a serious accident, and it is found out later that it took two and a half hours for help to get there, I think all of a sudden it would be very important to us.

So I think it is an issue I would like to continue to address. I would hope that this government will do everything possible to make sure that on our highways, we do everything possible to increase the awareness of this important issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

#### **Member's Statement on Adequacy of Municipal Funding Arrangements**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, an issue has risen in my riding in regard to the new community funding arrangement that this government is going to have. How are they going to be funding communities to ensure the communities have the ability and resources to see the unforeseen costs that are going to become their responsibility? I am talking about costs such as the high energy costs we are starting to see, such as the cost of fuel in all of our communities and also the cost of the service sector, especially departments like Public Works for the communities.

In some cases, the budget for the municipal services has almost doubled because of the service agreements that are in place. In some cases, we are paying \$58.00 an hour to have a service provided by an agent of this government. I think that these types of costs have to be built into any agreements we have with our municipalities.

Another concern I have is the communities that need to have services provided are not billed over and above the existing resources they have that are going to be distributed by this government.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is imperative that this arrangement does not fall in line with the previous agreements which we had with our communities which was the Operational Funding Contribution Agreements where it was actually broken down in regard to the number of facilities, the number of infrastructures, the length of roads, so you were able to actually see what the expenditures in those municipalities were when you were allocating funding.

The other concern I have heard from my constituents is on the high cost of infrastructure in our communities. You are now giving more responsibilities to the communities but we are not giving them the resources to replace, enhance or improve the existing facilities in our communities.

A lot of our communities have facilities that go back to 20 years, which have not been replaced to date. A lot of capital items that were in the five-year capital plan are no longer there because of cuts in this department. In order for the communities to be able to take on these new initiatives, they have to find ways of generating new revenues. In most cases,

these communities do not have the ability because of the lack of population.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, I will be asking the Minister responsible for Finance questions on this matter later. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

#### **Member's Statement on Tribute to Celine Lafferty on Her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today, on behalf of the people of the Deh Cho and throughout the North, I would like to take this opportunity to wish a happy belated 100<sup>th</sup> birthday to Miss Celine Lafferty of Fort Simpson, who is known to many of us as Granny Lafferty.

Mr. Speaker, Celine Lafferty was born on October 22, 1900, in Fort Providence, the daughter of Andrew and Madeline Laviolette. At the age of one, Celine's mother passed away and her and her sister Elizabeth were both placed in the mission convent in Fort Providence.

Mr. Speaker, the mission convent in Fort Providence was her home until the age of twenty. At that time, she met and married Joseph Lafferty of Fort Providence. Celine and Joseph have had nine children and although many of her children passed away at an early age, her descendants today include her three children, Albertine, Gabe, Germaine, many great grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren.

Celine Lafferty certainly had to endure many hardships throughout her life from a young child growing up in a convent to having to raise her family in the North when times were very difficult.

Fortunately, she was a very capable woman. She chopped wood, hauled water, made moccasins, parkas, and moosehair tuftings. She did whatever she could to make ends meet. Through it all, she never lost her sense of humour, her love for her family, and her infectious laugh. Later in life, she developed an addiction to minor hockey.

Mr. Speaker, the community of Fort Simpson celebrated Granny Lafferty's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday with her last week. She received certificates from the Premier, Mr. Stephen Kakfwi, and Prime Minister Jean Chretien. Today, I would like to honour her for the person that she is, an accomplished artist recognized for her beautiful moosehair tuftings, a mother, a grandmother, a wife, a kind and loving person with a fierce determination to take on all of life's challenges. Mr. Speaker, I honestly believe that this woman has set a standard that all of us in the North should strive to meet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Indeed, best wishes to Granny Lafferty on reaching 100 years. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

#### **Member's Statement on Personal Perspective on Family Violence**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in honour of Family Violence Awareness Week, I would like to make somewhat of a personal statement on this very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I tabled a copy of the transcript of an interview given by our Premier to CBC on the family violence awareness campaign. It is a personal account of his own awareness of the impact of family violence on our people. I am hoping that more people will take a look at it now that it has been tabled.

In particular, Mr. Speaker, there was one section in that interview that jolted me out of complacency and made me feel the need to speak today. It goes like this, and I quote:

"I always remember the first year I was married. I moved to Good Hope. At one point, my niece, who was 12 at that time, in a private moment with my wife asked her if I beat her. My wife was very shocked about it and she said, "No, of course not." My niece got up and said, "Well, he will."

This is exactly the same conversation I once had back in 1988 when I was in university in Ottawa and my younger sister was newly married to a Korean-Canadian. A friend of mine from the university, a young male student who was also Korean-Canadian, asked me if my brother-in-law was beating up my sister. I said, "Of course not", and he said, "Well, he will."

Mr. Speaker, I also come from a culture where some people think it is okay for the powerful to abuse and violate the safety of the powerless. I have had to learn to say no, it is not okay. I shall continue to say it out loud until it is stopped.

Just another personal note to conclude my point, Mr. Speaker. A couple of weeks ago I was interviewed by CBC on this important issue. At the time, I must admit I had doubts myself as to whether or not I could really make a difference simply by making a statement in this House. After all, they are just words. What difference could they make?

Any doubt I might have had evaporated when I heard the words of another interviewee in the same piece. As a victim of family violence herself, she made it clear how important it was for her to have MLAs and other political leaders say out loud that they believe in and practice zero tolerance against violence, and that it goes a long way to create awareness of this problem.

Mr. Speaker, it is true that the government has a big role to play in making more financial resources...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Ms. Lee, your time for your Member's statement has expired.

**MS. LEE:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, it is true that the government has a big role to play in

making more financial resources available to those who need shelters and counselling and other treatment services. However, there is also a lot we can do as leaders that does not involve money or intervention by the government.

We, and I mean all political leaders in the North -- have an obligation to say very loudly and clearly in every setting and forum we find ourselves in that we have a family violence problem in our Territory, that it is wrong and we will not condone it, so that every young girl growing up in this Territory knows that it is not okay for her to grow up expecting to be beaten or otherwise abused, that this is not an acceptable practice and that there are people in positions of responsibility and power who are speaking for her. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

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

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier today I spoke about the annual Take Your Kids to Work Day today. Some 400 students in the Territory are job-shadowing with family, friends, and people in business and in government, municipal governments and so forth. It is a great pleasure for us to have a number of people in the gallery today. I have a number of people to introduce, Mr. Speaker. I will start with Katherine Bayly, who is here with us today. She is job-shadowing her father, John Bayly, who is the principal secretary to Cabinet. Daylyn Kakfwi, who is the daughter of Premier Stephen Kakfwi. She is job-shadowing the work of her father. As well, with Mr. Carl Bird, who is the director of corporate services with the Executive of the territorial government, are Bradley Koswan, John Earle McPhee, and Kevin Davies. Please help me welcome all of them to the gallery.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. I just want to remind Members that your rules state that 30 seconds is your time for recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a former resident of Fort McPherson who now lives in Yellowknife, Ms. Karen Francis.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize in the visitors' gallery today the president of the Council Scholare Francophone to Hay River and the Northwest Territories representative for the Seniors' Francophone Assembly of Canada, and a constituent in Hay River South, Mr. Gerry Goudreaux.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bonjour, et bienvenue d'Assemblée. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a constituent of mine, Mr. Joe Wettrade from Gameti. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I cannot see her from where I sit, but I understand Julia Mott is in the audience, who works for First Air, a volunteer extraordinaire. I understand she is also with a student, whose name I do not know. I am sorry. I just want to recognize both of them. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a constituent today in the gallery, Ms. Barb Wyness.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Welcome. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the student the Honourable Sandy Lee could not see, Megan Cooper. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a grade 9 student who is job-shadowing today, Take Your Kids to Work, Cory Paquin, grade 9 from Sir John. Mr. Paquin.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

#### ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

##### Question 171-14(3): Airport 'A' Airports Employees' VTA Claim

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I had questions for the Honourable Joe Handley regarding Arctic 'A' transfers. The reason I question this Minister is I have worked in this area of responsibility with FMB. The stance that was taken originally when this agreement came forward and the government's standards of the day for vacation travel assistance changed, they said that this agreement did not apply any longer. That day, I dealt with the previous Minister and was told that it was within the bounds of this government to do what they have done. I figured that was

the end of it, but dealing with another situation with another employee from Arctic 'A' airports in Inuvik, I have become aware once again that this issue is still outstanding.

In fact, in arbitration, it was first of all appealed by the UNW and the appeal was upheld. It was agreed by an arbitrator that in fact this agreement was still valid. Since then, I have been working with the Minister to try to see if we can have it recognized. To date, I have been unsuccessful. I feel in light of the comments made by the Premier that every employee should be protected. My question now to the Minister is, will he now review this situation to pay out these employees what they were entitled to when this transfer came over? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

#### **Return to Question 171-14(3): Arctic 'A' Airports Employees' VTA Claim**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member has given a bit of the history on this and it is correct, the transfer happened in 1995. In 1996, I believe there was a renegotiation of the UNW collective agreement. In this collective agreement, VTAs, vacation travel assistance, were eliminated from the collective agreement. This led to some questions and there was a grievance filed. The chairman of the grievance made his award and it was that he provided for reimbursement for actual past travel expenses.

He went on in that grievance to clarify that the onus of proof continues to rest with the affected employee with respect to expenses incurred. What we have done as a department is we have appealed to the employees that if they have any receipts to substantiate past travel, then we would honour those receipts. Clearly the onus rests with them. We hope that every employee who feels they have not been dealt with fairly is able to give us some evidence that they actually travelled. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

#### **Supplementary to Question 171-14(3): Arctic 'A' Airports Employees' VTA Claim**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that has been the case and they have informed employees that should be done. In some cases, some of the employees have done that. Those who could afford to travel at that time. Mr. Speaker, this would impact 15 employees. Some are no longer with the Government of the Northwest Territories. As a result of this, they felt that this employer was not a worthy employer to work for so they left to find other sources of employment.

What we can do now in this new day and new government, the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly, is to honour the commitment that was made when this agreement was signed. These employees were entitled to two trips per year. It was a five-year agreement that expired in 1999-2000.

So will the Minister...I am not asking him to once again tell employees to show your receipts. In some cases, they have done that and they have been turned down. I want to know, will the Minister re-look at this issue? I believe the money was

transferred to the government of the day, so will you look at reinstating it and giving them what they are entitled to? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

#### **Further Return to Question 171-14(3): Arctic 'A' Airports Employees' VTA Claim**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, when the transfer was made, I am sure there were a lot of things that were included in the amount of money that was transferred. In fact, I would think generally that the federal government transferred the amount of money they were spending on the Arctic 'A' airports before the transfer, but I have looked into this and I am continuing to look into it.

I found out that the federal practice prior to the transfer was not to pay everybody out for two trips whether they took them or not, but rather to issue certificates or coupons for the employees to purchase travel when they actually travelled. They would have to actually travel in order to be eligible and that was what the amount of money transferred to the Government of the Northwest Territories was based on. It was not just a cheque written to everybody for two trips each year.

We did go through it and, as a result of the change in the collective agreement, there was a lack of clarity on this. It went to grievance. It was heard. The chairman of that process made his decision. We are following it. Certainly we want to help the employees. We just ask them to dig up and go back to the agencies and give us some proof that they travelled and we will reimburse them. We cannot just write a cheque for everybody assuming that everybody made two trips every year because that is not the case for any government employees, I do not think, or very many. So we need some proof. I will continue to work with the Member to try to resolve this one. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

#### **Supplementary to Question 171-14(3): Arctic 'A' Airports Employees' VTA Claim**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to further trying to deal with this, but if the answer is the same as has been stated, to come up with more receipts, then we are not going to move anywhere on this. In fact, by putting that stipulation on it, we are telling some of the employees -- and some of these people I know quite well, they are from my constituency -- that because they did not have the dollars, tough luck, too bad. You are out of luck and this government will not honour that initial agreement. I ask the Minister again, will he go back and give these employees what their due entitlement was of the day? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

#### **Further Return to Question 171-14(3): Arctic 'A' Airports Employees' VTA Claim**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I have gone back. I have spent a lot of hours on this one. I believe we have given the

employees everything they are entitled to, for which they have shown us some proof that they travelled. I am confident that what we have done is within the decision on the grievance that was put forward. It is within the terms of the agreement, the collective agreement. If there is anything more I can do, I am willing to do it, but I cannot go outside of a collective agreement. I cannot go beyond what the grievance process awarded. I have to be fair to all employees. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

#### **Supplementary to Question 171-14(3): Arctic 'A' Airports Employees' VTA Claim**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question now to the Minister is, in being fair to these employees because these employees were in that transfer agreement, what do they rate? If the Premier said every employee should have the right to be defended by Ministers, but in fact we are telling these employees, "You do not quite cut it in this case. Show your paperwork and then we will do something for you." Where do they rate in the agreement? We have talked in great length about how valued these employees are. Will you show them their value by reinstating this entitlement? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

#### **Further Return to Question 171-14(3): Arctic 'A' Airport Employees' VTA Claim**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly respect and appreciate this group of employees. I respect and appreciate all of our employees in the Government of the Northwest Territories, but I have to say that we have a collective agreement. The collective agreement is the agreement that provides the rights for all employees and ensures that all employees are treated equally and fairly. If there ever is a dispute or disagreement on the interpretation of a section, then we go to the grievance process. We have to rely on that process to give us direction. In this case, we are following it and we will continue to follow it. I want to be fair to these employees. I want to be fair to all employees. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

#### **Question 172-14(3): Public Sector Salary Comparison**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question this afternoon is for the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board and concerns the recent tentative collective agreement that was signed with the Union of Northern Workers. The deal calls for an increment of 3.8 percent in the first year and 2.5 percent in the second year plus increments in various benefits, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased that the talks had a positive outcome. I will look forward to a good, smooth ratification process. I hope that this is going to be the prelude of continuing improvement in the relationship that our government has with our workers.

I wanted to ask the Minister, how does our government now stand in relation to salary and benefit levels with our government and public sector workers in Canada? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

#### **Return to Question 172-14(3): Public Sector Salary Comparison**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that question as notice. There is a lot of detailed information to compare us to all the other jurisdictions. I do not have it with me. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty. Before we go into that, I would just like to remind Members that we have a full slate of questions today. I have asked you to maintain your rules of brevity and get to the point to the question to allow everybody an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Lafferty.

#### **Question 173-14(3): Dogrib Community Services Board Funding**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, the Honourable Jane Groenewegen. In late September, I had the opportunity to meet with the Dogrib Community Services Board and the Minister. At this meeting, one of the concerns expressed by the board was that they were under-funded.

The Dogrib Community Services Board was established three years ago to deliver programs in the Dogrib region. The board is responsible for creating and maintaining the educational system for the entire North Slave region and for delivering health and social services.

Can the department ensure that the funding provided to this new board structure allows for it to carry out its mandate and work in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### **Return to Question 173-14(3): Dogrib Community Services Board Funding**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can only speak to the portion of the funding that the board receives with respect to health and social services and, as Mr. Lafferty is aware, this is the first year that a number of the health boards have operated with a deficit. So this is a new issue we are facing. It is not just with the Dogrib Community Services Board but with three other boards as well.

The Dogrib Community Services Board did have an operating deficit this year. However, they had an accumulated surplus from last year and now that the financial information has been compiled, the department will be working with the board to ensure that they have sufficient financial resources to carry out the programs and services in their area.

They will be looking at areas that may not be within the control of the board, such as forced growth and expenditures related to inflation. They will be looking at a number of areas. So, yes, in answer to the Member's question, the department will work with the board to ensure that they are adequately funded through the budgeting process. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

#### **Supplementary to Question 173-14(3): Dogrib Community Services Board Funding**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From what I understand, there are fewer government dollars spent in the Dogrib region than in any other Western Arctic community for the delivery of health and social services. I would like to ask the Minister what steps the department is taking to ensure that the level of services provided in Dogrib communities are equal to the rest of the Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### **Further Return to Question 173-14(3): Dogrib Community Services Board Funding**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not certain what it would take to create that assurance because the types of facilities that are located in different communities vary. If we took it on a straight money spent on a per capita basis, it would probably not be a fair assessment. There are many things that affect the costs of delivery services in communities, such as their remoteness from things such as hospitals.

All I can say is that we can look at the funding that is available to the Dogrib region in relation to other regions, but it would take a fair amount of analysis to determine if it was on par. I have no reason to doubt that the Dogrib communities are being treated fairly in terms of the way that our funding is allocated. We could look further into offering verification of this for the Member.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

#### **Supplementary to Question 173-14(3): Dogrib Community Services Board Funding**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question I have for the Minister is that prior to the restructuring of the board, the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education was running in a surplus previous to that. Due to the restructuring, they have been running a deficit the last three years, since 1997 when the board was created. So I am just wondering, from now on, if the boards are going to be created, maybe a study should be done so they do not have to run a deficit in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### **Further Return to Question 173-14(3): Dogrib Community Services Board Funding**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Member for North Slave that for the boards that operated this past fiscal year in a deficit situation, operational reviews are going to be conducted in cooperation with those boards to ensure that they are being adequately resourced to look at areas where there may be expenditures that could be reduced through efficiencies and various methods. However, we are not singling out any board. This is a particularly difficult year for a number of the boards with a number of factors contributing to that.

So when we have that information in from those operating reviews, we will be in a much better position to see if it was the restructuring of the board which contributed to this or not. That work is just underway and is in progress now. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Question 174-14(3): Trappers and Harvester Assistance Programs**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today being Family Violence Week, we all know as legislators and as leaders that violence in the home is closely associated by economies of scale. People have learned to be a little bit more aggressive in their dealings. With that in mind, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development to tell the House what programs they have in place for trappers in the Northwest Territories. This is current programs, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

#### **Return to Question 174-14(3): Trappers and Harvester Assistance Programs**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a number of programs in RWED that are aimed at helping harvesters who make their living, or part of their living, off the land. If I could just go through some of them very quickly, and these are only the ones that the Member is asking about which are in reference to fur harvesters.

The Community Harvester Assistance Program is one where we have committed \$473,000 in the current fiscal year. The Western Harvester Support Program which was a \$15 million program. There is \$845,000 being spent this current year in that one. There is the Disaster Compensation Program, a \$15,000 Human Trapping Development Program. There is a Fur Pricing Program. The Fur Pricing Program provides a subsidy of \$345,000 for trappers. We maintain a Fur Market Service Revolving Fund. There is Fire Damage Compensation for trappers of \$100,000.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of programs that we have to assist people who make their living on the land. These are the main ones that I have referred to. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

### **Supplementary to Question 174-14(3): Trappers and Harvester Assistance Programs**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We know that health care is one of the biggest costs to this government. We know that low-income parents have a lot of problems. In light of the recent fuel prices going up at an extraordinary pace and there is no sign of it slowing down, has the government reviewed the level of income or support they provide communities throughout the Northwest Territories? All communities, all people, not only aboriginal people, but non-aboriginal trappers as well? Are the resources that we provide the communities still adequate as they were last year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Nitah, the question was not the topic that you started off with and we must stick to the one subject per question. I think it had something to do with income, so I will take the liberty of passing this on to the Minister of RWED, Mr. Handley, who originally took the first question. Mr. Handley.

### **Further Return to Question 174-14(3): Trappers and Harvester Assistance Programs**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, yes. We are very aware of the fact that over the last 20 months, fuel has gone up by roughly 25 percent. So anybody who has to depend on fuel in order to earn their livelihood or to even live is paying more now than they were before. We are continuing to monitor the situation and certainly we will continue to look at ways that we can do things differently here. As I mentioned, we do have a number of programs that support harvesters. Just a very quick calculation shows that we spent about \$2.5 million this year in support of harvesters. I have asked my department to look at that to see if there is a better way of doing this to ensure that the money is better spent and hopefully help compensate for the increased fuel costs. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

### **Supplementary to Question 174-14(3): Trappers and Harvester Assistance Programs**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister commit to me in this House today that if the communities approach the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development to further investigate other possibilities to increase the number of trappers in our communities in the areas of communities that are economically depressed, would the Minister commit to me today that he will work with those communities and do everything he can and his department can to assist these communities in achieving their goals in the area of trapping, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

### **Further Return to Question 174-14(3): Trappers and Harvester Assistance Programs**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I will commit to do that. My staff are doing that on an ongoing basis. We have, as I mentioned, contributed a fair amount of money this fiscal year to this sector of our economy. The Western Harvester Assistance Program was set up a number of years ago. Through that program, over \$10 million has been given to

communities and to aboriginal groups to support their harvesters. I would hope to work with them on how that money can be best utilized for the benefit of trappers. We are also working, Mr. Speaker, on programs, two pilot programs, to try to get young people into the trapping industry in order to help from that side as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

### **Supplementary to Question 174-14(3): Trappers and Harvester Assistance Programs**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I know sometimes we as leaders and sometimes Members on the other side of the floor see diamonds sparkling in their eyes and oil and gas flowing through their veins. The government has committed considerable dollars towards that industry. In today's paper, the Minister of Education just announced a \$12 million strategy team to bring people into the workforce in this industry. Here we have a 200-year history in the trapping industry...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Nitah, would you ask the question, please?

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister commit to a strategy with significant resources behind the strategy to look at the fur industry, not only the traditional trapping methods, but all the new technologies?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah, we have the question. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

### **Further Return to Question 174-14(3): Trappers and Harvester Assistance Programs**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try to keep the oil and gas from flowing through my veins too much. Mr. Speaker, yes, I commit to continuing to look at our strategy. We have a strategy. We did move to a new way of marketing Arctic furs a couple of years ago. It seems to be showing signs of success. The price of fur is coming up. We have a lot of programs that support the harvesters. If there are better ways of doing that, then I am certainly committed to looking at how we can improve that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

### **Question 175-14(3): Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. Last night, he was on CBC television. I listened with interest as he discussed his plans for human resource development. He talked about oil and gas training. He said that we were putting money into safety and driver education in this area, but also looking at mining. Then, Mr. Speaker, he said, and I quote, "Beyond that, I have a strategy of maximizing northern employment." That is not a strategy that I have seen tabled in this House or was aware of. I am wondering if Mr. Ootes can tell us about the strategy for maximizing northern employment? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 175-14(3): Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy**

**MR. OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The area that I spoke about, of course, was in regard to the human resource development plan which is part of the Non-Renewable Resource Strategy and, when we speak about a \$12 million strategy, that is part of the \$236 million that we are trying to get from the federal government. With regard to the question of maximizing northern employment, that is a small strategy that we are starting to develop to ensure that in the territorial government, we are able to access individuals who may want to work within the territorial government. As well, we want to ensure that we go to industry and any other employers that we ensure that employment is created for Northerners who may be in university, for example, today. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 175-14(3): Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since this is a small strategy that we are starting to develop, I am wondering if Mr. Ootes can tell us what the budget for the strategy is. Specifically, how much money has his department put into this strategy? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 175-14(3): Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy**

**MR. OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is no allocation of dollars towards that. It is an effort on our part to start identifying areas that we can ensure Northerners do get jobs. It ties into the human resources development plan. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 175-14(3): Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think this illustrates a concern that this side of the House has. We seem to have a lot of nice strategies with no money attached. We refer to them as "wish lists." Can the Minister tell us specifically, am I right in thinking this is a strategy with no money attached as of yet?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 175-14(3): Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy**

**MR. OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have responsibility, Mr. Speaker, as employment Minister, as the Member well knows, and I am not going to sit there and suggest that we are

not doing anything. This may be termed a strategy. We may not have the money, but we can certainly start working on identifying areas that employment should be created in. While we do not have the money, it is tied to the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy. In the interim, we are working on programs like the maximizing northern employment and the human resource development plan. That is a plan of some \$12 million, as I stated. We do not have that money. It is a proposal to the federal government as part of the Non-Renewable Resource Strategy, but it does not stop us from proceeding with trying to create employment here in the North. We have already identified in our money, which Members approved last spring, an amount of \$500,000. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 175-14(3): Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this really illustrates the concern I am talking about. We have constituents calling us saying we saw Mr. Ootes in the paper talking about priming the boom \$12 million plan. There are no dollars attached. Are we not creating false expectations and raising hopes without the money? When will the Minister table this strategy and show us where the money is coming from? Where is the beef, Mr. Speaker?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 175-14(3): Maximizing Northern Employment Strategy**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that I have emphasized certainly to those reporters who have interviewed me, that this was a proposal that we have been developing over the last six months as part of the Non-Renewable Resource Strategy. It is important for us to continue to proceed to develop it. It is a developing process we are into here. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 176-14(3): Bison Problem in Fort Providence**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. It is regarding the issue of the bison problem in Fort Providence.

This is not a new issue. Many letters have been written to the department, yet we still have bison walking through the community, tearing up fences, attacking dogs, causing property damage. It is not a rare occasion that this happens. It is on a nightly basis. I am starting to think that the bison are scared of the dark because they are all in town every night.

I would like to know what the Minister is planning to do about this problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

**Return to Question 176-14(3): Bison Problem in Fort Providence**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our officers are working with the local wildlife committee, I do not recall the exact name, to resolve this problem. Hopefully as the weather changes, they will forget their urban ways and move back out of town. If necessary, and if it is at the direction of the wildlife committee, we would have to destroy some of the bison. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 176-14(3): Bison Problem in Fort Providence**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the bison were introduced into the Providence area by the government in the 1960s. There is a concern now that one of these animals might hurt or kill someone. Who would be liable? Is the department willing to accept that liability?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 176-14(3): Bison Problem in Fort Providence**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that as notice. I do not know who the liability would rest with. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. The question has been taken as notice, Mr. McLeod. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Question 177-14(3): Alleged Contravention of the Public Service Act**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Premier. Yesterday, I raised the issue in the House that there was compelling legal evidence that pointed to the fact that Cabinet had probably contravened its own legislation, the Public Service Act, in coming to an agreement with the chief of staff.

During that debate and questions yesterday, the Premier made the following comment, and I refer to page 1415 of unedited Hansard for yesterday, "There is no job description for executive assistants. There never has been."

Mr. Speaker, I have here in the Ministerial Administrative Procedures Handbook, section 10, titled the Ministerial Executive Assistants, about nine pages of outlines, duties, responsibilities, pay ranges, and such.

My question to the Premier is was he blissfully unaware of this particular section of the administrative handbook for Ministers, or was he misleading the House? Could he clarify, please?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Before I ask the Premier to respond, I will say that there were two parts to that question. The first I shall allow. The second part of it I will rule out of order. The part about misleading the House shall be

ruled out of order, but the first portion of the question I will allow, if the Premier wishes to respond. Mr. Premier.

**Return to Question 177-14(3): Alleged Contravention of the Public Service Act**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Mr. Miltenberger referred to a legal opinion that he had in his own hands that says, and he made the allegation...formulating his own opinion based on the legal opinion, saying very clearly that Cabinet had allegedly contravened its own legislation. Mr. Speaker, we have no copy of that legal opinion in this House. Further reference to it I believe is not proper. It should be tabled as we had asked the Member to do yesterday. I do not believe it is proper for me to answer a question based on a legal opinion that none of us in this House have access to. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 177-14(3): Alleged Contravention of the Public Service Act**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Premier obviously chooses not to answer, but the reality is every Member of AOC has a copy of the legal opinion. The Premier has misspoken once again.

There is a very clear unequivocal statement made by the Premier, "There are no job descriptions for executive assistants. There never has been." That formed the basis for his argument...

-- Interjection

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Handley, you are rising on a point of order.

**Point of Order**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** ...continuing to raise a matter that he has referred to yesterday, mainly the legal opinion. It has not been tabled here. I do not think we can discuss it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. We have a point of order here. I am trying to ascertain what the point of order is. The Member is asking a question. He has referred to some documents which he has. Whether or not it is necessary for him to table that I do not think is the point. What is the point of order, Mr. Handley?

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the Member is referring to a document that is not before the House. That is the point of order. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. On your point of order, I will have to refer to Hansard to see exactly what was said, but what I understand is that the honourable Member did not refer to that document. He referred to an item in Hansard, which he did illustrate there. I will take the matter under advisement. I would caution the Members to observe the rules of the House about parliamentary language and about items that are not available to other Members.

Mr. Miltenberger, you may continue with your questioning until I review Hansard and make a ruling on it. Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 177-14(3): Alleged Contravention of the Public Service Act**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again, I refer to page 1415 of the unedited Hansard. I asked the Premier a simple question. He unequivocally stated, "There are no job descriptions for executive assistants. There never has been."

I have here nine pages of duties, responsibilities, pay ranges, related to executive assistants from the Ministerial Administrative Procedures Handbook. Can the Premier clarify for this House his statement? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 177-14(3): Alleged Contravention of the Public Service Act**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Member made a number of statements. For instance, he says he wants to speak to the issue of the most senior civil servant in the Government of the Northwest Territories. That, Mr. Speaker, is Liz Snider, secretary to Cabinet. It is not the chief of staff. That needs to be corrected because the Member is making the implication that the chief of staff is the most senior civil servant in the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The senior civil servants in the Government of the Northwest Territories are the deputy ministers, directors and superintendents, people who have power in legislation, who run departments, who deal with money and employees of a substantial number.

The chief of staff, as I have said, is an executive assistant with enhanced responsibilities. It is a political appointment. It is a political position that services the Premier's office. That is what it is.

The Member made the allegation that whatever it is that he says we have done undermines the most fundamental premise of a non-political civil service and I reject that. He refers to a legal opinion a number of times. He shared that with his colleagues but he has not shown that to Members of this House. It is not a tabled document but he continues to refer to it and to make the allegations, Mr. Speaker. This legal opinion questions whether or not Cabinet has contravened its own legislation. That is that Cabinet, by the Member's allegation, has done something illegal. I reject that.

I challenge the Member to produce some evidence other than his own personal opinion that it is in fact a legal opinion that exists. I would like to see it tabled. I think the people of the Northwest Territories would like to see it. It is a serious allegation and I challenge him to table it.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 177-14(3): Alleged Contravention of the Public Service Act**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to hear the Premier refer repeatedly to a document that he just called a point of order on for not being before the House.

Mr. Speaker, I would like the Premier to answer a simple question. Is he that woefully uninformed about his own procedural handbook after 13 years on Cabinet that he is unaware that this document exists? And that he would state just the contrary in this House, on unedited Hansard, page 1415, which leads to the two concerns I raised in my initial question, both of which are valid? The Premier has not clarified it. If he will be patient, he will probably get a copy of that legal document in good time, the same way we get information from them, in good time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, I ask you to be clear with your questions. Mr. Miltenberger, I lost the question along the way and I am not sure whether the Premier would... I am going to ask you to repeat your question to clarify. What was the question you were asking the Premier?

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, the Premier said in the unedited Hansard, page 141.: "There are no job descriptions for executive assistants. There never has been." It appears to the contrary that there is. I would ask the Premier to clarify his statement in relation to this issue in Hansard from yesterday.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Premier.

**Further Return to Question 177-14(3): Alleged Contravention of the Public Service Act**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, the statement I made yesterday is that as far as I know, there is no job description for executive assistants. That is the statement I made. If a Member is making the allegation that I have deliberately misled the House, he is wrong. If I have said something that is not correct, then I can be corrected. That is not a problem but that is not the issue here. The issue is yesterday, the Member made a very serious allegation to the Government of the Northwest Territories. I have said again the Member should table that document because I believe he is just twisting a legal opinion...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Excuse me, we have a point of order. Point of order, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Point of Order**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** I speak to the issue that you made yourself very clear earlier on in terms of this particular issue. The Minister and the Premier answered the question and then proceed as well to give another harangue about his point of view on an issue that he already called a point of order on and that you ruled on. I think it is making unjust and unfair use of this particular time. The clock is still running and other Members want to speak, as you say. I believe he is just using it as a soapbox and it is far beyond answering the question. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. My judgment is there is no point of order. The Premier perhaps is extending the answer in lieu of the time but the Premier is answering the question in his own way and is allowed to continue. I will allow his response to continue. If he is done, then we will move on to the next supplementary. Mr. Miltenberger, final supplementary.

**Supplementary to Question 177-14(3): Alleged Contravention of the Public Service Act**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given the fact that there appears to exist terms of reference and duties for executive assistants, would the Premier be prepared to table in addition to that, the supplementary duties and pay raises and general responsibilities for the chief of staff that he says falls in this particular classification? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 177-14(3): Alleged Contravention of the Public Service Act**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, people of the Northwest Territories should be reminded and should be aware that people who work for the Government of the Northwest Territories are allowed, within some parameters, to engage in political activity. Not everybody chooses to exercise those but those rights are extended to employees of the government.

Senior civil servants, which includes deputy ministers, are prohibited from engaging in certain types of political activities. Executive assistants to elected Ministers, including the Premier's chief of staff, are excluded from that restricted employee category. That is very clear and it is categorical.

Mr. Speaker, I have said a number of times in this House, I have referred the information to standing committees of this House that the executive assistant to the Premier has been titled chief of staff and has been added, by political agreement among the Ministers, to have additional duties and responsibilities. I laid those out and I am going to table that this afternoon.

I again challenge the Member to table that legal opinion on which he based his very serious allegation that this Cabinet is breaking the law. I challenge him to back up his statement and show me clearly where that is done. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Question 178-14(3): Fulfilling Government Promises**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, trust is an important thing for the government to have in the eyes of the public. People must be able to trust their government to deliver on its promises. Trust is fragile and easily lost. Aboriginal governments are watching this government to make sure that we follow through.

Mr. Speaker, would the Premier agree that it is vitally important for the Government of the Northwest Territories to deliver what it promises?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Return to Question 178-14(3): Fulfilling Government Promises**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, of course it does. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 178-14(3): Fulfilling Government Promises**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More specifically, would the Premier agree that promises made by Government of the Northwest Territories employees, say for example, negotiators at self-government tables, if within government policies of the day must be delivered on?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, I have no idea what the question was. I am sorry. I did not catch the question at all. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I am trying to get at is that if an employee makes a promise, whether they are at a self-government table or in some other setting, that sets the government into following through on some action, will this government stand behind the words of that employee and make sure that it does in fact deliver if the promise was made within a policy supported by this government at the time?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The question kind of borders on being hypothetical. However, it is answerable and I will ask the Premier, who may or may not choose to answer the question. Mr. Premier.

**Further Return to Question 178-14(3): Fulfilling Government Promises**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, I consider it to be hypothetical. Unless there is a specific example provided, there is no way to respond to the question. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 178-14(3): Fulfilling Government Promises**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, perhaps if I remove the word if from the question, it will not be hypothetical. Will this government deliver on promises made by employees to members of the public or to aboriginal governments? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. It is a very broad question. Again, I will allow it. Mr. Premier.

**Further Return to Question 178-14(3): Fulfilling Government Promises**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, this is very simplistic to expect a yes or no answer to a question, especially in the context of self-government negotiations and the entire dynamics that surround negotiating processes. I am going on the assumption that there is some reality to the question and take it as notice and try to research it myself, since there is no evidence forthcoming. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. The remainder of the question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

**Question 179-14(3): Emergency Services on NWT Highways**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in keeping with my Member's statement with regard to public safety travelling on our highways, there seems to be some confusion as to how many different departments are involved in providing emergency service on our highways, so I am going to direct my question to the Minister of Transportation.

My first question would be who is the lead department on providing emergency services along our highways? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Return to Question 179-14(3): Emergency Services on NWT Highways**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Member indicated, I am partly unclear exactly what type of emergency we are talking about here, so I am going to have to take his question as notice so I can get back to him with what the government's position is on this.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. The remainder of the question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 180-14(3): Municipal Funding Arrangements**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. It is in regard to my Member's statement on the new initiative this government is putting in place for community government funding. The concern I have, Mr. Speaker, is that there seems to be some items not realized in regard to how they are calculating these funds, especially the high cost of delivery programs and services in our communities. Also, the cost of acquiring services from outside the communities and also forced growth, the high cost of fuel and the high cost of operating equipment and services in our communities.

With regard to how these things were calculated, I would like to ask the Minister how is it that they have come up with a formula without realizing that there are other extra costs that will be associated with delivering these programs in communities?

I would like to ask the Minister, have they allowed for the ability of communities to be able to have the resources to find areas where there are unforeseen costs, the high cost of operating and maintaining facilities such as the water treatment plants, for instance, and the maintenance of our road systems in our communities, the cost of gravel? Have you built in those costs to ensure that they will be able to cover all those services?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Allen.

**Return to Question 180-14(3): Municipal Funding Arrangements**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the whole purpose of the formula based funding policy to replace the existing policy was to make it much more simple for communities to exercise some flexibility in how they want to design the cost of supporting the infrastructure based on the limited amount of funds we have as a government here. So there are several methods used to try to define what those funding elements are. Unfortunately, there is more work required, so we are continuing to work along with the communities through consultation processes to achieve some understanding of how it is going to work. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 180-14(3): Municipal Funding Arrangements**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe the concern from the communities is these so-called unforeseen costs that this government is going to be handing off to the communities. Other experiences communities have had to date is community empowerment, where they take on these programs and services, but there are no actual dollars there for administration, for replacement of capital or even consideration of having the dollars there to attract people with the qualifications to take on those responsibilities.

I would like to ask the Minister if there are any mechanisms there to have a phase-in period, so that when these agreements are taken on, if there are any unforeseen costs associated with taking on these resources, they are able to carry out those responsibilities with the resources they need.

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

**Further Return to Question 180-14(3): Municipal Funding Arrangements**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that has certainly been taken into consideration. We look at the new formula. It really only identifies three important factors at this time. It involves population, northern cost index, and assessed value of assets. We understand there are incremental costs involved, but hopefully we can work more closely with the communities to try to identify what they are and how we are going to approach those unforeseen costs.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 180-14(3): Municipal Funding Arrangements**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there also are additional costs that are not built into this formula in regard to the costs associated with banking. There are interest costs. There are costs with regard to GST where the municipalities are paying that. There are service charges being charged back to the municipality with regard to services from Public Works. There is a six percent charge there. There are all these charge-backs that are associated with doing business,

but nowhere in the formula do they allow for those funds to be covered because it is an unforeseen cost because of interest and what not. So is there a mechanism to ensure that those costs associated with the administration of the services will be covered?

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

#### **Further Return to Question 180-14(3): Municipal Funding Arrangements**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, we are not definite on how we are going to factor in all these costs, but I am sure as we move along in our consultation processes with the communities, we will continue to identify the shortfalls. Hopefully, within the fiscal restraints, we can find some resolutions to those problems. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Allen. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

#### **Supplementary to Question 180-14(3): Municipal Funding Arrangements**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regard to this item, will the Minister commit to allow communities in my riding...one of the ideas that is being thrown around is at the Beaufort Leaders Conference, have a meeting with the municipalities in my riding who will be affected by this new change, so they could sit down with this department and go through those costs that are not covered to date and the costs associated with the infrastructure administration?

I would like to ask the Minister, is his department committed to ensure that there is continued dialogue and consultation with communities either at a regional level or a community level? I believe this new mechanism is not as clear as they make it out to be. You pretty well have to be a mathematician to figure out these formulas. I think in order for communities to really understand it, this government has to commit to consultation and dialogue with those communities.

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

#### **Further Return to Question 180-14(3): Municipal Funding Arrangements**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly it is the endeavour of the department to consult with all communities. We have begun the process. It is important that the communities be aware of the number of changes and the direction we are going to be taking to work with the communities. It is not an easy task but we intend to consult with all communities across the Northwest Territories to ensure that they as well as we are educated in the changeover in the formula funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Allen. The time allocated for question period has expired. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

### **ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS**

#### **Reply 1-14(3)**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was approached by the South Slave Métis Nation to consider, and asked if I would first read their declaration, which was unanimously passed in Hay River last July 24<sup>th</sup>. I would read it into the record and then table it in this House. I consented to do that. Given its length, I have chosen to do it through replies to the opening address. I will do that. Thank you.

We, the indigenous Métis of the South Slave, affirm that we are a distinct Métis Nation within Canada with aboriginal rights to lands, resources, and governance throughout our traditional territory.

We hold these rights because we are direct descendants of First Nations and Métis people of the Mackenzie and Athabasca River Basins. Our Dene and Cree ancestors lived on these lands, which the creator gave them and governed themselves according to their own laws and customs from time before memory.

We have always lived in harmony with nature, in accordance with the great law that was given to our aboriginal ancestors by the Creator. We also lived in harmony with our Dene and Cree relations. We honour our aboriginal ancestors in relations.

Clearly, we are distinct from First Nations people. We, the indigenous Métis of the South Slave, are also direct descendants of the first people of European heritage to reach this region, long before Canada became a nation in 1867.

Before the fall of Quebec in 1759, French and mixed-blood "coureurs de bois" traveled into the Athabasca country, living with Dene and Cree families on the land. When North West Company traders explored north to Great Slave Lake in the 1780s, they met the family of the French-Cree "coureur de bois", Francois Beaulieu the First, and his Chipewyan wife Ethiba.

This family was only one of several Métis families established in the region in the 1700s. Because of their presence, trading companies set up posts in the area of what is now Fort Resolution beginning in the 1780s. All of the South Slave Métis are descended from one or more of these families.

Beaulieu and his son, Francois Beaulieu the Second, along with other early Métis families, including the Mandeville, Cayen, Houle, Poitras, Tourangeau, St. Germain, Mercredi, and Lafferty families were vital players in building a country that was to become Canada. Métis played a nationally significant role in northern exploration, the fur trade, and Treaty-making. At the same time, our ancestors were creating a new nation of Métis.

Francois Beaulieu the First was one of Alexander Mackenzie's voyageurs on his epic journey down the Mackenzie River to the Arctic Ocean in 1789 and in 1792, up the Peace River and over the Rockies

Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. His brother Jacques was an interpreter for explorer-trader Peter Pond.

Francois Beaulieu the Second and Francois Baptiste "le Camarade" de Mandeville were advisers, guides, hunters and interpreters for Sir John Franklin's successful expeditions to Great Bear Lake in the Arctic Coast. Beaulieu mapped the route to the north of the Coppermine River for Franklin via the Marion and Camsell rivers and Great Bear Lake. Beaulieu also brought Father Faraud, the first priest north of 60, to Fort Resolution in 1852.

Beaulieu resisted the Hudson Bay Company's monopoly in Rupert's land, travelling to trade as far as the Red River settlement in what is now Manitoba. He and his clan were based at Salt River, from where they hunted Buffalo, extracted salt from the Salt Plains for trade, and farmed, as well as operated the trading post. Beaulieu was considered a leader of the Dogrib people north of Great Slave Lake, as well as a trade chief of the Chipewyan south of Great Slave Lake. He traded with the Yellowknives and as far west as Fort Simpson.

Mandeville, who was allied by marriage to the distinguished Dogrib Chief Edzo, and a close friend of the famous Yellowknives Chief Akaitcho, helped make peace among the warring Dene peoples. The Mandevilles lived and hunted for trade as well as for domestic use in the Thelon River area by the 1830s. "Le Camarade" described and mapped the portage route via the upper Thelon to the Back River for the explorer George Back. Mandeville helped Fort Reliance for Back in 1833. The Mandevilles also founded the village at Little Buffalo River, near the present site of Fort Resolution.

These were not the only posts and villages the early Métis founded. In 1868, Joseph King Beaulieu, son of Francois Beaulieu the Second, founded a post at Fond du Lac, near the site of the present community of Lutselk'e. In 1874, King Beaulieu built the post at the foot of the Rapids of the Drowned that was to become Fort Smith, the terminus of the portage route to Smith's Landing-Fort Fitzgerald. Other communities founded by Métis in the same era include Jean River, Rocher Ricer and Smith's Landing-Fort Fitzgerald.

The Métis Nation of the South Slave arose during the same year as the Métis fur trade communities that grew up in the American Midwest-Great Lakes region and the historic Métis Nation of the Canadian prairies. Our Métis Nation eventually had trade and marriage links to these communities. Many of us are related to Métis people from the Great Lakes or Red River who came north in the 1700s and 1800s. The Lafferty family is one distinguished family who can trace their heritage back to the American Great Lakes Métis communities via Red River, Fort Chipewyan and Fort Resolution.

We honour our Métis women, who were among the first northern aboriginal women to receive a Euro-Canadian education. Some, such as Francois

Beaulieu's daughter Catherine, were educated at Red River and returned to act as educators and catechists. Those who were the wives of traders were often their community's midwives and healers. They were also known for their strength of character and independence. Catherine Beaulieu had her own dog team and made lengthy journeys around Great Slave Lake to trade with the people.

We are proud Métis, known historically as 'the free people', or 'gens libre' in Michif French. As early as 1862, Francois Beaulieu the Second identified himself to Father Emile Petitot as "a Métis born and bred in the woods". He lived for nearly 100 years and left many descendants. The priests referred to him fittingly as "Le Patriarche" - the patriarch or founding father of the South Slave Métis.

Métis knowledge of the waterways of the region and development of its transportation routes and methods have a solid foundation in Canada's history. We were famous long-distance canoeemen, who showed traders new and shorter routes to fur country. After 1826, we were York boatmen and captains of brigades. And from 1833 when steamboats came to the region, we were boat-builders, woodcutters, trackers, deckhands, and pilots like the legendary Johnny Berens.

Some of our ancestors fought in the battles for Métis rights to protect their traditional land on the Prairies. Most of the indigenous Métis of the South Slave were not part of the Red River Métis resistance, but regarded it as important and kept in touch with events. Martyred Métis statesman Louis Riel is said to be our relative through the Bouchers, a Chipewyan family of Ile a La Cross, Saskatchewan.

Many times, our Dene and Cree relatives have honoured our people by selecting them as spiritual, trade, war or talking chiefs. In 1899 at Fort Chipewyan, influential Métis trader Pierre Mercredi interpreted the Chipewyans' conditions for accepting Treaty 8. In 1900 at Fort Resolution, Michel Mandeville was the interpreter. There, the Chipewyans put forward another respected Métis leader, Pierre Beaulieu, to be their chief. The Treaty Commissioner refused to allow this, because he was Métis and because he refused to accept extinguishment as a condition of the Treaty.

Pierre Mercredi interpreted again in the 1920 Treaty boycott in Fort Resolution, and is credited with using his good offices to help resolve the crisis. This action was typical of the role the Métis played throughout our history as intermediaries and diplomats between the aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state. Two Métis men, Napoleon Lafferty and Patrice Mercredi, became the only native Northerners to be ordained as priests in the Mackenzie Athabasca district.

Other Métis helped Canada establish its presence in our territory by working to carry the mail hundreds of miles by dog team and as buffalo rangers and special constables enforcing the law in Wood Buffalo National Park and as far east as the Thelon River

Valley in the barrenlands. Many of us fought for Canada in the two world wars and the Korean War, including members of the Loutit, Heron, Sanderson, Mercredi and Evans families. Most recently, South Slave Métis have been Members of the Canadian forces in the Gulf War and Bosnia and have served as well in peacetime.

We are direct descendents of those people who signed Treaty 8 at Fort Chipewyan's Smith Landing at Fort Resolution. However, we have never been a part of the benefits of Treaty 8 or recognized as a First Nations people.

We have suffered many of the same rounds as our First Nation relatives, including attempts by the Government of Canada to take over our lands and resources, to govern our people without consultation or consent and to eradicate our languages and way of life. Métis suffered as much for government neglect as interference. Our rights and very existence as an aboriginal people were never acknowledged.

We hold the federal government to account for creating inequity in our communities where none existed before. When status Indians were permitted by regulation to continue harvesting in Wood Buffalo National Park, we were not. When status Indians and Inuit had their medical treatment paid for, we did not. We have supported institutions like the church, the education system and by taking wage employment, but we found ourselves subject to racism and discrimination often enshrined in government policy. As a result, many of our people were forced to live in hardship. Even now, Métis post-secondary students must either pay taxes on their education grants or accept a loan, while status Indian students receive non-taxable grants.

Our treatment by Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories in the last 100 years since the signing of Treaty 8 would have broken a weaker people. We remain strong and survive to this day because of the strength, unity, love and caring of our families.

We, the indigenous Métis of the South Slave, now reside mainly in the communities of Fort Smith, Hay River, Fort Resolution and Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories. We did not cede, surrender or release aboriginal title to the lands and resources throughout our traditional territory. We shall always have aboriginal rights to the use of our lands and resources. We also have the inherent right to govern ourselves in matters that are internal to our communities and traditional territories integral to our distinctive culture and practices, customs and traditions and with respect to our unique relationship to our land, water and resources and essential to our operation as governments.

The federal government has a fiduciary obligation to our people, which is protected by Section 35 of the Constitution of Canada. This is a sacred trust that

must be upheld by the crown and we insist that justice prevail.

Our rights are not dependent on and cannot be compromised by the will of other governments. We have the right to exercise them for our benefit at any time. We would prefer to negotiate in good faith with other governments to take our rightful place in Canada. We are willing to work with First Nations and other governments for the purposes of community harmony.

We shall govern ourselves in all areas that affect Métis people with the guided principle that future generations must benefit from our actions. We ourselves will take on the responsibility of healing the wounds of the past that were inflicted upon us by others. Our government is based on our beliefs, values, traditions, history, customs and laws as Métis people. Our Métis constitution will set out our principle structures of government, jurisdictions and authorities.

We place high value on the wisdom of our elders and will continue to use our guidance in all matters affecting Métis people. We will ensure that their knowledge of our identity, of our nationhood and historic place within Canada and of our aboriginal rights is passed on to our children for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, this declaration was passed unanimously by resolution of the South Slave Métis Tribal Council Special Assembly, Hay River, Northwest Territories, July 24, 2000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 9, replies to the opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

##### **Tabled Document 52-14(3): South Slave Métis Nation Declaration**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am proud to rise today to table the South Slave Métis Nation Declaration. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

##### **Tabled Document 53-14(3): Letter to Chair of Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development re: Department of the Executive, Dated March 27, 2000**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following letter to the chair of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development regarding the Department of the Executive

overview presentation dated March 27, 2000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Groenewegen. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Minister responsible for Health, Ms. Groenewegen.

#### ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

##### **Motion 9-14(3): Legislative Assembly's Declaration on Family Violence**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, November 3, 2000, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that the Members of the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly declare their intent to address the issue of family violence through their personal commitments to help stop family violence through their own action and leadership; and further, support a collective commitment of the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly to work in partnership with communities and their leaders to help lift the silence surrounding family violence and create caring support for people experiencing violence; and furthermore, the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly invites all northern leaders, including leaders of aboriginal governments and organizations, municipal governments, trade unions, boards, agencies and societies to adopt the principle of zero tolerance of family violence in spirit and in practice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

##### **Motion 10-14(3): Referral of Tabled Document 32-14(3), Report of the Chief Electoral Officer to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, November 3, 2000, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Tabled Document 32-14(3), Report of the Chief Electoral Officer titled Modernizing our Electoral System be referred to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures; and further, the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures report its findings with recommendations to the Legislative Assembly no later than the fall Session of 2001. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 14, notice of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for the first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Item 20, report of committee of the whole. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

#### ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Speaker, meetings for tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight and at 10:30 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Social Programs.

Orders of the day for Thursday, November 2, 2000:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, No. 3
  - Bill 12, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2000-2001
  - Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 2, Write-off of Debts Act, 2000-2001
  - Bill 3, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2000-2001
  - Bill 7, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act
  - Bill 9, An Act to Amend the NWT Power Corporation Act
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, November 2, 2000 at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 3:30 p.m.